Contents and Pedagogy
Standard for Geography Teachers (9-12)
1. **Background**

The Geography teachers' professional standards presented in this document have been prepared using the generic standard as an overarching frame (a focus is put, nevertheless, on the first and second standards). It is equally important to mention that international experiences related to Geography standards have been thoroughly studied and integrated into the document. What is more, national policies directly related to Geography education (GTP, ETP, ESDPs, etc.) and the Geography syllabi for Ethiopian schools are carefully reviewed (fig. 1). Fig. 1 shows that the conceptual framework that informed the preparation of the Geography standards for Ethiopian schools, grades 9-12.

Fig. 1: Conceptual framework

2. **Geography Education: The Global Experience**

The Canadian Council of Geographic Education presents ten reasons why every student should study Geography.

- To understand basic physical systems that affect everyday life (e.g. earth-sun relationships, water cycles, wind and ocean currents);

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1 Source: Canadian Council for Geographic Education
➢ To learn the location of places and the physical and cultural characteristics of those places in order to function more effectively in our increasingly interdependent world;

➢ To understand the geography of past times and how geography has played important roles in the evolution of people, their ideas, places and environments;

➢ To develop a mental map of your community, province or territory, country and the world so that you can understand the “where” of places and events;

➢ To explain how the processes of human and physical systems have arranged and sometimes changed the surface of the Earth;

➢ To understand the spatial organization of society and see order in what often appears to be random scattering of people and places;

➢ To recognize spatial distributions at all scales – local and worldwide – in order to understand the complex connectivity of people and places;

➢ To be able to make sensible judgments about matters involving relationships between the physical environment and society;

➢ To appreciate Earth as the homeland of humankind and provide insight for wise management decisions about how the planet’s resources should be used; and

➢ To understand global interdependence and to become a better global citizen.

2.1. **Key Geographic Themes and Standards: The US Model**

Five fundamental themes of geography have been identified by a joint committee of the US National Council for Geographic Education and the Association of American Geographers. These are basic concepts and topics that recur in all geographic inquiry and at all levels of instruction. They are (Getis, Getis and Fellman, 2006, p.17):

- **Location:** the relative and absolute position on the earth’s surface;
- **Place:** the distinctive and distinguishing physical and human characteristics of locales;
- **Relationships within places:** the development and consequences of human-environmental relationships;
- **Movement:** patterns and change in human spatial interaction on the earth; and
- **Regions:** how they form and change.

It was also argued that the geographically informed person knows and understands about six key issues presented in the following section (Getis, Getis and Fellman, 2006, p.19).
A. *The World in Space Terms:*
   1. How to use maps and other geographic tools and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.
   2. How to use mental maps to organize information about people, places and environments in a special context.
   3. How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on Earth’s surface.

B. *Places and Regions:*
   4. The physical and human characteristics of places.
   5. That people create regions to interpret Earth’s complexity.
   6. How culture and experience influence people’s perceptions of places and regions.

C. *Physical Systems:*
   7. The physical processes that shape the patterns of Earth’s surface.
   8. The characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems on Earth’s surface.

D. *Human Systems:*
   9. The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth’s surface.
   10. The characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth’s cultural mosaics.
   11. The patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth’s surface.
   12. The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement.
   13. How the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth’s surface.

E. *Environment and society:*
   14. How human actions modify the physical environment.
   15. How physical systems affect human systems.
   16. The changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources.

F. *The Uses of Geography:*
   17. How to apply geography to interpret the past.
   18. How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

The six issues have been used extensively while developing the Geography teachers’ professional standards for Ethiopian secondary schools. It is also interesting to note that all the six areas have
been addressed, albeit to a different extent, in the syllabi for Ethiopian schools Geography grades 9-10.

2.2. Key Geographic Themes and Standards: The Australian Model

A successful geography teaching engages students in the classroom and in the field and is built on substantive knowledge of the discipline, continual planning, evaluation and renewal of teachers’ professional knowledge and practice (www.geogstandards.edu.au). The professional standards were developed by the University of Melbourne, The Australian Geography Teachers’ Association, the Geography Teachers’ Association of Victoria, and the Victorian Institute of Teaching. The standards were developed through videotaping and interviewing accomplished geography teachers and their students at work in government and nongovernmental schools in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia. The overall purpose of the project was to develop a dynamic set of subject specific standard for school geography in Australian schools, which built on a platform of classroom practice, for the purpose of enhancing teacher professional learning.

