

STUDY GUIDE

GENERAL GEOGRAPHY

**Degree in Primary Teacher Training
Bilingual Programme
C.U. Cardenal Cisneros
Universidad de Alcalá**

Academic Year 2025-26

1st Year – 2nd Term

STUDY GUIDE

Name of the subject:	GENERAL GEOGRAPHY
Code:	520001
Studies:	Degree in Primary Teacher Training Bilingual Programme
Department & Area:	Department of Teaching Specific Sciences. Area of Geography, History and Social Sciences.
Character:	Compulsory
ECTS:	6
Year & Term:	1 st Year, 2 nd Term
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Language:	English

1. INTRODUCTION

The subject General Geography offers the learner a meaningful set of methodological resources, skills and knowledge, especially oriented to the Primary Education content area of Social Sciences. To have a solid basis in geographical concepts and concerns constitutes an indispensable tool for teacher trainees to develop their future professional competences suitably. Therefore, the importance of this subject within the degree syllabus is shown by its being a compulsory subject.

For the completion of any academic work, the importance of asking the teacher on the permitted use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools is remembered. If it is not clearly stated in the guide or instructions for specific activities, it is understood that AI should not be used in any case. It is warned that the improper use of these technologies, such as the generation of works without express authorization, can constitute an academic fraud. Therefore, it is recommended to review the university's regulations regarding the use of AI, always act with responsibility and transparency in the learning process and consult with the teacher if they have any questions in this regard.

Requirements

It is required for students have successfully passed the Access Test to the Bilingual Programme (B1 level) and be committed to pursuing B2 Level along this academic year. To ensure success in this subject continuous work during the whole term is recommendable, therefore, it is important to have an active and participative attitude during lessons.

2. COMPETENCES

Generic competences

- Adquirir y comprender los conocimientos necesarios de las distintas áreas de estudio que conforman el título de tal forma que capaciten para la profesión de Maestro en Educación Primaria (Competencia transversal del Título de Grado nº 4).
- Saber aplicar esos conocimientos al trabajo de una forma profesional, demostrando el dominio de las competencias mediante la elaboración y defensa de argumentos y resolución de problemas en dichas áreas de estudio (Competencia transversal del Título de Grado nº 5).
- Ser capaces de recoger e interpretar datos relevantes de las distintas áreas de estudio y de emitir juicios que incluyan una reflexión sobre temas relevantes de índole socioeducativa, científica y ética (Competencia transversal del Título de Grado nº 6).
- Abordar con eficacia situaciones de aprendizaje de lenguas en contextos multiculturales y plurilingües. Fomentar la lectura y el comentario crítico de textos de los diversos dominios científicos y culturales contenidos en el currículo escolar (Competencia propia del Título de Grado nº 3).
- Mantener una relación crítica y autónoma respecto de los saberes, los valores y las instituciones sociales públicas y privadas (Competencia propia del Título de Grado nº 8).
- Valorar la responsabilidad individual y colectiva en la consecución de un futuro sostenible (Competencia propia del Título de Grado nº 9).
- Reflexionar sobre las prácticas de aula para innovar y mejorar la labor docente. Adquirir hábitos y destrezas para el aprendizaje autónomo y cooperativo y promoverlo entre los estudiantes (Competencia propia del Título de Grado nº 10).
- Conocer y aplicar en las aulas las tecnologías de la información y de la comunicación. Discernir selectivamente la información audiovisual que contribuya a los aprendizajes, a la formación cívica y a la riqueza cultural (Competencia propia del Título de Grado nº 11).

Specific competences

1. To understand the basic principles of Social Sciences.
3. To integrate the study of History and Geography from a cross-curricular point of view.
4. To promote the democratic education of citizenship and the practice of critical awareness in social thinking.
5. To value the relevance of public and private bodies to develop peaceful co-existence among peoples.

