# Geography 11– 12 – Geographical Investigation sample assessment task



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## Advice for teachers

**Note:** the examples in this package are provided so that schools and teachers may choose relevant information and adjust for their contexts and their school-based practices. Relevant information should be transferred into the school’s assessment task template.

### Task

The Geographical Investigation task provides students with the opportunity to select and research a geographical issue, which relates to the Year 11 course.

The task must:

* be based in an area that is accessible for the purpose of primary data collection
* include a research focus, active inquiry methodologies, analysis of data, and communication of findings.

### Evidence of learning

Students will demonstrate their proficiency in undertaking a geographical inquiry through practical research and the application of geographical concepts, skills and tools.

### Assessment type

The Geographical Investigation forms part of the [school-based assessment](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/hsie/geography-11-12-2022/assessment#year-11-geography-school-based-assessment-requirements-geography_11_12_2022) program for Year 11 geography. It provides opportunity for individual or collaborative inquiry.

### Duration

Assessment advice and due dates should be informed by school assessment policy and assessment schedules.

Twenty hours of course time is to be assigned to meeting the course content and completion of the Geographical Investigation. Students will need to spend time outside of school hours to gather and process the data and information required.

Fieldwork undertaken as part of the Geographical Investigation is to be completed in addition to 12 hours mandatory fieldwork required in Year 11.

### Scheduling and weighting

This task must have a weighting of 30%–40%.

This task has been designed as a mid-term consolidation of the skills acquired during fieldwork activities in Term 1. It is intended to be delivered as part of an integrated program of learning with the Geographical Investigation and the People, patterns and processes focus areas. Teachers may choose to adopt or adapt the marking rubric depending on the school and student context.

### Inclusion and wellbeing

This assessment package has been prepared by the NSW Department of Education. It has been developed as a model for teachers, to assist in the development of an assessment task that can be contextualised to an individual school's needs.

Plan assessment tasks that are inclusive and accommodate the needs of all students in your classroom. Some students may require more specific adjustments and enhancements to allow them to participate on the same basis. The Geography 11–12 programs have example adjustments and enhancements. For further advice, see [Inclusive practice resources for secondary school.](https://education.nsw.gov.au/campaigns/inclusive-practice-hub/secondary-school)

## Task description

Schools should provide any important details regarding submission. This may include the use of group work, word limits and format of task submission. It may also include procedures to be followed if the student is absent when the assessment is due.

**Type of task:** Geographical Investigation

**Outcomes being assessed:** GE-11-01, GE-11-02, GE-11-05, GE-11-06, GE-11-07, GE-11-08, GE-11-09

**Weighting:** 35%

**Submission:** this task may be presented in a range of forms, for example, written, oral, graphical or multimodal.

**Due date:** school-based decision.

**Description:** select and research a geographical issue which relates to the Year 11 course. The investigation must:

* be based in an area that is accessible for the purpose of primary data collection
* include a research focus, active inquiry methodologies, analysis of data, and communication of findings.

### Steps to success

Step 1 – identify the research focus

The issue must relate to the Year 11 course and be in a geographical area that is accessible for collection of primary data.

**Step 2 – develop geographical questions and formulate a plan**

Identify the issue and the questions that are to be answered as part of the geographical investigation. Make a plan that includes the data and information that you will need, a plan for how you will conduct the investigation and the materials you will require.

**Step 3 – collect, record and process primary data**

Visit the locations that are part of your Geographical Investigation and begin the collection of primary data. This may include the use of geographical tools for example, photographs, observations, surveys, weather observations, maps and sketches. The primary data collected should be used to answer the geographical questions you have developed.

**Step 4 – organise and process secondary information**

Access a range of secondary sources, such as online articles, academic journals, government reports, and social media posts related to your geographical investigation topic. The information collected will be used to support your primary data when answering the investigation questions.

**Step 5 – present and communicate findings**

Create a concise summary of the research findings, addressing the inquiry questions and highlighting any implications. Use a range of visual aids, such as graphs, tables, and maps, to illustrate the findings effectively.

**Step 6 – propose recommendations for individual and/or collective action**

Summarise the findings and provide any key recommendations for actions focusing on clarity, conciseness, and persuasiveness. Assess the feasibility, impact, and potential consequences of each action.