The professional standards prepared for Australia are hence believed to establish a framework for geography teachers to reflect individually and collectively on their professional practice and engage in continuing into their own teaching. They are also hoped to provide aspirational goals for teaching as the standards are written to describe highly accomplished geography teaching. They articulate common and distinctive elements of the specialized practice of geography teaching as an alternative to generic standards.

The following are such standards along with their respective indicators.

   A. Knowing geography and geography curriculum
   B. Fostering geographical enquiry and fieldwork
   C. Developing geographical thinking and communication
   D. Understanding students and their communities
   E. Establishing a safe, supportive and intellectually challenging learning environment
   F. Understanding geography teaching- pedagogical practices
   G. Planning, assessing and reporting
   H. Progressing professional growth and development
   I. Learning and working collegially
3. Geography Teachers' Standards for Ethiopian Schools

The subject matter standards itemized below are intended to assure that (1) Geography teachers at the first cycle of secondary level (grades 9-10) possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions associated with the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures related to Geography at this level; and (2) that they are able to create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for learners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STANDARD 1: CONTENT KNOWLEDGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Element</strong></td>
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</table>
| Demonstrating the World in Spatial Terms | A geography teacher for grades 9-10:  
  ➢ *Indicator 1*: uses maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information;  
  ➢ *Indicator 2*: uses mental maps to organize information about people, places, and environments in a spatial context; and  
  ➢ *Indicator 3*: analyzes the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on earth’s surface. |
| Distinguishing Places and Regions | A geography teacher for grades 9-10:  
  ➢ *Indicator 1*: distinguishes the physical and human characteristics of places in the World in general and Africa and Ethiopia in particular;  
  ➢ *Indicator 2*: illustrates how people create regions to interpret Earth’s complexity; and describes and explains how culture and experience influence people’s perceptions of places and regions. |
| Understanding Physical Phenomena and their Characteristics | A geography teacher for grades 9-10:  
  ➢ *Indicator 1*: identifies and explains the physical processes that shape the patterns of Earth’s surface;  
  ➢ *Indicator 2*: describes and explains the characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems and biomes on Earth’s surface in general and Africa and Ethiopia in particular; and  
  ➢ *Indicator 3*: describes and explains world climate and factors that cause climate change and its effect. |
| Understanding Human Activities and their Characteristics | A geography teacher for grades 9-10:  
  ➢ *Indicator 1*: describes and explains the characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth’s surface in general and Africa and Ethiopia in particular;  
  ➢ *Indicator 2*: identifies and explains the characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth’s cultural mosaics in general and that of Arica and Ethiopia in particular;  
  ➢ *Indicator 3*: explains the patterns and networks of economic... |
interdependence on Earth’s surface in general and Africa and Ethiopia in particular; and

- **Indicator 4**: describes the processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement in the world in general and Africa and Ethiopia in particular;

| Understanding the Interactions between Environment and Society | **A geography teacher for grades 9-10:**
| --- | --- |
|  | **Indicator 1**: explains the way in which human actions modify the physical environment;
|  | **Indicator 2**: describes the way in which physical features affect human systems; and
|  | **Indicator 3**: explains the changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources. |

| Understanding Historical Development of and Uses of Geography | **A geography teacher for grades 9-10:**
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Indicator 1</strong>: applies geography to interpret the past and present; and plan for the future.</td>
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| Understanding Public and Policy Related Issues in Ethiopia | **A geography teacher for grades 9-10:**
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<td><strong>Indicator 1</strong>: explains the implications of such public and policy issues in Ethiopia as HIV/AIDS policy, environmental policy, economic policy, and population policy to education in general and geographic education in particular.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence Guide</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Critical aspect of the standard | Geography teachers teaching in the Ethiopian secondary schools (grade 9-10) are expected to have knowledge and skills:
|  | - related to the whole academic discipline including its concepts, skills, values and understandings;
|  | - that assist students to understand that geography draws from the physical sciences, the social sciences and the humanities;
|  | - related to current curriculum documents and reasons for curriculum change; and
|  | - in locating geography within a wider educational context, making connections with other curricular and co-curricular areas. |

| Methods of assessment | Competency may be accessed through written test and portfolio. |
| Context of assessment | Competency may be assessed in the workplace, i.e., in schools where teachers teach and interact with fellow teachers, students, parents, school management, etc. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STANDARD 2: PEDAGOGICAL KNOWLEDGE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Element</strong></td>
<td><strong>Performance Indicators</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Knows Students and How they Learn: | Geography teachers at grades 9-10:
|  | **Indicator 1: seek and use support to gifted students** from specialists and other sources of expertise to enhance student learning;
| Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning |  |
|  | **Indicator 2**: identify the learning needs of individuals and or |
needs of students with various backgrounds

