



**Geography Elective
Years 7–10**

Draft Syllabus

**Consultation Report
February 2016**

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1 Background information

The preparation of the *Geography Elective Years 7–10 Draft Syllabus* took into account the broad directions that informed the development of the new *Geography K–10 Syllabus*, which was published by BOSTES in July 2015.

BOSTES conducted consultation in Term 4 2015 and Term 1 2016 to engage stakeholders in the syllabus development process and to seek their feedback on the Draft Syllabus.

The consultation program included:

- consultation with the BOSTES Special Education Advisory Committee
- targeted meetings with HSIE teachers and faculties:
 - Ascham School
 - Birrong Girls High School
 - Catherine McAuley Westmead
 - Glenwood High School
 - Marcellin College
 - Merewether High School
 - Redfield College
 - The Shore School
 - Terrigal High School
- an online survey on the BOSTES website from 16 November to 18 December 2015
- written submissions from:
 - NSW Department of Education
 - Association of Independent Schools of NSW
 - Geography Teachers Association of NSW
 - BOSTES Special Education Advisory Committee
 - 1 individual.

Professional associations and schooling sectors conducted a range of activities during the consultation period to inform feedback to BOSTES.

Feedback from consultation was analysed and informed revisions to the Draft Syllabus.

2 Executive summary

The *Geography Elective Years 7–10 Draft Syllabus Consultation Report* provides a description of the consultation process and a summary and analysis of feedback received. The summary analysis identifies key matters raised, together with proposed actions for syllabus development.

The *Draft Syllabus Consultation Report* presents data and findings gathered through 19 survey responses, 5 written submissions, and 9 school meetings.

The *Draft Syllabus Consultation* was welcomed by respondents as an opportunity to align the *Geography Elective* course with the new *Geography K–10 Syllabus* and to provide a contemporary representation of the subject of *Geography*.

Key matters

The key matters to emerge from the consultation included:

- The focus and scope of Geography Elective needs clarification in the rationale and objectives.
- The outcomes need to be reviewed to strengthen the progression from Stage 4 to Stage 5, and the number of outcomes for each topic needs to be reduced.
- The topic ‘Australia’s Neighbours’ should allow for a broader study of Asian nations.
- The topic ‘Global Citizenship’ needs to take a more contemporary approach to the notion of global citizenship.

Actions in response to key matters

- The rationale and objectives have been revised to include specific reference to the contribution of Geography Elective to student learning and the scope of the course.
- The outcomes have been revised to provide clarity about the progression between Stages 4 and 5, and focus outcomes have been identified for each topic.
- The focus of the ‘Australia’s Neighbours’ topic on developing nations has been broadened to enable the study of a range of nations in the Asian region.
- The content of the ‘Global Citizenship’ topic has been revised to provide a stronger focus on the contemporary nature of global citizenship.

A summary of key matters and related actions is contained in Section 4 of this report.

3 Summary of respondents

Consultation stakeholder and teacher meetings

9 targeted meetings with HSIE teachers and faculties

Government sector	17	Catholic sector	6	Independent sector	5
Other	12				

Online survey respondents

19 online survey responses

Respondent:					
Academic	1	Parent	0	Pre-service teacher	0
Principal	0	School executive	1	School faculty	1
Student	3	Teacher	11	Other	2
I am:					
An Aboriginal person	1	A Torres Strait Islander person	0		
An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person	0	Not an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person	18		
Sector:					
Government	5	Catholic	3		
Independent	8	Non-school based	3		
Area of NSW:					
Metropolitan	13	Regional	6		
Number of people contributing to this survey:					
1	18	2–5	1	6 or more	0

4 Key matters

Key matters	Actions
<p>The focus and scope of Geography Elective needs clarification in the rationale and objectives.</p> <p>The outcomes need to be reviewed to strengthen the progression from Stage 4 to Stage 5, and the number of outcomes for each topic needs to be reduced.</p> <p>The topic ‘Australia’s Neighbours’ should allow for a broader study of Asian nations.</p> <p>The topic ‘Global Citizenship’ needs to take a more contemporary approach to the notion of global citizenship.</p>	<p>The rationale and objectives have been revised to include specific reference to the contribution of Geography Elective to student learning and the scope of the course.</p> <p>The outcomes have been revised to provide clarity about the progression between Stages 4 and 5, and focus outcomes have been identified for each topic.</p> <p>The focus of the ‘Australia’s Neighbours’ topic on developing nations has been broadened to enable the study of a range of nations in the Asian region.</p> <p>The content of the ‘Global Citizenship’ topic has been reviewed to provide a stronger focus on the contemporary nature of global citizenship.</p>

5 Analysis

5.1 Rationale

Summary

Several respondents supported the alignment of the rationale for Geography Elective with the rationale for the *Geography K–10 Syllabus*. There was support for including specific reference within the rationale to the purpose of Geography Elective in the curriculum.

