

Units 3 and 4: Global Politics 2016–2017

This revised curriculum for VCE Global Politics Units 3 and 4 **replaces** the units within the Australian and Global Politics Study Design 2012–2017.

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Unit 3: Global actors

In this unit students investigate the key global actors in twenty-first century global politics. They use contemporary evidence to analyse the key global actors and their aims, roles and power. They develop an understanding of the key actors through an in-depth examination of the concepts of national interests and power as they relate to the state, and the way in which one Asia-Pacific state uses power within the region to achieve its objectives.

This unit is concerned with contemporary issues and events. While these may have antecedents in issues and events before the twenty-first century that students need to understand to contextualise contemporary global situations, focus needs to be on the twenty-first century when choosing particular examples and case studies.

Area of Study 1

Global actors

Who are the key actors in contemporary global politics? From where does their power stem? What impact do these actors have on global politics? What challenges do these global actors face in achieving their aims?

In this area of study, students examine the key actors in contemporary global politics: states, Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs), non-state actors, and Transnational Corporations (TNCs).

The state is the principal actor within global politics because the world (with few exceptions) is divided into these political communities; however, its power is being challenged. Students consider the challenges to the sovereignty of states. These arise from regional organisations, contested and changing state borders such as secessionist movements, and issues and crises that require multilateral action. Such issues have arisen because security is no longer limited to border protection and has expanded to include such things as financial stability, mitigating human crises and environmental challenges.

The omnipresent security dilemma faced by states has amplified moves towards global governance. Students explore Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs), including the United Nations (UN), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and the International Criminal Court (ICC) that are central to cooperative action because they establish, manage and facilitate relations between states through their processes, protocols and legal arrangements.

Non-state actors include a range of organisations: non-government organisations (NGOs), which are legal service providers and include organisations such as Amnesty International and Greenpeace; organised religions which engage in international advocacy; and groups which do not accept the legitimacy of the state such as terrorist organisations. Citizens' participation in global NGOs is increasingly facilitated by dramatic changes in communications and technology. Some non-state actors act to challenge the power of the state and prevent it from dominating the rest of society, and pressure it to become more responsive to the needs of its citizens or to aid states in meeting their citizens' needs. Students investigate the aims, roles and power of two non-state actors chosen from legal organisations and/or global terrorist movements.

Students also consider the role of one Transnational Corporation (TNC) within global politics and the global economy. Facilitated by advances in technology and communication, these actors have expanded their role and activities on a grand scale, affecting most areas of human life. TNCs are considered by some people to be predators, exploitative of human rights and the environment, and by others as drivers of progress and innovation.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to evaluate the power of key global actors in the twenty-first century and assess the extent to which they achieve their aims.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

Key knowledge

- the key terms: nation, state, sovereignty, power, global governance, multilateralism, public opinion and globalisation

States

- aims, roles and the power of states
- the challenges facing state sovereignty:
 - regional groupings
 - contested and changing borders
 - issues and crises that require multilateral resolution

Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs)

- aims, roles and power of:
 - the United Nations (UN)
 - the International Monetary Fund (IMF)
 - the World Trade Organization (WTO)
 - the International Criminal Court (ICC)

Non-state actors

- aims, roles and power of TWO non-state actors chosen from the following (both may be chosen from the category of legal organisations):
 - legal organisations, including human rights NGOs, environmental NGOs and/or organised religions
 - global terrorist movements

Transnational Corporations (TNCs)

- aims, roles and power of ONE Transnational Corporation.

Key skills

- define and explain key global politics terms and use them in the appropriate context
- explain the aims and roles of key global actors
- evaluate the power of key global actors
- analyse the challenges facing state sovereignty
- assess the extent to which key global actors achieve their aims
- research and synthesise contemporary evidence to draw conclusions.

Area of Study 2

Power in the Asia-Pacific region

What is power? Why do different ideas about national interests exist? How is power exercised by a state in the Asia-Pacific region? What is the most effective type of power for a state to use to pursue its national interests? How effective is the state in achieving its national interests?

In this area of study students examine the way in which a specific Asia-Pacific state uses its power in the region to pursue its national interests, and explore the ideas and debates that form, and have formed, its national interests since 2000.