**Step 7 – critically review the plan, process and findings of the investigation**

Reflect on each step of the investigation. Evaluate any challenges faced and explain how they have been overcome. With hindsight, what might you have done differently?

## Marking guidelines

Table 1 – assessment marking guidelines

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Marking guideline descriptors |
| A | Uses an extensive range of geographical inquiry skills and tools, including fieldwork and ethical practices, to investigate places and environments.Collects, selects and organises a range of primary data and secondary geographical information from a variety of sources.Comprehensively and effectively applies a variety of mathematical ideas and techniques to analyse geographical data.Clearly communicates detailed geographical understanding using geographical knowledge, concepts, terms and tools, in multiple forms.Presents findings in a sustained, logical and well-structured response. |
| B | Uses a range of geographical inquiry skills and tools, including fieldwork and ethical practices, to investigate places and environments.Collects, selects and organises appropriate primary data and secondary geographical information from a variety of sources.Effectively applies a variety of mathematical ideas and techniques to analyse geographical data.Communicates geographical understanding using geographical knowledge, concepts, terms and tools, in a range of forms.Presents findings in a sustained, logical and well-structured response. |
| C | Uses geographical inquiry skills and tools, including fieldwork and ethical practices, to investigate places and environments.Collects, selects and organises primary data and secondary geographical information from multiple sources.Applies mathematical ideas and techniques to analyse geographical data.Communicates geographical understanding using geographical knowledge, concepts, terms and tools, in appropriate forms.Presents findings in a logical and well-structured response. |
| D | Uses some geographical inquiry skills and tools to investigate places and environments.Collects primary data and secondary geographical information from an identified source.Uses mathematical ideas or techniques to communicate geographical data.Communicates geographical understanding using appropriate forms.Presents findings in a submitted response. |
| E | Uses a limited range of geographical inquiry skills and tools to investigate places and environments.Collects basic primary data or secondary geographical information.Applies a mathematical idea or technique to communicate geographical data.Communicates geographical understanding using geographical terms. |

## Student support material

The following resources may be useful in providing tools and templates that can be used in each step of the Geographical Investigation. The use of these resources is not mandatory.

Table – student support material

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Step | Resource |
| Step 1 – identify the research focus | [Brainstorming](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/542?clearCache=36caaeb3-2e52-73f7-2a9c-ed1df5c466cc)[Plus, Minus, Interesting (PMI)](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/551?clearCache=ab707eb6-fdb8-d452-5d17-87428941c643) |
| Step 2 – develop geographical questions and formulate a plan | [Question Formulation Technique](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/568?clearCache=813aa275-ed6a-d62a-c5e2-8991c43e5056) [What’s the question?](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/572?clearCache=bd3a5a2a-f64a-9f5b-99a8-c583ad7b9c47) |
| Step 3 – collect, record and process primary data | [Sketches and squiggles](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/657?clearCache=9f1ad9b3-fd34-675f-cc20-c434c382dfde)[Note taking](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/661?clearCache=f0d2c60c-73f5-1aa7-1ce2-9873ec9c1993)[Geographical tools videos](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/hsie/hsie-curriculum-resources-k-12/hsie-11-12-curriculum-resources) |
| Step 4 – organise and process secondary information | [Facts and claims](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/664?clearCache=8ff2d27c-3b42-ca08-aa9d-e9c939eaca9e)[Predicting and inferring](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/662?clearCache=6e8228ca-62c9-ff6f-d121-9c116186c391) |
| Step 5 – present and communicate findings | [Writing scaffolds](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/625?clearCache=15c4db70-52b6-8362-7baa-68462cff47b1)[Graphic organisers](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/599?clearCache=1c3e4292-d6ae-8185-315-4d4021e179b) |
| Step 6 – propose recommendations for individual and/or collective action | [Strategic planning and evaluation](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/659?clearCache=3f90200b-c59c-e3ae-300-778c12246dc9)[Thinking skills](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/638?clearCache=982a70c0-2833-fed2-8610-2557e19c64c5) |
| ****Step 7 – critically review the plan, process and findings of the investigation**** | [Gallery walks](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/555?clearCache=ba269641-b220-899c-e6ff-bfb9ede8fb65)[Learning portfolios](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/583?clearCache=edde1507-e3ce-8392-e999-f0fbe983dc40) |

## Additional Information

The information below can be used to support teachers when using this teaching resource for Geography 11–12.

