GEOG11023 *Physical Geography of Australia*
Term 1 - 2026

Profile information current as at 20/05/2026 11:16 pm

General Information

Overview
This unit surveys the major patterns of Australian landscapes and the processes which have produced them. Topics include the geology, climates, landforms, soils and ecology of Australia.

Details
Career Level: *Undergraduate*
Unit Level: *Level 1*
Credit Points: *6*
Student Contribution Band: *8*
Fraction of Full-Time Student Load: *0.125*

Pre-requisites or Co-requisites
There are no requisites for this unit.
Important note: Students enrolled in a subsequent unit who failed their pre-requisite unit, should drop the subsequent unit before the census date or within 10 working days of Fail grade notification. Students who do not drop the unit in this timeframe cannot later drop the unit without academic and financial liability. See details in the Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework).

Offerings For Term 1 - 2026
- Online
- Rockhampton

Attendance Requirements
All on-campus students are expected to attend scheduled classes – in some units, these classes are identified as a mandatory (pass/fail) component and attendance is compulsory. International students, on a student visa, must maintain a full time study load and meet both attendance and academic progress requirements in each study period (satisfactory attendance for International students is defined as maintaining at least an 80% attendance record).

Website
This unit has a website, within the Moodle system, which is available two weeks before the start of term. It is important that you visit your Moodle site throughout the term. Please visit Moodle for more information.

Class and Assessment Overview

Recommended Student Time Commitment

Each 6-credit Undergraduate unit at CQUniversity requires an overall time commitment of an average of 12.5 hours of study per week, making a total of 150 hours for the unit.

Class Timetable

Regional Campuses
Bundaberg, Cairns, Emerald, Gladstone, Mackay, Rockhampton, Townsville

Metropolitan Campuses
Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney

Assessment Overview

1. Practical and Written Assessment
Weighting: 30%
2. Written Assessment
Weighting: 40%
3. Online Quiz(zes)
Weighting: 30%

Assessment Grading

This is a graded unit: your overall grade will be calculated from the marks or grades for each assessment task, based on the relative weightings shown in the table above. You must obtain an overall mark for the unit of at least 50%, or an overall grade of 'pass' in order to pass the unit. If any 'pass/fail' tasks are shown in the table above they must also be completed successfully ('pass' grade). You must also meet any minimum mark requirements specified for a particular assessment task, as detailed in the 'assessment task' section (note that in some instances, the minimum mark for a task may be greater than 50%). Consult the University's Grades and Results Policy for more details of interim results and final grades.

CQUniversity Policies

All University policies are available on the CQUniversity Policy site.
You may wish to view these policies:

- Grades and Results Policy
- Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)
- Review of Grade Procedure
- Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – Domestic Students
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – International Students
- Student Refund and Credit Balance Policy and Procedure
- Student Feedback – Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Information and Communications Technology Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure

This list is not an exhaustive list of all University policies. The full list of University policies are available on the CQUniversity Policy site.

Previous Student Feedback

Feedback, Recommendations and Responses

Every unit is reviewed for enhancement each year. At the most recent review, the following staff and student feedback items were identified and recommendations were made.

Feedback from UC self-assessment.

Feedback
Continuously revise and update learning materials to ensure alignment with advancements in AI applications.

Recommendation
Continued revising and updating the learning materials, focusing on refining online quiz questions to reduce the likelihood of them being answered by AI tools while maintaining close alignment with unit content.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. explain fundamental processes responsible for the development of Australian climates, landforms, soils and biogeography
2. describe major patterns of climates, landforms, soils and biogeography in Australia.

Important skills objectives include the development of abilities to:

- find particular information when required that is contained in your online material, textbook or other study resources
- demonstrate information literacy skills concerning the use of the CQU Library online catalogue and the development of search strategies for research paper topics
- research and analyse information relating to the physical geography of Australia
- write annotated bibliographies and research papers.

In a broader educational context, it is worth noting that the design of this unit is intended to assist students to develop independent life-long learning skills, and in particular the ability to successfully cope with online learning environments, such as is presented in this unit.