Feedback affirming the rationale

Feedback	Sources
The alignment of the rationales for Geography Elective and Geography K–10 is appropriate.	BGHS (CM) MC (CM) MHS (CM) THS (CM)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
The rationale should provide a clearer focus on the nature and purpose of Geography Elective.	AIS DoE	The rationale has been amended to clarify the nature and purpose of Geography Elective, and the focus of the course.

5.2 Aim

Summary

Several respondents supported the alignment of the aim for Geography Elective with the aim for the *Geography K–10 Syllabus*. It was considered that the references to interactions, scales and active and informed citizenship were equally relevant to Geography Elective.

Feedback affirming the aim

Feedback	Sources
The alignment of the aims for Geography Elective and Geography K–10 is appropriate.	BGHS (CM) MC (CM) MHS (CM) THS (CM)

Key matters raised and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
The aim should be reviewed for its alignment with the course topics and content.	AIS DoE	The aim has been refined to better reflect the focus of the Geography Elective course.

5.3 Objectives

Summary

Several respondents supported the alignment of the objectives for Geography Elective with the objectives for the *Geography K–10 Syllabus*. Some respondents commented that the objectives could be reviewed to represent the broader scope of learning offered by the Geography Elective course. The majority of survey respondents agreed that there was a clear relationship between the objectives, outcomes and content.

Feedback affirming the objectives

Feedback	Sources
The objectives are clear and appropriate.	BGHS (CM) MC (CM) MHS (CM) THS (CM) Submission 1

Key matters raised and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
The objectives should be strengthened to represent the broader scope of learning offered through the course.	AIS DoE	An additional objective for knowledge and understanding has been included.

5.4 Outcomes

Summary

Survey respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the outcomes provide clear statements of the intended results of teaching the Geography Elective course. These respondents also strongly agreed or agreed that the outcomes provide a basis for measuring and reporting student achievement. A number of respondents expressed the view that the outcomes required further refinement to ensure an appropriate progression between Stages 4 and 5 and that they are manageable for teachers.

Feedback affirming the outcomes

Feedback	Sources
The revised outcomes are an improvement on the current syllabus and they are relevant and appropriate.	AIS MHS (CM) CMW (CM) THS (CM) GHS (CM) ASC (CM) RC (CM)

Key matters and Actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
The outcomes should have a clearer progression between Stages 4 and 5, and the appropriateness of the verbs should be reviewed.	AIS DoE MC (CM) Survey (x 1)	The progression between Stages 4 and 5 has been strengthened and adjustments made to the verbs within some outcomes.
The number of outcomes for each topic needs to be reviewed to ensure that the outcomes are manageable for teachers.	AIS DoE BGHS (CM) MHS (CM) MC (CM) GHS (CM) ASC (CM)	The number of outcomes specified for each topic has been reduced to ensure a focus on the most relevant outcomes.

5.6 Content

Summary

The majority of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the content organisation and structure was appropriate. Several respondents welcomed the alignment of the concepts, skills and tools between the Geography Elective Years 7–10 and Geography K–10 syllabuses.

The majority of respondents affirmed the clarity of the course structure and the flexibility it provided to meet the needs and interests of students.

The majority of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the content of the Geography Elective draft syllabus complements the content of the Geography K–10 syllabus. Some respondents indicated that although they taught the topic ‘Development Geography’, which had been removed from the Geography Elective course, they recognised the issue of overlap with the new Stage 5 topic ‘Human Wellbeing’ in the Geography K–10 syllabus.