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<th>Demonstrate respect and care about students</th>
<th>groups of students and provide an inclusive learning environment;</th>
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<td>— <strong>Indicator 3:</strong> tailor learning experiences according to individual students' learning styles and needs;</td>
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<td>— <strong>Indicator 4:</strong> creatively link their sophisticated geographical understandings with the diverse and developing understandings of their students;</td>
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<td>— <strong>Indicator 5:</strong> recognize cognitive differences among students by developing a repertoire of teaching strategies, gathering and incorporating appropriate instructional materials, and utilizing a variety of assessment procedures related to geography education; and</td>
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<td>— <strong>Indicator 6:</strong> accommodate instruction for physical differences by providing classroom arrangements to meet the needs of all students and adapting lessons to meet visual, auditory, tactile and other needs.</td>
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<th>Geography teachers at grades 9-10:</th>
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<td>— <strong>Indicator 1:</strong> impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time and a variety of teaching methodologies.</td>
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<td>— <strong>Indicator 2:</strong> set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding students have acquired.</td>
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<td>— <strong>Indicator 3:</strong> reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching.</td>
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<td>— <strong>Indicator 4:</strong> Complete lesson planning which comprises four components: (before, during, after, and follow-up planning).</td>
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<td>— <strong>Indicator 2:</strong> Communicate effectively to stimulate pupils and achieve the objectives of lessons.</td>
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<td>— <strong>Indicator 3:</strong> Employ a range of teaching strategies and justify</td>
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their approach.

- **Indicator 4:** Set expectations and a pace of work which make appropriate demand
- **Indicator 5:** Teaching should be built on a framework of research-based instructional strategies on all students.
- **Indicator 6:** Perform action research as the basis for good teaching