Alignment of Learning Outcomes, Assessment and Graduate Attributes

— N/A Level • Introductory Level • Intermediate Level • Graduate Level ◦ Professional Level ◦ Advanced Level

Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Learning Outcomes

Assessment Tasks	Learning Outcomes	
	1	2
1 - Practical and Written Assessment - 30%		•
2 - Written Assessment - 40%	•	
3 - Online Quiz(zes) - 30%	•	•

Alignment of Graduate Attributes to Learning Outcomes

Graduate Attributes	Learning Outcomes	
	1	2
1 - Communication		•
2 - Problem Solving	•	
3 - Critical Thinking		•
4 - Information Literacy	•	•
5 - Team Work	•	•
6 - Information Technology Competence	•	•
7 - Cross Cultural Competence	•	•
8 - Ethical practice	•	•
9 - Social Innovation		
10 - First Nations Knowledges		
11 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures		

Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Graduate Attributes

Assessment Tasks	Graduate Attributes										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1 - Practical and Written Assessment - 30%	•	•		•		•	•	•			
2 - Written Assessment - 40%	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			
3 - Online Quiz(zes) - 30%		•	•	•		•		•			

Textbooks and Resources

Textbooks

GEOG11023

Supplementary

The Australian Physical Environment
Edition: 1st (2008)
Authors: Bridgman, H., Dragovitch, D., Dodson, J.
Oxford University Press Australia
South Melbourne , VIC , Australia
ISBN: 13-978-0-19-554109-0
Binding: Other

View textbooks at the CQUniversity Bookshop

IT Resources

You will need access to the following IT resources:

- CQUniversity Student Email
- Internet
- Unit Website (Moodle)

Referencing Style

All submissions for this unit must use the referencing style: Harvard (author-date)
For further information, see the Assessment Tasks.

Teaching Contacts

Jiaping Wu Unit Coordinator
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Schedule

Week 1 - 09 Mar 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Structure of the Earth and Plate Tectonics	Ch.1: Australia in the Physical World (Bridgman et al., 2008) Ch.2: The Earth in Space and Time (Bridgman et al., 2008) Ch.8: The Development of the Landscape (only pp. 163-171) (Bridgman et al., 2008)	Note: There are 5 online quizzes. All the quizzes are available from the first day of the term, but each quiz will have a different due date throughout the term. Please mark the due dates in your calendar.

Week 2 - 16 Mar 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Geological Evolution of Australia	Ch.2: Tectonic Setting of Australia (Saygin, 2007) Ch.12: Earth's Internal Structure, Rock Cycle, and Geologic Time (Arbogast, 2017)	

Week 3 - 23 Mar 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Global Climatic Processes	Ch.3: The Global Energy System (Bridgman et al., 2008) Ch.4: Atmospheric Circulation (Bridgman et al., 2008)	

Week 4 - 30 Mar 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Australian Climates	Ch.9: Global Climates and Global Climate Change (Arbogast, 2017) or Ch.5: Hydrologic Systems and Atmospheric Processes (Bridgman et al., 2008) Ch.6: Ocean Atmosphere Interactions (Bridgman et al., 2008) Ch.7: Climatic Environments (Bridgman et al., 2008)	

Week 5 - 06 Apr 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Geomorphology: Principles & Patterns	Ch.13: Tectonic Processes and Landforms (Arbogast, 2017) or Ch.8: The Development of the Landscape (pp. 171-187) (Bridgman et al., 2008) Ch.9: Landscapes, Sediments and Soil Development (pp. 188-197) (Bridgman et al., 2008) Ch.10: Water in the Landscape (pp.215-241) (Bridgman et al., 2008)	

Week 6 - 13 Apr 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Geomorphology: Regional Patterns	Ch.18: Arid Landscapes and Eolian Processes (Arbogast, 2017) Ch.19: Coastal Processes and Landforms (Arbogast, 2017) or Ch.11: Aeolian Landforms (Bridgman et al., 2008) Ch.12: Coastal Landforms (Bridgman et al., 2008)	Quiz 1 due

Vacation Week - 20 Apr 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic

Week 7 - 27 Apr 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Soils and the Formation Processes	Ch.10: Global Soils (Strahler, 2013) or Ch.9: 'Soils' section (pp. 198-214) (Bridgman et al., 2008)	Written Assessment: Term proposal Due: Week 7 Monday (27 Apr 2026) 9:00 am AEST

Week 8 - 04 May 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Soil Classification & Regional Patterns	Ch.12: The evolution of Australian soil (McKenzie et al., 2004) Ch.7: Groundwater—lifeblood of the continent (Brodie et al., 2012)	quiz 2 due

Week 9 - 11 May 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Ecosystems	Ch.13: Historical Biogeography (Bridgman et al., 2008)	quiz 3 due

Week 10 - 18 May 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Biomes	Ch.14: Ecological Biogeography (Bridgman et al., 2008)	quiz 4 due

Week 11 - 25 May 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Australian Flora	Ch.15: Communities and Ecosystems (Bridgman et al., 2008) Ch.9: Vegetation' (Carnahan, 1977)	