3. CONTENTS

UNIT 1: POPULATION

- 1.1. An introduction to Human Geography & Cartography
- 1.2. Population distribution
- 1.3. Population structure
- 1.4. Migration

UNIT 2: NATURE AND SOCIETY

- 2.1. Climate and landscape
- 2.2. The interaction between nature and society. Sustainable development
- 2.3. Global environmental problems

UNIT 3: HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

- 3.1. Rural space
- 3.2. Urban space
- 3.3. The historical process of urbanisation
- 3.4. Urban planning and urban structure

UNIT 4: ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

- 4.1. An introduction to economic activities
- 4.2. The primary sector
- 4.3. The secondary sector
- 4.4. The tertiary and quaternary sector

UNIT 5: POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

- 5.1. The political organization of society
- 5.2. Boundaries and international affairs
- 5.3. Geopolitical changes in Contemporary Times
- 5.4. Geopolitical areas and hotspots in the world

Units	Total of ECTS credits and hours
1. POPULATION	1.5 ECTS (37.5 h)
2. NATURE AND SOCIETY	1 ECTS (25 h)
3. HUMAN SETTLEMENTS	1.5 ECTS (37.5 h)
4. ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES	1 ECTS (25 h)
5. POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY	1 ECTS (25 h)

Please, notice that the organization of these contents **may change** slightly depending on the characteristics of the group, the evolution of the teaching-learning process and the introduction of extraordinary activities. In addition, it is possible that the academic calendar influences the proposed schedule. Every change will be suitably notified to students during the term.

4. TEACHING-LEARNING METHODOLOGY. FORMATIVE ACTIVITIES

4.1. Time distribution

The total amount of time that the learner has to devote to this formative programme to achieve its aims is 150 hours, of which only 50 are referred to as lesson attendance, receiving input from the lecturer. The rest will be for study and self-organized work.

Total number of hours: 150	
Number of hours of classroom attendance: 50	30 hours of whole group classes 15 hours of practical classes 3 hours of seminars 2 hours of assessment tasks
Number of hours of independent learning: 100	100 hours of independent work

4.2. Methodology, materials and didactic resources

The methodology will be based on the CLIL Approach, whose main aim is creating a communicative atmosphere and involving students actively in high-order thinking processes. Thanks to the continuous attendance to the classes, students will be improving their competence in the English language at the same time they are learning about the specific content area. In addition, students will also be helped to reflect on the “mechanics” of this approach, enabling them to transfer their learning experience to their teaching practice.

The teaching-learning process will be varied in each type of class although always active and innovative. The lecturer will act as a learning facilitator by providing several resources and explanations in order to make the students achieve the proposed competences. To do this there will be four distinctive classroom organizations.

a. Theoretical classes	Lectures, summaries and outlines of basic contents from each module, discussion and analysis activities, and activities aimed at deepening and reinforcing theory.
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b. Practical classes	Multimedia learning, case studies, problem solving, research projects, use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), group work, oral defence of written assignments, formative outings, participation in socio-educative activities, etc.
c. Seminars	Cooperative learning activities, problem based learning, debates, group and personal tutorials, work monitoring, etc.
d. Introduction to research projects	Production of essays and other works in which research tasks are required. Every type of work is going to be useful to turn the scientific knowledge into school knowledge.

In this subject, some activities can be conducted as interdisciplinary learning experiences in collaboration with other subjects from the semester study programme. The teacher will inform about that in due time.

In addition, the student will be able to follow the teaching process through different didactic tools and on-line materials that permit both the acquisition of knowledge and self-learning activities. To facilitate this it is recommended the use of the Cardenal Cisneros virtual campus, available in the following website: <https://learn.cardenalcisneros.es/>

There will be other online tools at students' disposal that are adapted for a complete online teaching and learning process through the platform Microsoft TEAMS, in case of necessity.

There the student has all the documents, materials and other resources for studying. Furthermore through this website the student will be able to participate in the forums, e-mail and other communication systems among the teacher and the students.

