

A Guide to the New Years 7–10 Syllabus

The new *Geography Years 7–10 Syllabus* will replace the current syllabus and will be implemented in 2005 with Year 7 and Year 9 students.

The new syllabus is informed by contemporary research about how people learn and about how learning outcomes can be enhanced by teaching practice.

The syllabus promotes *assessment for learning* as an essential component of good teaching. It follows the broad directions established in the NSW Board of Studies *K–10 Curriculum Framework* and is part of a continuum of learning from Kindergarten to Year 12 that supports sustained, sequential, high quality learning.

What is similar?

Mandatory courses (Stages 4 and 5)

Much of the content is similar to the current syllabus content. Students will continue to:

- learn to use and apply geographical tools across all focus areas as they develop the skills of geographic inquiry
- develop skills for acquiring, processing and communicating geographical information
- learn about the spatial and ecological dimensions of their world
- incorporate fieldwork in their learning
- gain an awareness of, and develop values and attitudes about, a range of geographical issues that impact on people at different times and places
- learn about global environments and the communities in their world
- learn about Australian environments, communities and our links with the region and the world
- learn about civics for informed and active citizenship.

Elective course

Students will continue to:

- build on their learning from the Stage 4 and Stage 5 mandatory courses
- learn to use and apply geographical tools and further develop skills for acquiring, processing and communicating geographical information
- choose elective focus areas that provide a broader and deeper understanding of the discipline of Geography and the processes of geographical inquiry
- further develop values and attitudes about a range of geographical issues.

Current programs can be modified to meet the requirements of the new syllabus and many existing units of work will form the bases of effective programs. The majority of existing resources will continue to be relevant.

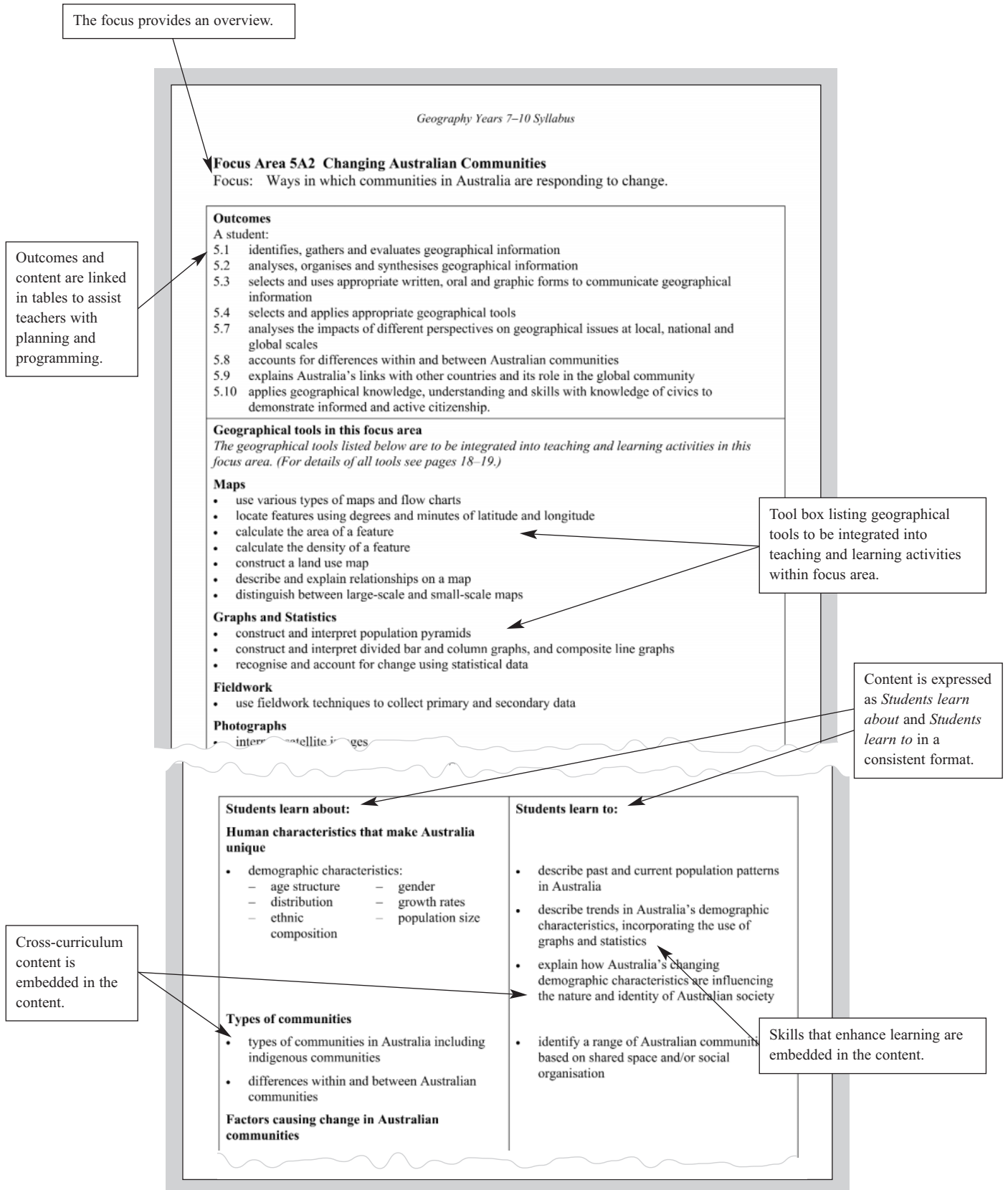
The recent experience teachers have gained in implementing the *Geography Stage 6 Syllabus* (1999) will assist in the implementation of the new *Geography Years 7–10 Syllabus*.