There was general support for the inclusion of the new topic ‘Global Citizenship’. Several respondents suggested that the topic needed to be amended to provide a more contemporary approach to global citizenship. Similarly, respondents questioned the focus of the ‘Australia’s Neighbours’ topic on developing nations and recommended that the topic be reconsidered so that it would enable a broader range of Asian nations to be studied. The majority of respondents indicated that geographical inquiry and fieldwork were prominent. Some identified this as an area that should be strengthened.

The retention of the school-developed option was welcomed and recognised as an opportunity for students to investigate local community issues. Some respondents expressed the view that there should be two school-developed options within the course. Some respondents proposed the addition of a new topic on Indigenous communities.

Generally respondents provided positive feedback in support of the organisation and structure, and content of the course. A number of respondents provided a range of specific amendments to the content of topics.

Feedback affirming the course structure and options

Feedback	Sources
<p>Organisation and structure The organisation and structure of the content is clear and appropriate, and the broad consistency with the Geography K–10 Syllabus, such as the concepts, skills and tools.</p>	<p>GTANSW SEAC TSS (CM) BGHG (CM) MHS (CM) MC (CM) CMW (CM) THS (CM) GHS (CM)</p>

Feedback	Sources
	RC (CM) Submission 1
The draft syllabus provides flexibility to meet the needs and interests of the diversity of learners and sufficient scope for effective teaching and learning programs to be developed.	AIS GTANSW SEAC TSS (CM) MHS (CM) MC (CM) CMW (CM) THS (CM) ASC (CM) RC (CM) Survey (x 2) Submission 1
The study requirements and indicative time allocations for the course and topics work well and will continue to enable depth of study.	BGHS (CM) MHS (CM) MC (CM) ASC (CM) RC (CM)
The prominence of the inquiry-based approach to learning and the emphasis on fieldwork is supported.	GTANSW BGHS (CM) MHS (CM) MC (CM) CMW (CM) GHS (CM) ASC (CM) Survey (x 1)
<p>Topics and content</p> <p>The topics within the syllabus complement those that are offered in the new Geography K–10 syllabus.</p>	GTANSW THS (CM) GHS (CM) RC (CM) Survey (x 1)
The retention of the school-developed study is supported.	GTANSW SEAC BGHS (CM) MHS (CM) MC (CM) GHS (CM) RC (CM)
The syllabus provides ample opportunity to study places beyond Australia.	TSS (CM) BGHS (CM) MC (CM) THS (CM)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
<p>Learning across the curriculum</p> <p>Specific aspects of the learning across the curriculum statements should be reviewed for their appropriateness and alignment to course content, particularly for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures • Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia • Sustainability • Critical and creative thinking. 	<p>DoE AIS</p>	<p>Learning across the curriculum statements have been reviewed for consistency with the Geography K–10 syllabus where appropriate and to align with the specific learning intentions of the Geography Elective course.</p>
<p>Topics and content</p> <p>The contemporary nature of the ‘Global Citizenship’ topic needs to be strengthened.</p>	<p>AIS DoE THS (CM) Submission 1</p>	<p>The scope and focus of the, ‘Global Citizenship’ topic has been revised to strengthen the contemporary nature of the content.</p>
<p>The ‘Australia’s Neighbours’ topic needs to be broadened so that a range of Asian nations can be studied.</p>	<p>AIS DoE BGHS (CM) MHS (CM) CMW (CM)</p>	<p>The focus on development issues within the topic has been broadened to enable the study of a range of nations within the Asian region.</p>
<p>The content within some topics should be reviewed for clarity and to provide a more logical sequence.</p>	<p>AIS DoE Submission 1</p>	<p>Some specific amendments have been made to the ordering of content within topics for clarity and coherence.</p>
<p>Additional guidance for the school-developed option would be helpful.</p>	<p>GHS (CM) Submission 1</p>	<p>The school-developed option includes further elaboration of the inquiry process and the opportunity to undertake fieldwork and local geographical studies.</p>

5.8 Life Skills outcomes and content

Summary

The majority of respondents who commented on Life Skills outcomes and content noted the scope provided by Geography Elective to meet the diverse needs of all students. The acknowledgement of diversity was strongly supported. A number of respondents provided a range of specific amendments to the content of topics.

Some respondents noted that the syllabus provides opportunities to engage students in practical and meaningful ways.

