



GEOGRAPHY

General course

**Year 12 syllabus – What’s changing: Rationale and Aims
For teaching in 2027**

Acknowledgement of Country

Kaya. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) acknowledges that our offices are on Whadjuk Noongar boodjar and that we deliver our services on the country of many traditional custodians and language groups throughout Western Australia. The Authority acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We offer our respect to Elders past and present.

Background

As part of the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) Refreshment for reviewing the nomenclature of courses, the Authority has updated the rationale and aims of each syllabus.

The revised rationale and aims are aligned with the mapping of the general capabilities to provide clear connections between the rationale, aims and syllabus content. The rationale outlines what the subject is about and why it is important. It describes what students can expect to study in the course, along with the knowledge, skills and understandings they will develop throughout the course. It also explains how these can be applied in everyday life and references potential future pathways, outlining how students might connect what they learn in the course to further education, training and employment opportunities.

Important information

WACE Refreshment: Reviewing the nomenclature of courses

This document contains information that will be included in the syllabus effective from 1 January 2027.

Users of the syllabus are responsible for checking its currency.

Syllabuses are formally reviewed by the Authority on a cyclical basis, typically every five years.

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Rationale

The Geography General course draws on students' curiosity about the diversity of the world's places and their peoples, cultures and environments. It enables them to appreciate the complexity and diversity of our world, and to promote a more sustainable way of life and awareness of social and spatial inequalities. Geography provides an integrative way of exploring, analysing and applying the principal geographical concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability, scale and change to provide a deeper knowledge and understanding of the processes shaping our world.

Students investigate and analyse key challenges and opportunities for local, regional, national and global communities. They explore the interactions between natural and human systems, considering cultural, social and environmental factors that influence sustainability decisions and reflect differing values and levels of commitment to sustainable development. Students gain insight into recent and potential future developments, including hazard risk management, the unequal distribution of resources, cultural diffusion and sustainable development practices.

The course highlights the interconnectedness of locations and the significance of spatial concepts such as location, distance and proximity. It develops students' communication skills through spatial and visual representation, interpretation and analysis of data and the clear articulation of findings. Students develop inquiry skills by collecting primary data through observation, surveys and fieldwork, and by gathering and interpreting secondary data from various sources. They learn to use geospatial and digital technologies to investigate spatial patterns and processes.

The course develops practical and transferable skills that are valuable in both daily life and professional settings, including teamwork, problem-solving and critical thinking. It fosters students' ability to critically assess information, consider multiple perspectives and develop evidence-based conclusions. It encourages them to engage as responsible global citizens and reflect on their role in ecological sustainability and community wellbeing.

The course prepares students to tackle global challenges and opens doors to fields like environmental science, urban planning and resource management. Learning spatial technologies, such as GPS and GIS, prepares students for roles in environmental protection, city development, tourism, agriculture, logistics and disaster management. Critical thinking, research, data analysis and communication skills enhance employability in roles such as market research analyst, policy advisor, GIS technician, cartographer, conservation officer, meteorologist and demographer.

Aims

The Geography General course aims to develop students’:

- understanding and application of the concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability, scale and change through inquiries into geographical phenomena and issues
- inquiry and analytical skills to investigate interactions between natural and cultural environments using geographical inquiry methods to make informed decisions
- ability to identify, evaluate and justify alternative and innovative responses to the geographical challenges facing humanity, and propose and justify actions, considering environmental, social and economic factors
- responsible citizenship by exploring the impact of human activities on the environment and society, to encourage informed decision-making about where and how to live, work, and contribute to sustainable communities
- communication and critical thinking by interpreting and analysing geographical data, evaluating different perspectives and effectively communicating findings to diverse audiences
- preparation for future careers and studies by developing transferable skills applicable to careers in urban planning, environmental management, tourism, agriculture, mining, education, foreign affairs and other geography-related fields.