What is different?

The new syllabus builds on the current syllabus in directions identified through research into the teaching of Geography in other systems nationally and internationally, and through consultation at forums, meetings and during wide circulation of the draft syllabus.

- Outcomes and stage statements from Stage 1 to Stage 5 describe the continuum of learning in Geography. This enables teachers to map students' learning development, and to plan and program work according to students' needs and abilities.
- An overview statement is provided that shows how each cross-curriculum area is embedded in the essential content.

The features of the content pages



- Content relating to the use and understanding of information and communication technologies (ICT) is incorporated in the syllabus content.
- Life Skills outcomes and content have been provided for those students with special education needs, particularly those students with an intellectual disability, for whom it has been determined that the outcomes and content found in sections 7 and 8 of the syllabus are not appropriate.
- Built into the syllabus is the concept that *assessment for learning* is integral to teaching and learning in a standards-referenced framework. *Assessment for learning* involves teachers planning how and when they will gather evidence of learning at the same time that they plan the work that students will do. It recognises the importance of assessment to student motivation and self-esteem, and promotes the active involvement of students in their own learning.

Mandatory courses (Stages 4 and 5)

- The content has been reduced across the courses including the requirement to include ‘at least one case study’ rather than the two case studies.
- The content has been re-organised and focus areas have been re-named.
- Civics and citizenship has been clarified within the content.

Elective course

- Focus areas have been revised and re-named.
- There are eight focus areas rather than five, including a school-developed focus area.
- At least three focus areas are to be studied in a 100-hour elective course. At least five focus areas are to be studied in a 200-hour elective course.

How can the syllabus be used to program?

The syllabus outcomes provide the focus for teaching and learning in Geography. This syllabus encourages a model of programming that begins with outcomes, and is precise about what is being taught and what is being learnt. Developing integrated programs from the new *Geography Years 7–10 Syllabus* involves:

- identifying the outcomes to be addressed (mandatory courses see syllabus page 23, elective course see page 45)
- identifying the required evidence of learning
- planning explicit teaching and learning experiences to address the outcomes (mandatory courses see syllabus pages 26–43, elective course see pages 46–58) to allow students to demonstrate evidence of learning
- identifying strategies to teach the content
- incorporating *assessment for learning* by using the assessment advice in the syllabus and in the support material that will be provided by the Board of Studies.

The inclusion of outcomes and stage statements that describe a continuum of learning from Stage 1 to Stage 5 in the mandatory courses will assist teachers to program for students in Years 7–10 who have not yet demonstrated Stage 3 outcomes.

How does the syllabus cater for all students?

A key principle of the *K–10 Curriculum Framework*, which guides K–10 syllabus development, is that the curriculum must be inclusive of all students in New South Wales.

The rationale, aim, objectives, outcomes and content of the syllabus have been designed to accommodate teaching approaches that support the learning needs of all students.

Students with special education needs will participate fully in learning experiences and assessment activities. These students may require additional support in terms of modified tasks and varied learning approaches. There may also be occasions when different strategies need to be adopted to broaden and deepen the learning experiences of gifted and talented students.

Life Skills outcomes and content, using the rationale, aim and objectives of this syllabus have been included in section 9. They will provide the basis for a program of study for the small percentage of students with special education needs for whom the outcomes and content in sections 7 and 8 of the *Geography Years 7–10 Syllabus* are not appropriate.

What support is the Board providing to assist with initial implementation of the syllabus?

Following the release of the syllabus, support materials will be distributed to assist teachers in understanding the syllabus and its associated assessment requirements.

The first School Certificate credential based on the new syllabuses will be awarded in 2006. Specific advice about requirements for the School Certificate and the Australian History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship test will be provided well in advance of 2006.

distributed with the syllabus	<p>Phase 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ this guide to the new <i>Geography Years 7–10 Syllabus</i> ■ draft Descriptions of Levels of Achievement
3 months after distribution of the syllabus	<p>Phase 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ advice on programming ■ sample units of work ■ sample assessment activities
6 months after distribution of the syllabus	<p>Phase 3 (incorporates Phases 1 and 2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ annotated samples of student work
12 months after implementation of the syllabus	<p>Phase 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ final Descriptions of Levels of Achievement

The Department of Education and Training, the Catholic Education Commission, other school systems, the Association of Independent Schools and professional associations will assist and support the ongoing implementation of the syllabus.