Feedback affirming the Life Skills outcomes and content

Feedback	Sources
The alignment to the Life Skills outcomes, topics and content within the course is clear, appropriate and helpful to teachers.	SEAC Survey (x 1)
The content for Life Skills provides tangible opportunities to engage students.	GTANSW THS (CM) GHS (CM) Survey (x 1)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
The verbs within outcomes should be reviewed for their appropriateness.	SEAC AIS DoE	Some adjustments to the verbs within outcomes have been made to clarify the learning intention.
There should be a statement included about the opportunities afforded by fieldwork to meet the needs and interests of the diversity of students.	SEAC AIS DoE THS (CM)	A statement has been included in the school-developed option that highlights the opportunity to undertake fieldwork.

5.9 Other comments

Summary

The majority of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the draft syllabus forms a sound basis for developing teaching and learning programs. Some respondents requested support materials for the Geography Elective course.

Feedback affirming the Draft Syllabus

Feedback	Sources
The draft syllabus provides scope to develop rigorous, interesting and relevant teaching and learning programs.	GTANSW (SM) ASC (CM) BGHS (CM) CMW (CM) Survey (x 2)
The Geography Elective course has achieved an appropriate balance between physical and human geography.	THS (CM) CMW (CM) RC (CM)
The opportunity to study content areas different from the Geography K–10 syllabus, such as 'Political Geography' and 'Oceanography', is a strength of the Geography Elective course.	GTANSW BGHS (CM) THS (CM) RC (CM)

Key matters and actions

Key matters	Sources	Actions
Support materials should be considered for the Geography Elective course.	GTANSW TSS (CM) ASC (CM) MHS (CM) GHS (CM)	Programming and assessment advice developed for the Geography K–10 Syllabus may assist teachers in providing various ways of approaching syllabus content, such as the concepts, tools and skills.
A statement needs to be included in the syllabus indicating to teachers the importance of programming the Geography Elective course in ways that complement programs developed for the Geography K–10 syllabus.	GTANSW Survey (x 1)	A statement about programming the Geography Elective course in complementary ways has been included.
Some additional terms should be added to the glossary.	GTANSW	Some new terms that appear in the Geography Elective course have been added to the glossary as appropriate.

6 Quantitative analysis of survey responses

Note: Due to rounding, some percentages may not total 100%.

Survey Item	Number of responses	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Objectives, outcomes and content					
1. There is a clear relationship between the objectives, outcomes and content.	14	29%	57%	14%	0%
2. The outcomes provide clear statements of the intended results of teaching Geography and provide a basis for measuring and reporting student achievement.	12	33%	67%	0%	0%
Organisation and structure					
3. The content organisation and structure are appropriate.	12	25%	58%	17%	1%
Content					
4. The content makes clear what students should learn in Geography Elective.	12	25%	75%	0%	0%
5. The content of the Geography Elective draft syllabus complements the content of the Geography K–10 syllabus.	12	17%	58%	25%	0%
6. The syllabus caters for the learning needs of all students.	12	25%	67%	8%	0%
7. The syllabus provides a sound basis for developing teaching and learning programs.	12	33%	50%	17%	0%
Life Skills outcomes and content					
8. Years 7–10 Life Skills outcomes provide a sound basis for guiding assessment and reporting of student achievement.	11	27%	55%	18%	0%
9. Years 7–10 Life Skills outcomes and content provide sufficient scope for developing programs for students with special education needs.	11	27%	55%	9%	9%

7 Respondents

7.1 Consultation meetings

Targeted meetings with HSIE teachers and faculties

(code: CM)

School	Date	Number of participants	Code
The Shore School	10 December 2015	2	TSS
Glenwood High School	15 December 2015	3	GHS
Birrong Girls High School	15 February 2016	6	BGHS
Merewether High School	17 February 2016	3	MHS
Marcellin College	17 February 2016	1	MC
Catherine McAuley Westmead	18 February 2016	2	CMW
Redfield College	18 February 2016	3	RC
Terrigal High School	25 February 2016	5	THS
Ascham School	25 February 2016	3	ASC

Geography Teachers Association of NSW (GTANSW) meeting

(SM) at PTC Ashfield 2 December 2015

7.2 Written submissions

Organisations, groups and individuals	Code
NSW Department of Education	DoE
Association of Independent Schools of NSW	AIS
Geography Teachers Association of NSW	GTANSW
BOSTES Special Education Advisory Committee	SEAC
Martin Pluss	Submission 1