5. ASSESSMENT

Assessment criteria

In this subject the assessment criteria are based on the Primary Education Teacher Training Degree programme, which was approved by the University of Alcalá and the Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación in 2010.

These assessment criteria describe what a learner is expected to know, understand and be able to do after successful completion of a process of learning. As this is a theoretical-practical subject, the development of the programme will take into account both the acquisition of knowledge as well as the application of procedures and the development of competences. To achieve these goals, some **continuous assessment activities** will be suggested to facilitate the learner's progress during the course. Some of these activities will be done in class, with the lecturer's assessment, and others, on the learner's side on a self-study basis.

In the following grid it is possible to see the correspondences among the specific competencies (SC) and the assessment criteria proposed for this subject. According to these criteria, by the end of this subject **students are expected to:**

Specific Competences	Assessment criteria
– To understand the basic principles of Social Sciences (SC1).	Know, comprehend and correctly use the principal concepts, methods and scientific terminology of Human Geography.
	Recognize the characteristics of different types of landscapes, human settlements, urban spaces, economic activities and political systems.
– To integrate the study of History and Geography from a cross-curricular point of view (SC3).	Apply a number of techniques for a multidisciplinary description, interpretation and representation of the geographical space
	Analyze some geographical variables that influence in the interaction between nature and society.
	Produce and present explicative synthesis about geographical topics, using ICTs and other innovative resources.
– To value the relevance of public and private bodies to develop peaceful co-existence among peoples (SC5).	Evaluate critically the role that the social institutions play as mediators for the peaceful relationship between populations and countries.
– To promote the democratic citizenship education and the practice of critical awareness in social thinking (SC4).	Show interest in learning as well as active participation during the class sessions.

Now you can see a list in which the assessment criteria are expressed with the percentage that each one has in the global teaching and learning process.

Nº	Criteria	%
1	Know, comprehend and correctly use the principal concepts, methods and scientific terminology of Human Geography	30
2	Recognize the characteristics of different types of landscapes, human settlements, urban spaces, economic activities and political systems	15

3	Apply a number of techniques for a multidisciplinary description, interpretation and representation of the geographical space	15
4	Analyze some geographical variables that influence in the interaction between nature and society	10
5	Evaluate critically the role that the social institutions play as mediators for the peaceful relationship between populations and countries	5
6	Produce and present explicative synthesis about geographical topics, using ICTs and other innovative resources	20
7	Show interest in learning as well as active participation during the class sessions	5

As an added criterion and following the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment nomenclature, the CUCC has set the entrance level to the Bilingual Programme at B1. It is necessary to remind learners in the Bilingual Programme that they are supposed to show their progress in their command of the English language throughout the course. This implies that both written and oral assignments are expected to show an adequate progression in the command of the English language. This includes correct use of oral and written English (spelling, syntax, pronunciation, register, etc.), as this language will be the communicative tool in the classroom and learners will be expected to have a high linguistic and communicative competence in English in their future professional careers as Primary teachers.

Learning outcomes

These are the learning outcomes established by the official documents of the Teacher Training Degree (memoria de verificación del título de Maestro de Educación Primaria):

Learning outcomes: General Geography	Code
To know, identify, and relate the basic principles that make up the social sciences.	RACS 1
To know the social sciences curriculum in primary education.	RACS 2
To interpret and relate historical and geographical study from an educational and instructive perspective.	RACS 3
To develop critical social thinking.	RACS 5
To analyse and describe the important role played by public and private institutions in promoting peaceful coexistence among peoples.	RACS 6

Assessment system

The assessment system is based on the “Normativa reguladora de los procesos de evaluación de los aprendizajes” of the University of Alcalá. These regulations establish the following:

1. This subject has one ordinary examination in May and another extraordinary examination in June/July.
2. The **ordinary examination** follows the criteria set in the **continuous assessment** system. To do this, it is compulsory a minimum of 80% of attendance to the classes, as well as day-certain submission of the tasks and an appropriate attitude along the teaching and learning process. Those students who do not cover this minimum must retake the subject in the extraordinary examination.
3. If any student cannot follow the continuous assessment proposed for the ordinary examination, he/she should ask the teacher for the way of applying to the **final assessment system**. This proposal has to be asked in the first two weeks of the term and will be approved or rejected by the CUCC headmaster.
4. The **extraordinary examination** is set for the students who cannot attend the classes or are unable to pass the ordinary examination. It is their own responsibility to contact the teacher in order to know what are the assessment tasks and exams to be retaken and how to pass the evaluation criteria that were tested in the classes.
5. In the extraordinary examination, the students must cover **the same evaluation criteria** that are established to pass the subject, although they have to do it by following the final assessment system.
6. Both in the continuous and the final assessment system there are **content exams** in which the student must demonstrate a sufficient acquisition of the fundamental concepts and theoretical aspects of the subject. There are also **practical exams / exercises** to prove the application of the required skills related to the understanding and analysis of this field of knowledge.
7. To pass the subject, students must demonstrate through a number of assessment criteria that they have **achieved all of the competences** set out in this study guide, with a **minimum mark of 5** to do the final average. Students are **required to complete all the assessed tasks** presented in this study guide. This applies both to the continuous and the final assessment system, and the ordinary and extraordinary examination periods. Exceptions should be carefully considered by the teacher on a reasoned basis, established with documentary evidence, after a personal interview with the interested person.
8. The criteria of both the continuous and the final assessment are detailed in the next section of this study guide.
9. For further explanations about assessment regulations in the University of Alcalá, please visit the following website: <https://www.uah.es/export/sites/uah/es/conoce-la-uah/organizacion-y-gobierno/.galleries/Galeria-Secretaria-General/Normativa-Evaluacion-Aprendizajes.pdf>

Assessment tools

In the following grids it is listed the number of assessment tools that will be used to measure the student's final mark. The first grid refers to the continuous evaluation modality and the second one refers to the final evaluation modality.

Assessment tools: continuous evaluation

Instrumentos de evaluación	Criterios de evaluación				
	Classroom activities	Individual & group projects	Practical exams / exercises	Content examination	Percentage
1. Know, comprehend and correctly use the principal concepts, methods and scientific terminology of Human Geography			X	X	30
2. Recognize the characteristics of different types of landscapes, human settlements, urban spaces, economic activities and political systems			X	X	15
3. Apply a number of techniques for a multidisciplinary description, interpretation and representation of the geographical space	X	X	X		15
4. Analyze some geographical variables that influence in the interaction between nature and society		X	X		10
5. Evaluate critically the role that the social institutions play as mediators for the peaceful relationship between populations and countries		X			5
6. Produce and present explicative synthesis about geographical topics, using ICTs and other innovative resources		X		X	20
7. Show interest in learning as well as active participation during the class sessions	X	X			5
PERCENTAGE	10	25	25	40	100

Please, notice that these percentages are estimated and **may change** slightly depending on the characteristics of the group and the teaching-learning process.

Assessment tools: final evaluation

Assessment tools Assessment criteria	Individual projects	Practical exams / exercises	Content examination	Porcentaje
1. Know, comprehend and correctly use the principal concepts, methods and scientific terminology of Human Geography		X	X	35
2. Recognize the characteristics of different types of landscapes, human settlements, urban spaces, economic activities and political systems		X	X	15
3. Apply a number of techniques for a multidisciplinary description, interpretation and representation of the geographical space	X	X		15
4. Analyze some geographical variables that influence in the interaction between nature and society	X	X		10
5. Evaluate critically the role that the social institutions play as mediators for the peaceful relationship between populations and countries	X			5
6. Produce and present explicative synthesis about geographical topics, using ICTs and other innovative resources	X		X	20
7. Show interest in learning as well as active participation during the class sessions				
PERCENTAGE	25	25	50	100

During all assessment tasks, the guidelines established in the University of Alcalá Coexistence Regulations must be followed, as well as the possible implications of irregularities committed during those tasks, including the consequences for committing academic fraud, according to the Disciplinary Regulations for Students of the University of Alcalá.