National interests are used by states to describe, support and inform foreign policy actions. Students learn that although states vary markedly, they share a common interest in maintaining their sovereignty and national security. They also learn that globalisation and the rise of so-called 'third-agenda' issues have elevated the awareness and importance of particular national interests, such as the environment, and resource and human security – all of which inform and shape the debate over what constitutes national interests. 'National interests' are often contested and views about them often depend on factors such as state formation, cultural and ethnic identity, ideology, historical links and relationships to foreign powers.

To achieve its national interests, a state may use a variety of hard and soft types of power and foreign policy instruments. Students consider many different types of instruments available to the state, including diplomacy, trade, aid and use of armed forces. Students develop an understanding that the importance and effectiveness of different types of power and foreign policy instruments in pursuit of a state's national interests vary considerably, and there is often a marked difference between the intentions and results.

For the purposes of this study, the Asia-Pacific region is comprised of the following:

- Pacific Rim states: Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, North Korea, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, United States of America, Vietnam
- Pacific Island states and territories: Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu
- Others: East Timor, Laos, Myanmar

For this area of study, students will study ONE of the following states in the Asia-Pacific: Australia, China, Indonesia, Japan or United States of America.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse and evaluate types of power as used by a specific Asia-Pacific state in the region in pursuit of its national interests.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

Key knowledge

- the key terms: sovereignty, national interests, power, nation, state, nation-state, security, idealism, pragmatism
- the power used by ONE Asia-Pacific state within the region:
 - the factors that shape the following national interests: national security, economic prosperity, regional relationships, international standing
 - different interpretations of national interests
 - types of power: hard, soft, military economic, political, diplomatic and cultural
 - the main foreign policy instruments used to try to achieve national interests: diplomacy, trade, aid, military
 - the effectiveness of the state in achieving its national interests.

Key skills

- define key global politics terms and use them in the appropriate context
- use a variety of source material to analyse types of power
- analyse ideas and debates about different interpretations of national interests
- evaluate the relative importance and effectiveness of different types of power and foreign policy instruments in the pursuit of national interests
- evaluate the success of a specific Asia-Pacific state in achieving its national interests
- research and synthesise contemporary evidence to draw conclusions.

School-based assessment

Satisfactory completion

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on whether the student has demonstrated the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Teachers should use a variety of learning activities and assessment tasks to provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills in the outcomes.

The areas of study and key knowledge and key skills listed for the outcomes should be used for course design and the development of learning and assessment activities.

Assessment of levels of achievement

The student's level of achievement in Unit 3 will be determined by School-assessed Coursework. School-assessed Coursework tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

Where teachers provide a range of options for the same School-assessed Coursework task, they should ensure that the options are of comparable scope and demand.

The types and range of forms of School-assessed Coursework for the outcomes are prescribed within the study design. The VCAA publishes *Advice for teachers* for this study, which includes advice on the design of assessment tasks and the assessment of student work for a level of achievement.

Teachers will provide to the VCAA a numerical score representing an assessment of the student's level of achievement. The score must be based on the teacher's assessment of the performance of each student on the tasks set out in the following table.

Contribution to final assessment

School-assessed Coursework for Unit 3 will contribute 25 per cent to the study score.

Outcomes	Marks allocated*	Assessment tasks
<p>Outcome 1 Evaluate the power of key global actors in the twenty-first century and assess the extent to which they achieve their aims.</p>	50	<p>For each outcome, select one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a multimedia presentation • a case study • an essay • a report • a test • structured questions • short-answer questions • an extended response
<p>Outcome 2 Analyse and evaluate types of power as used by a specific Asia-Pacific state in the region in pursuit of its national interests.</p>	50	
Total marks	100	

*School-assessed Coursework for Unit 3 contributes 25 per cent.

External assessment

The level of achievement for Units 3 and 4 is also assessed by an end-of-year examination, which will contribute 50 per cent.

Unit 4: Global challenges

In this unit students investigate key global challenges facing the international community in the twenty-first century. They examine and analyse the debates surrounding two ethical issues which are underpinned by the contested notion of global citizenship. They then evaluate the effectiveness of responses to these issues. Students also explore the context and causes of global crises, and consider the varying effectiveness of responses and challenges to solving them.

This unit is concerned with contemporary issues and events. While these may have antecedents in issues and events before the twenty-first century that students need to understand to contextualise contemporary global situations, focus needs to be on the twenty-first century when choosing particular examples and case studies.