### Aim

To demonstrate the required components of the Geographical Investigation and how this may be communicated to students as an assessment task.

### Purpose and audience

This sample assessment task provides an example of one way to structure the Geographical Investigation assessment. It includes a marking criteria which aligns with the A to E grading scale. This resource is for teachers and leaders when planning for assessment and reporting of the Geography 11–12 syllabus.

### When and how to use this document

Use the sample assessment task to guide the development of an effective assessment task notification, scaffold and marking criteria which allow all students to demonstrate their achievement of course outcomes.

The primary role of assessment is to establish where individuals are in their learning so that teaching can be differentiated and further learning progress can be monitored over time.

Feedback is one of the most powerful influences on student achievement. Feedback that focuses on improving tasks, processes and student self-regulation is the most effective. Students engaging with feedback can take many forms including formal, informal, formative, summative, interactive, demonstrable, visual, written, verbal and non-verbal.

[CESE What works best 2020 update](https://education.nsw.gov.au/parents-and-carers/learning/what-works-best-2020-update)

### Differentiation

Differentiated learning can be enabled by differentiating the teaching approach to content, process, product and the learning environment. For more information on differentiation go to [Differentiating learning](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/professional-learning/teacher-quality-and-accreditation/strong-start-great-teachers/refining-practice/differentiating-learning) and [Differentiation](https://education.nsw.gov.au/campaigns/inclusive-practice-hub/primary-school/teaching-strategies/differentiation).

When using these resources in the classroom, it is important for teachers to consider the needs of all students in their class, including:

* **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.** Targeted [strategies](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/aec/aboriginal-education-in-nsw-public-schools) can be used to achieve outcomes for Aboriginal students in K-12 and increase knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal histories and culture. Teachers should use students’ Personalised Learning Pathways to support individual student needs and goals.
* **EAL/D learners.** EAL/D learners will require explicit English language support and scaffolding, informed by the [EAL/D enhanced teaching and learning cycle](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/literacy-and-numeracy/resources-for-schools/eald/enhanced-teaching-and-learning-cycle) and the student’s phase on the [EAL/D Learning Progression](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/english-as-an-additional-language-or-dialect/planning-eald-support/english-language-proficiency). In addition, teachers can access information about [supporting EAL/D learners](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/english-as-an-additional-language-or-dialect/planning-eald-support/english-language-proficiency) and [literacy and numeracy support specific to EAL/D learners](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/literacy-and-numeracy/resources-for-schools/eald)..
* **Students with additional learning needs.** Learning adjustments enable students with disability and additional learning and support needs to access syllabus outcomes and content on the same basis as their peers. Teachers can use a range of [adjustments](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/disability-learning-and-support/personalised-support-for-learning/adjustments-to-teaching-and-learning) to ensure a personalised approach to student learning. In addition, the [Universal Design for Learning planning tool](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/teaching-at-home/teaching-and-learning-resources/universal-design-for-learning) can be used to support the diverse learning needs of students using inclusive teaching and learning strategies and subject specific curriculum considerations can be found on the [Inclusive Practice hub](https://education.nsw.gov.au/campaigns/inclusive-practice-hub).
* **High potential and gifted learners.** [Assessing and identifying high potential and gifted learners](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/high-potential-and-gifted-education/supporting-educators/assess-and-identify#Assessment1) will help teachers decide which students may benefit from extension and additional challenge. [Effective strategies and contributors to achievement](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/high-potential-and-gifted-education/supporting-educators/evaluate) for high potential and gifted learners helps teachers to identify and target areas for growth and improvement. In addition, the [Differentiation adjustment tool](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/high-potential-and-gifted-education/supporting-educators/implement/differentiation-adjustment-strategies) can be used to support the specific learning needs of high potential and gifted students. The [High Potential and Gifted Education Professional Learning and Resource Hub](https://schoolsnsw.sharepoint.com/sites/HPGEHub/SitePages/Home.aspx) supports school leaders and teachers to effectively implement the High Potential and Gifted Education Policy in their unique contexts.