The teaching-learning methodology and the evaluation process will be adjusted to the guidelines of the CUCC Guidance Service and/or the UAH Diversity Attention Unit to apply curricular adaptations to students with specific needs after submitting documentation that proves such need.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Basic bibliography

We can use as a textbook any of the following ones. They provide not only the main theoretical concepts but also many didactic suggestions and activities for the teaching-learning process.

Aguilera Arilla, M^a J. et al. (2010). *Geografía General II: Geografía Humana*. UNED.

Albet, A.; Benejam, P. et al. (2012). *Geography. Secondary Education*. Vicens Vives.

Nagle, G. (2000). *Advanced Geography*. Oxford University Press.

Additional bibliography

To do this subject it is also recommendable to use frequently the following reference books related with Human Geography.

Azcárate, B.; Azcárate, M. V.; Sánchez, J. (2010). *Geografía regional del mundo. Desarrollo, subdesarrollo y países emergentes*. UNED.

(A global descriptive approach to the main geographical regions all over the world)

Daniels, P. et al. (2008). *An Introduction to Human Geography: Issues for the 21st Century*. Pearson Education.

(An authoritative book that discusses the main problems that the complex world in the 21st century is facing)

Kelly, K. (2009). *Geography. Macmillan Vocabulary Practice Series*. Macmillan.

(An user-friendly, CLIL oriented book to practice English as well as to acquire geographical key concepts. It includes a CD-Rom with multimedia activities for self-training)

Luján garcía, C. I. (2010). *English for Geographers*. Editorial Club Universitario.

(This textbook is intended to be used by students of the Degree of Geography. Each of the units offers the learners a variety of activities to improve their written skills and to improve their vocabulary. At the end, learners are expected to reach level B1)

Mayhew, S. (2009). *Oxford Dictionary of Geography*. Oxford University Press.

(An excellent specialised dictionary for Geography students)

Nagle, G. & Spencer, K. (2003). *AS and A Level Geography Through Diagrams-Oxford Revision Guides*. Oxford University Press.

(This text is part of the "Oxford Revision Guides" series. This book uses diagrams and concise notes to help students revise)

Waugh, D. (2009). *Geography: An Integrated Approach*. Nelson Thornes.

(An authoritative book that discusses the key issues of 21st century Geography)

Atlases & GIS

Various Authors (2004). *Atlas National Geographic*. RBA.

Various Authors (2005). *Gran Atlas del Mundo. Una nueva visión de la Tierra. Mapas, fotos y presentaciones en 3D*. Círculo de Lectores.

Various Authors (2008). *Collins World Atlas. Complete Edition*. Collins.

Various Authors (2008). *Geographica. Atlas Mundial Ilustrado*. H. F. Ullmann.

As Geographic Information Systems for this subject, learners will use some computer programmes such as **Google Earth**, **Google Maps**, **Iberpix**, **VPS Geography** and **Gapminder Desktop**. They are downloadable software that can be acquired from the Internet.

Electronic resources

Geographic encyclopaedias and on-line databases:

<https://www.indexmundi.com>

<https://www.ine.es>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com.es>

<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/>

<https://www.worldatlas.com/>

<https://elordenmundial.com/>

<https://www.exteriores.gob.es/es/Comunicacion/Paginas/Ficha.aspx>

<https://factsmaps.com/>

Other electronic resources:

<https://www.age-geografia.es/site/>

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/103332028@N06/>

<https://www.geografiainfinita.com/>

<https://www.ign.es/ign/main/index.do>

<https://www.ted.com/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJQQVLyM6wtPleV4wFBK06g>

All Web references were accessible at the time of publishing this study guide.