Area of Study 1

Ethical issues and debates

Do we have a responsibility to uphold the human rights of persons outside our borders? What is the best way to address people movement? What does 'development' look like? Can the world be rid of weapons, and if so, will it be safer?

In this area of study students examine debates about two global issues. They use the concepts of 'realism' and 'cosmopolitanism' as a framework for analysing these issues and debates. For the purposes of this area of study, two of the following global issues must be examined: human rights, people movement, development, arms control and disarmament. These debates are considered in the context of specific case studies which transcend specific states, regions and continents. Students examine and analyse the effectiveness of the strategies proposed by global actors which may play important roles in both the causes and solutions to the issues.

Students learn that human rights are rights inherent to all human beings. These were expressed in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and later in the form of treaties, customary international law and general principles. Human rights can result in conflict where rights claimed by one individual or group are at a variance with the rights of other individuals or groups. Moreover human rights are continually challenged by those who deny the universality of their application based on religious, cultural and economic grounds.

People movement, both internal and external, whether as result of globalisation, conflict, economic interest, natural disaster or human-made disaster, is an ongoing issue. Students consider debates about people movement and arguments about the moral obligation to help distant foreigners over a state's national interests, often presented in the form of border security.

Students learn about development issues, global poverty and inequality. They consider debates about the range of solutions presented to alleviate poverty and the often controversial nature of what constitutes 'development', which at times prioritises the acquisition of wealth over political liberties, human rights and the environment.

Arms control and disarmament are processes by which states seek to construct a more stable and peaceful international arena by reducing the threat to the security of the state

posed by other states and non-government actors such as terrorist groups. Students explore the ability of arms control and disarmament to achieve a more secure world.

For this area of study, students study TWO of the following ethical issues: human rights, people movement, development, arms control and disarmament.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to evaluate two global ethical issues from a range of perspectives, and analyse the effectiveness of global actors' responses to these issues.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

Key knowledge

- the key terms: realism, cosmopolitanism, justice, and ethics
- human rights:
 - international treaties relating to human rights
 - responses by relevant global actors
 - ethical debates including economic challenges to the universality of human rights, the principle of universality versus religion, justifications for intervention including the 'Responsibility to Protect'
- people movement:
 - international treaties relating to people movement
 - responses by relevant global actors
 - ethical debates including obligations to strangers versus national interests including border security, the rights of refugees versus economic migrants, and disputes over refugee resettlement
- development:
 - international treaties relating to development
 - responses by relevant global actors
 - ethical debates including economic self-determination versus globalisation, overseas development assistance and global targets of UN versus self-interest of states, development versus sustainable development
- arms control and disarmament:
 - international treaties relating to arms control and disarmament
 - responses by relevant global actors
 - ethical debates including security dilemma of state and non-state proliferation, international security versus state security, arms control versus disarmament.

Key skills

- define and explain key global politics terms and use them in the appropriate context
- analyse treaties relating to two ethical issues
- evaluate ethical debates surrounding two ethical issues
- analyse the effectiveness of responses by global actors to two ethical issues
- research and synthesise contemporary evidence to support arguments.

Area of Study 2

Global crises

What crises does the world face today? What are the causes of particular global crises? How have global actors responded to these crises and how effective are their responses?

In this area of study students investigate the causes and key aspects of, and the effectiveness of responses to, two global crises. Two global crises are selected from the following: climate change, armed conflict, terrorism, and economic instability.

Climate change presents policymakers with significant difficulties, some of which lie in the fact that responses require global cooperation by states at an unprecedented level. Students consider whether national interests prevail over global climate challenges, and how other economic priorities and political factors play a role.

Students learn that armed conflict remains a common instrument of state power, challenging the idea that it will ever become obsolete. They consider whether mechanisms of global governance can respond to and stop conflict, and whether the notion of sovereignty presents an insurmountable challenge to responding effectively to conflict.

Terrorism is a salient feature of contemporary global politics. Students come to understand that terrorism is due to the perceived success of such tactics in attracting publicity and the rise of support networks to facilitate terrorist objectives. They consider the effectiveness of terrorism in achieving its aims and consider the reasons why some groups resort to violence to achieve their objectives. Students study in detail key aspects of terrorism including state and non-state terrorism.