All students need to be challenged and engaged to develop their potential fully. A culture of high expectations needs to be supported by strategies that both challenge and support student learning needs, such as through appropriate curriculum differentiation.

### About this resource

**Resource evaluation and support**: all curriculum resources are prepared through a rigorous process. Resources are periodically reviewed as part of our ongoing evaluation plan to ensure currency, relevance, and effectiveness. For additional support or advice contact the HSIE Curriculum team by emailing HSIE@det.nsw.edu.au.

**Alignment to system priorities and/or needs**: this resource aligns to the [School Excellence Framework](https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/school-excellence-and-accountability/school-excellence/about-sef) elements of assessment (formative assessment, summative assessment, student engagement) and reporting (student reports).

**Alignment to Australian Professional Teaching Standards:** this resource supports teachers to address [Australian Professional Teaching Standards](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/teacher-accreditation/meeting-requirements/the-standards/proficient-teacher) 5.1.2, 5.5.2.

This resource has been designed to support schools with successful implementation of new curriculum, specifically, the Geography 11–12 syllabus © 2022 NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales.

The resource is produced to assist schools with promoting and implementing the course for the first time. As the course may be taught by teachers from a range of key learning areas, the resource is designed to support teachers from a variety of KLA expertise.

**NESA syllabus**: [Geography 11–12 (2022)](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/syllabuses/geography-11-12-2022)

**Course outcomes**: GE-11-01, GE-11-02, GE-11-05, GE-11-06, GE-11-07, GE-11-08, GE-11-09.

**Author**: Curriculum Secondary Learners

**Publisher**: State of NSW, Department of Education

**Resource**: Assessment task

**Related resources**: further resources to support Geography 11-12 can be found on the [Planning, programming and assessing geography 11–12](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/hsie/planning-programming-and-assessing-hsie-11-12/planning-programming-assessing-geography-11-12) webpage including, sample scope and sequences, sample assessment schedules, teaching and learning programs, assessment materials and learning sequences.

**Professional Learning**: join the [HSIE statewide staffroom](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/statewide-staffrooms) for information regarding professional learning opportunities.

**Universal Design for Learning Tool**: [Universal Design for Learning planning tool](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/teaching-at-home/teaching-and-learning-resources/universal-design-for-learning). Support the diverse learning needs of students using inclusive teaching and learning strategies.

**Consulted with**: Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships, Inclusion and Wellbeing, EAL/D.

**Reviewed by**: this resource was reviewed by Curriculum Secondary Learners and by subject matter experts in schools to ensure accuracy of content.

**Creation date**: July 2023

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**Evidence Base**:

‘The range of assessment strategies outlined in the advice encourages a variety of assessment methods each lesson to check for students’ understanding and inform what should be taught next.’ (CESE, 2020, p 22). The assessment strategies outlined are student-centred, providing ‘students with opportunities to reflect on their progress to inform future learning goals’ (CESE, 2020, p 22).

## References

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[NSW Geography 11-12 Syllabus](https://curriculum.nsw.edu.au/learning-areas/hsie/geography-11-12-2022/overview) © 2022 NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales.

CESE (Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation) (2020a) ‘[What works best: 2020 update](https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/educational-data/cese/publications/research-reports/what-works-best-2020-update)’, CESE, NSW Department of Education, accessed 15 September 2023.

CESE (Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation) (2020b) ‘[What works best in practice](https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/educational-data/cese/publications/practical-guides-for-educators-/what-works-best-in-practice)’, CESE, NSW Department of Education, accessed 15 September 2023.

State of New South Wales (Department of Education) (2006) ‘[Policy Standards – Implementation document for Curriculum planning and programming, assessing and reporting to parents K-12 policy](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2005-0290)’, NSW Department of Education, accessed 15 September 2023.

Wiliam D (2013) [‘Assessment: The bridge between teaching and learning’](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258423377_Assessment_The_bridge_between_teaching_and_learning), *Voices from the Middle*, 21(2):15–20, accessed 15 September 2023.

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