

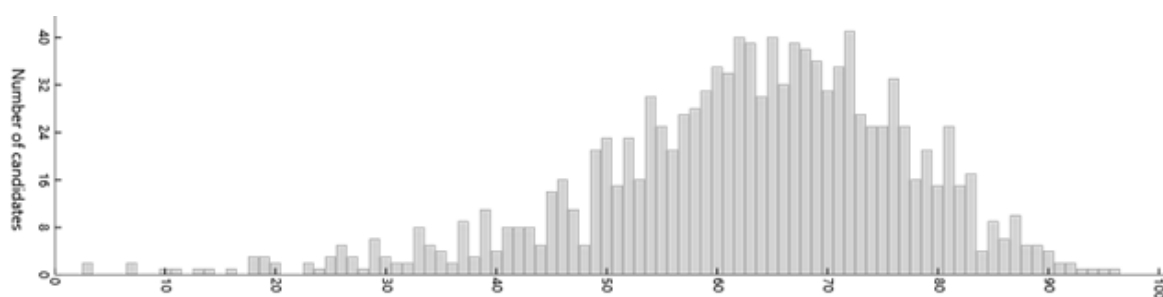


Summary report of the 2023 ATAR course examination report: Geography

Year	Number who sat	Number of absentees
2023	1191	22
2022	1269	29
2021	1496	36
2020	1531	29

The number of candidates sitting and the number attempting each section of the examination can differ as a result of non-attempts across sections of the examination.

Examination score distribution



Summary

Attempted by 1191 candidates Mean 62.40% Max 96.00% Min 3.00%

Section means were:

Section One: Multiple-choice Mean 79.66%

Attempted by 1191 candidates Mean 15.93(/20) Max 20.00 Min 3.00

Section Two: Short response Mean 62.36%

Attempted by 1188 candidates Mean 24.94(/40) Max 39.50 Min 0.00

Section Three: Extended response:

Part A: Unit 3 Mean 51.05%

Attempted by 1154 candidates Mean 10.21(/20) Max 19.50 Min 0.00

Section Three: Extended response:

Part B: Unit 4 Mean 56.59%

Attempted by 1155 candidates Mean 11.32(/20) Max 20.00 Min 0.00

General comments

The examination had an overall mean of 62.4%. The examination functioned very well and was a fair assessment of the revised syllabus implemented for the first time in 2023.

The examination used a location outside of Western Australia for the topographic map, utilising a section of the Townsville urban area and surrounds, Queensland. The map had a scale of 1:50 000 and was produced in 2021. The broadsheet contained information and data presented in a variety of formats including; a 2005 oblique aerial photograph of Townsville CBD and Castle Hill, a pair of population pyramids (2001 and 2021) for Townsville, two maps of Australia showing changes in grazing and cropping by statistical local area between 1992–93 and 2005–06, a table that presented survey data by region on perceptions of liveability survey, and a stacked area chart showing the number of people living in urban slum households in the world.

Advice for candidates

- Practise the basic mathematical/arithmetical skills required as detailed in the skills section of the syllabus.
- Practise identifying different relief features and landforms, as identified in the syllabus. Using contour lines is a basic mapping skill that requires proficiency.
- Practise calculating and comparing scales of different sources, for example, between aerial photographs and topographic maps.
- Practise interpreting aerial photographs, particularly identifying different features to help establish the direction from which photographs are taken.
- Practise calculating the area of features using topographic maps at varying scales.
- Learn definitions and key terminology from the syllabus.
- Use reading time to fully understand the data in sources on the broadsheet. Look for borders, colours, headings and fonts to help distinguish between data sets on a single source.
- Learn the meaning of key directional verbs (such as, describe, explain, assess) and practise using them in order to address the questions more accurately.
- Complete depth studies, ensuring that all responses are detailed and demonstrate that the case studies chosen have particular nuances specific to the place or location. Support all claims with specific examples and supporting evidence.
- Avoid relying too heavily on a textbook for local examples or using out of date information.

Advice for teachers

- Provide students with opportunities to provide written responses with greater depth, insisting on more accurate and specific details and examples.
- Teach students the key terms and definitions in the syllabus.
- Teach and test students on the meaning of the cognitive verbs/key directional terms used in the *Glossary of key words used in the formulation of questions* and how they function to determine mark allocations.
- Teach students to be precise in their approach to mapping skills, for example, constructing and annotating cross sections and sketch maps.
- Provide students with a variety of photographs and satellite images to calculate and establish position and direction between two sources.
- Provide students with a vast range of data sources for all overview and depth study content areas to ensure familiarity with the various ways data can be presented.
- Teach students to focus on how different factors account for differences in land cover change between two countries, rather than simply outlining the factors.
- Teach students to focus on changing demographic characteristics in urban and rural places, rather than simply outlining demographic characteristics.
- Teach students the meaning of the term 'interrelationship' (bi-directional) and provide opportunities to practise outlining interrelationships as detailed in the Unit 3 syllabus.
- Teach students to explicitly distinguish between adaption and mitigation strategies.
- Teach students to identify the requirements of the question to ensure that they can accurately address the nuances of the question, for example, the impact of a challenge on a place, rather than just the impacts.
- Teach students how to use a wide range of appropriate supporting evidence and examples specific to their response, rather than examples that are general and vague.

Comments on specific sections and questions

Section One: Multiple-choice (20 Marks)

The mean score for Section One was 79.66%. Questions 1 to 14 were based on topographic mapping skills. Recognising a basic landform using contour lines, and mathematic-based questions such as calculating time, average gradient and area, proved to be a challenge for

candidates. Of the remaining five questions, three were source analysis questions while two were Unit 3 and Unit 4 based definitions. Candidates performed well in the definition and source analysis questions.

Section Two: Short response (40 Marks)

Questions 21 and 22 were skills-based questions. Question 24 required candidates to demonstrate Unit 3 content knowledge and use a source to support their answer, while Question 29 was a Unit 4 source question. The remaining six questions were a balance of Unit 3 and Unit 4 content questions. Interpretation of the aerial photograph within the answer booklet was done very well, however the cross-section provided a challenge to some candidates, particularly identifying the shape of the slope.

Section Three: Extended response: Part A: Unit 3 (20 Marks)

The mean mark for Section Three, Part A was 50.2%. The majority of candidates chose to answer Question 30. The questions were relatively well-balanced, with a mean of 10.4 for Question 30 and 9.69 for Question 31 and less than one mark difference between the pairs of part (a) and part (b) mean scores. Overall, Question 30 was answered slightly better than Question 31.

Section Three: Extended response: Part B: Unit 4 (20 Marks)

The mean for Section Three, Part B was 56.6%. Question 32 was answered by 54.5% of the candidates, while 45.5% chose Question 33. The questions were well-balanced, and both questions had higher mean scores than those in Part A. The explanation of the causes and impacts of a challenge for a megacity had a higher mean score than those for Perth or a regional urban centre. However, the evaluation of a planning strategy had a slightly higher mean score for Perth or a Regional urban centre when compared to the evaluation for a megacity. Overall, the evaluations appeared stronger than when examined in previous years.