Students explore how the increased inter-connectedness of the world economy has brought with it innumerable benefits, but has also amplified the capacity for global economic instability. Organisations for global economic governance face challenges in coordinating global economic stability, as illustrated by the Global Financial Crisis and the Sovereign Debt Crisis. Students consider whether economic instability is a feature of market economic systems and the increasing interdependence within the global economy.

For this area of study students, will study TWO of the following crises: climate change, armed conflict, terrorism, economic instability.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to explain two contemporary global crises and evaluate the effectiveness of responses to these.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

Key knowledge

- the key terms: crisis diplomacy, international cooperation, globalisation, unilateralism
- climate change:
 - the causes
 - the responses and proposed solutions from relevant global actors
 - difficulties in achieving effective resolutions
 - key aspects of the crisis of climate change, including resource exploitation, national interests, and methods of adapting to and reducing climate change
- armed conflict:
 - the causes
 - the responses and proposed solutions from relevant global actors
 - difficulties in achieving effective resolutions
 - key aspects of the crisis of armed conflict including intervention, war as an instrument of state policy, prosecuting war and war crimes in international law
- terrorism:
 - the causes
 - the responses and proposed solutions from relevant global actors
 - difficulties in achieving effective resolutions
 - key aspects of the crisis of terrorism including non-state terrorism, terrorism as an instrument of state policy and the role of asymmetric warfare
- economic instability:
 - the causes
 - the responses and proposed solutions from relevant global actors
 - difficulties in achieving effective resolutions
 - key aspects of the crisis of economic instability including globalisation, capitalism's boom-bust cycle, the role of key global actors as regulators and stabilisers of the global economy.

Key skills

- define and explain key global politics terms and use them in the appropriate context
- explain the key aspects of two global crises
- analyse causes of, and responses to, two global crises
- evaluate the effectiveness of proposed solutions and difficulties in achieving effective resolution to two global crises
- research and synthesise contemporary evidence to draw conclusions.

School-based assessment**Satisfactory completion**

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on whether the student has demonstrated the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Teachers should use a variety of learning activities and assessment tasks to provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills in the outcomes.

The area of study and key knowledge and key skills listed for the outcomes should be used for course design and the development of learning and assessment activities.

Assessment of levels of achievement

The student's level of achievement in Unit 4 will be determined by School-assessed Coursework. School-assessed Coursework tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

Where teachers provide a range of options for the same School-assessed Coursework task, they should ensure that the options are of comparable scope and demand.

The types and range of forms of School-assessed Coursework for the outcomes are prescribed within the study design. The VCAA publishes *Advice for teachers* for this study, which includes advice on the design of assessment tasks and the assessment of student work for a level of achievement.

Teachers will provide to the VCAA a numerical score representing an assessment of the student's level of achievement. The score must be based on the teacher's assessment of the performance of each student on the tasks set out in the following table.

Contribution to final assessment

School-assessed Coursework for Unit 4 will contribute 25 per cent to the study score.

Outcomes	Marks allocated*	Assessment tasks
<p>Outcome 1 Evaluate two global ethical issues from a range of perspectives, and analyse the effectiveness of global actors' responses to these issues.</p>	50	<p>For each outcome select one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a multimedia presentation • a case study • an essay • a report • a test • structured questions • short-answer questions • an extended response.
<p>Outcome 2 Explain two contemporary global crises and evaluate the effectiveness of responses to these.</p>	50	
Total marks	100	

*School-assessed Coursework for Unit 4 contributes 25 per cent.

External assessment

The level of achievement for Units 3 and 4 is also assessed by an end-of-year examination.

Contribution to final assessment

The examination will contribute 50 per cent.

End-of-year examination

Description

The examination will be set by a panel appointed by the VCAA. All the key knowledge and key skills that underpin the outcomes in Units 3 and 4 are examinable.

Conditions

The examination will be completed under the following conditions:

- Duration: two hours.
- Date: end-of-year, on a date to be published annually by the VCAA.
- VCAA examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the [VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook](#).
- The examination will be marked by assessors appointed by the VCAA.

Further advice

The VCAA publishes specifications for all VCE examinations on the VCAA website. Examination specifications include details about the sections of the examination, their weighting, the question format/s and any other essential information. The specifications are published in the first year of implementation of the revised Units 3 and 4 sequence together with any sample material.