Week 12 - 01 Jun 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Australian Fauna	Ch.12: Biodiversity in Australia: An Overview (Dickman, 2019) or Ch.4: The Ecosystems (Heathcote, 1994) Ch.2: Biogeography of Australian Flora and Fauna (Smith, 1986)	quiz 5 due Written Assessment 2 Term paper Due: Week 12 Friday (5 June 2026) 11:45 pm AEST

Exam Week - 08 Jun 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic

Vacation/Exam Week - 15 Jun 2026

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic

Assessment Tasks

1 Written Assessment: Term proposal

Assessment Type
Practical and Written Assessment

Task Description
For this assessment, you are tasked with completing a research proposal and an annotated bibliography.
In the research proposal, you should:

- Select a region in Australia for study.
- Briefly review the literature regarding the physical geography of the chosen region.
- Outline a research plan for completing the term paper

The research proposal should be 800-1000 words in length, excluding references.
In the annotated bibliography, you are required to:

- Identify and evaluate 10 information sources (books, book chapters, journal articles, etc.)
- Provide bibliographical information (citation) of each source following the Harvard Referencing Style
- Write explanatory paragraphs (annotations) for each source, approximately 100 words each. These annotations should include: a) A summary of the main arguments or ideas; b) an evaluation of the relevance and usefulness of the information; and c) a reflection on how you will use the source in writing your term paper

Accurate citation of sources and clear, concise summaries and evaluations of the information they contain are essential for this task. The detailed instructions and requirements for the annotated bibliography will be provided on the Moodle site of the unit.
Please note that you will study the same chosen region for both written assessments. You are therefore advised to review both assessment tasks on the unit's Moodle site before commencing this assignment.
AI Assessment Scale: Level 2
You may use AI for planning, idea development, and research. Your final submission should show how you have developed and refined these ideas. Any misuse or lack of disclosure regarding AI tools will be considered a breach of academic integrity.

Assessment Due Date
Week 7 Monday (27 Apr 2026) 9:00 am AEST

Online submission

Return Date to Students
Week 8 Friday (8 May 2026)

Assessments will be marked and returned in two weeks after the due date or as soon as practicable.

Weighting
30%

Assessment Criteria
Your assessment will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- The quality of your research proposal. This includes defining the region you have chosen to study, conducting a literature review on the physical geography of the region, and outlining your research plan.
- The quality of your references, annotations and evaluations. This includes assessing whether the sources are academic and suitable for your research, as well as the accuracy of your citations, summaries, and evaluations.
- The quality of your written communication. This includes structure, format, grammar, spelling, and coherence.

Detailed marking criteria for this assessment will be available on the Moodle site of the unit, so please review them carefully before submitting your work.

Referencing Style

- Harvard (author-date)

Submission
Online

Submission Instructions
There will be a submission link placed on the Moodle website.

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- describe major patterns of climates, landforms, soils and biogeography in Australia.

Graduate Attributes

- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Information Literacy
- Information Technology Competence
- Cross Cultural Competence
- Ethical practice

2 Written Assessment 2 Term paper

Assessment Type
Written Assessment

Task Description
In this assessment task, you are required to complete a term research paper based on the research proposal you submitted in Assessment 1. The paper should focus on describing patterns and interpreting the processes of the five elements of the physical geography of your chosen region: Geology, climate, landforms, soils, and biogeography.
You should use the information sources identified in the annotated bibliography of Assessment 1 to support your analysis and interpretations. Your paper should be between 2,500 and 3,000 words in length, excluding the cover page, abstract, table of contents, reference list, and appendices. The word count is calculated from the first word of the introduction to the last word of the conclusion.
Please read the detailed information and adhere closely to the writing and referencing guidelines provided on the unit's Moodle site.
AI Assessment Scale: Level 2
You may use AI for planning, idea development, and research. Your final submission should show how you have developed and refined these ideas. Any misuse or lack of disclosure regarding AI tools will be considered a breach of academic integrity.

Assessment Due Date
Week 12 Friday (5 June 2026) 11:45 pm AEST

Online submission

Return Date to Students
Vacation/Exam Week Friday (19 June 2026)

The assessment will be marked and returned within two weeks after the end of the term, or as soon as possible.

Weighting
40%

Assessment Criteria
This assessment will be marked based on the overall quality and quantity of your research, including

- Knowledge: Demonstrating the level of understanding of the region's physical geography and the quality of

evidence provided on the five elements.
- Description and Analysis: Demonstrating the quality of describing patterns and processes, including their analysis and the interrelation and interaction among the elements.
- Presentation and Communication: Demonstrating communication skills, including attention to structure, format, citation, grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Detailed marking criteria for this assessment will be available on the Moodle site of the unit, so please review them carefully before submitting your work.