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<th>Geography teachers at grades 9-10:</th>
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<th>Geography teachers at grades 9-10:</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Indicator 1:</strong> Understand and apply the principles of assessment, recording and reporting</td>
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<td><strong>Indicator 2:</strong> Incorporate appropriate evaluation tools and instruments</td>
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<td><strong>Indicator 3:</strong> Use the results of assessment to evaluate and improve teaching and to improve standards of attainment</td>
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**Evidence Guide**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical aspect of the standard</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geography teachers at grades 9-10 are expected to possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions to organize and provide instruction at this level for the study of individual development and identity. They are supposed to use teaching strategies based on knowledge of students’ physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics to improve student learning; and apply an understanding of human development and learning theory to the design of learning experiences.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Methods of assessment</th>
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<td>Context of assessment</td>
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</table>
## Table: Test Item Specification for Geography Grade 9-10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Sub Standard</th>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Cognitive Domains</th>
<th>No. Objective Items</th>
<th>No. Subjective Items</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content Knowledge</td>
<td>Know the Content and How to Teach It</td>
<td>The World in Space</td>
<td>Recall</td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Application</td>
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<td>Places and Regions</td>
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<td>Physical Systems</td>
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<td>Environment and Society</td>
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<td>The Uses of Geography</td>
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<td>Pedagogy Knowledge</td>
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<td>Know students and how they learn</td>
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<td>Demonstrate respect and care about students</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Know how to plan Instructions</td>
<td>Plan well structured lessons</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Know how to Deliver Instructions</td>
<td>Demonstrate Principles of Teaching and Learning</td>
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</table>
| **Know the Content and How to Teach It:** | A geography teacher for grades 11-12:  
- **Indicator 1:** distinguishes contour lines representing various landforms and indivisibility over landforms;  
- **Indicator 2:** identifies maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information;  
- **Indicator 3:** uses mental maps to organize information about people, places, and environments in a spatial context; and  
- **Indicator 4:** analyzes the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on earth’s surface. |
| **Demonstrating the World in Spatial Terms** |  |
| **Distinguishing Places and Regions** | A geography teacher for grades 11-12:  
- **Indicator 1:** describes the absolute and relative location, size and shape of Africa and Ethiopia;  
- **Indicator 2:** distinguishes the physical and human characteristics of places in the World in general, Africa in particular and Ethiopia;  
- **Indicator 3:** explains how people classify regions to interpret Earth’s complexity; and  
- **Indicator 4:** describes how culture and experience influence people’s perceptions of places and regions. |
| **Understanding Physical Phenomena and their Characteristics** | A geography teacher for grades 11-12:  
- **Indicator 1:** describes the geology of Africa as well as the characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems and biomes in the continent; and explains the geology of Ethiopia and the Horn as well as the characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems and biomes in the region;  
- **Indicator 2:** describes the characteristics of climate and drainage system of Africa as well as the causes and consequences of climate change; and  
- **Indicator 3:** explains the characteristics of climate and drainage system in the Ethiopia and the Horn as well as the causes and consequences of climate change in the region. |
| **Understanding Human Activities and their Characteristics** | A geography teacher for grades 11-12:  
- **Indicator 1:** describes the characteristics, distribution, measure of population and migration of human populations in Africa and Ethiopia;  
- **Indicator 2:** explains the characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations in Ethiopia and the Horn;  
- **Indicator 3:** explains the complex interrelationship between population, use of natural resources and economic growth and development in Africa and Ethiopia;  
- **Indicator 4:** analyses the patterns and networks of economic interdependence in Africa; and  
- **Indicator 5:** explains the processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement in Africa and Ethiopia. |
| Understanding the Interactions between Environment and Society | A geography teacher for grades 11-12:  
- **Indicator 1:** describes the way in which human actions modify the physical environment;  
- **Indicator 2:** explains the way in which physical features affect human activities;  
- **Indicator 3:** describes and explains the changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources; and  
- **Indicator 4:** identifies the challenges and prospects for socio-economic development in Africa and Ethiopia. |
|---|---|
| Understanding Historical Development and Uses of Geography | A geography teacher for grades 11-12:  
- **Indicator 1:** describes the major thoughts about geography both as a discipline and school subject;  
- **Indicator 2:** applies geography to interpret the past and the present; and plans for the future. |
| Evidence | Descriptions |
| Critical aspect of the standard | Geography teachers teaching in the Ethiopian secondary schools (grade 11-12) are expected to have knowledge about and skills:  
- related to the whole academic discipline including its concepts, skills, values and understandings;  
- that assist students to understand that geography draws from the physical sciences, the social sciences and the humanities;  
- related to current curriculum documents and reasons for curriculum change; and  
- in locating geography within a wider educational context, making connections with other curricular and co-curricular areas. |
| Methods of assessment | Competency may be accessed through written test and portfolio. |
| Context of assessment | Competency may be assessed in the workplace, i.e., in schools where teachers teach and interact with fellow teachers, students, parents, school management, etc. |

**SUB-STANDARD 2: PEDAGOGY KNOWLEDGE**

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- **Indicator 1:** seek and use support to gifted students from specialists and other sources of expertise to enhance student learning;  
- **Indicator 2:** identify the learning needs of individuals and or groups of students and provide an inclusive learning environment; |
| Demonstrate respect and care about students | ➢ Indicator 3: tailor learning experiences according to individual students’ learning styles ad needs;  
➢ Indicator 4: creatively link their sophisticated geographical understandings with the diverse and developing understandings of their students;  
➢ Indicator 5: recognize cognitive differences among students by developing a repertoire of teaching strategies, gathering and incorporating appropriate instructional materials, and utilizing a variety of assessment procedures related to geography education; and  
➢ Indicator 6: accommodate instruction for physical differences by providing classroom arrangements to meet the needs of all students and adapting lessons to meet visual, auditory tactile and other needs. |
| Plan well structured lessons | Geography teachers at grades 11-12:  
➢ Indicator 1: impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time  
➢ Indicator 2: set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding students have acquired  
➢ Indicator 3: reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching  
➢ Indicator 4: Complete lesson planning which comprises four components: (before, during, after, and follow-up planning) |
| Demonstrate Principles of Teaching and Learning | Geography teachers at grades 11-12:  
➢ Indicator 1: Plan coherent, progressive teaching programmes and justify what they teach.  
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➢ Indicator 3: Employ a range of teaching strategies and justify their approach.  
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