Referencing Style
- Harvard (author-date)

Submission
Online

Submission Instructions
There will be a submission link placed on the Moodle website

Learning Outcomes Assessed
- explain fundamental processes responsible for the development of Australian climates, landforms, soils and biogeography

Graduate Attributes
- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking
- Information Literacy
- Team Work
- Information Technology Competence
- Cross Cultural Competence
- Ethical practice

3 Online Quizzes

Assessment Type
Online Quiz(zes)

Task Description
This assessment comprises five online quizzes. Each quiz contains ten multiple-choice questions. Students are required to select the most appropriate answer from the provided options to complete each quiz.
Extensions are not available for this assessment.
Further details about the quizzes and instructions on how to complete them are available on the unit's Moodle site.
AI Assessment Scale: Level 1
You must not use AI at any point during this assessment. You must demonstrate your core skills and knowledge. Any misuse or lack of disclosure regarding the use of AI tools will be considered a breach of academic integrity.

Number of Quizzes
5

Frequency of Quizzes
Other

Assessment Due Date

By 11.45pm on Sunday of the respective due week.

Return Date to Students

The online quizzes will be marked automatically after submission

Weighting
30%

Assessment Criteria
Marking: Your answers on each quiz will be automatically assessed by the Moodle software. You will receive prompt feedback on your quiz performance, including the correct answers for any questions you answered incorrectly. Please take the time to review the feedback, as it will significantly enhance your learning throughout the term. The Moodle software will automatically record your scores, allowing you and me to track your progress and performance over the term. These scores will also contribute to your final term marks.
Availability: All five quizzes are accessible on the Moodle site for this unit at the beginning of the term. Each quiz will be closed down in specific weeks: quiz 1 by week 6, quiz 2 by week 8, quiz 3 by week 9, quiz 4 by week 10, and quiz 5 by

week 12. This allows students who prefer to complete some quizzes as soon as possible while managing their time for other commitments. The availability is designed also to accommodate contingencies like illnesses, work or family matters, or technical problems. Therefore, once a quiz is no longer available for completion, students cannot access it and will receive a score of 'zero' for that particular quiz.
Please note: Extensions are not available for quiz assessments. Once a quiz has closed, it cannot be reopened and extension requests cannot be approved.

Referencing Style
- Harvard (author-date)

Submission
Online

Learning Outcomes Assessed
- explain fundamental processes responsible for the development of Australian climates, landforms, soils and biogeography
- describe major patterns of climates, landforms, soils and biogeography in Australia.

Graduate Attributes
- Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking
- Information Literacy
- Information Technology Competence
- Ethical practice

Academic Integrity Statement

As a CQUniversity student you are expected to act honestly in all aspects of your academic work.

Any assessable work undertaken or submitted for review or assessment must be your own work. Assessable work is any type of work you do to meet the assessment requirements in the unit, including draft work submitted for review and feedback and final work to be assessed.

When you use the ideas, words or data of others in your assessment, you must thoroughly and clearly acknowledge the source of this information by using the correct referencing style for your unit. Using others' work without proper acknowledgement may be considered a form of intellectual dishonesty.

Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in your university study ensures the CQUniversity qualification you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

As a student, you are responsible for reading and following CQUniversity's policies, including the Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure. This policy sets out CQUniversity's expectations of you to act with integrity, examples of academic integrity breaches to avoid, the processes used to address alleged breaches of academic integrity, and potential penalties.

What is a breach of academic integrity?

A breach of academic integrity includes but is not limited to plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, cheating, contract cheating, and academic misconduct. The Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure defines what these terms mean and gives examples.

Why is academic integrity important?

A breach of academic integrity may result in one or more penalties, including suspension or even expulsion from the University. It can also have negative implications for student visas and future enrolment at CQUniversity or elsewhere. Students who engage in contract cheating also risk being blackmailed by contract cheating services.

Where can I get assistance?

For academic advice and guidance, the Academic Learning Centre (ALC) can support you in becoming confident in completing assessments with integrity and of high standard.

What can you do to act with integrity?

Be Honest
If your assessment task is done by someone else, it would be dishonest of you to claim it as your own

Seek Help
If you are not sure about how to cite or reference in essays, reports etc, then seek help from your lecturer, the library or the Academic Learning Centre (ALC)

Produce Original Work
Originality comes from your ability to read widely, think critically, and apply your gained knowledge to address a question or problem