

GENERAL PAPER SYLLABUS

Pre-University Higher 1

Implementation starting with
2023 Pre-University One Cohort



Ministry of Education
SINGAPORE

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Desired Outcomes of Education

21st Century Competencies (21CC)

The General Paper in the A-Level Curriculum

Syllabus Aims and Learning Outcomes

1. INTRODUCTION

DESIRED OUTCOMES OF EDUCATION

The Desired Outcomes of Education are attributes that educators aspire for all students to have by the completion of their formal education.

Students schooled in the Singapore education system embody the Desired Outcomes of Education. They should possess:

- a good sense of self-awareness;
- a sound moral compass; and
- the necessary skills and knowledge to take on challenges of the future.

They should also be:

- **confident persons** who have a zest for life, have a strong sense of right and wrong, are adaptable and resilient, know themselves, are discerning in judgment, think independently and critically, and communicate effectively.
- **self-directed learners** who take responsibility for their own learning and question, reflect and persevere in the lifelong pursuit of learning.
- **active contributors** who are able to work effectively in teams, exercise initiative, take calculated risks, are innovative, and strive for excellence.
- **concerned citizens** who are rooted to Singapore, have a strong civic consciousness, are responsible to their family, community and nation, and take active roles in improving the lives of others.

21st CENTURY COMPETENCIES (21CC)



Framework for 21st Century Competencies and Student Outcomes¹
 © Ministry of Education, 2014

Globalisation, changing demographics and technological advancements are some of the key driving forces of our current times, and they will continue to shape our future. To help our students thrive in this fast-changing world, the Framework for 21st Century Competencies and Student Outcomes identifies the core values and competencies that underpin the holistic education that our schools provide. Together, these core values and competencies will enable our students to tap into rich opportunities in the digital age while keeping a strong Singapore heartbeat.

¹ For more information on the Framework for 21st Century Competencies and Student Outcomes, access <https://www.moe.gov.sg/education-in-sg/21st-century-competencies>

THE GENERAL PAPER IN THE A-LEVEL CURRICULUM

General Paper (GP) contributes to the attainment of the Desired Outcomes of Education and the development of 21CC by requiring students to critically analyse real-world issues, appreciate the complexities that individuals and societies face, and make informed and responsible decisions. Students also learn to communicate ideas effectively and persuasively. Underpinning the learning of knowledge and skills in GP are sound values, which will help guide students in making responsible decisions in life and for life. At the same time, students develop the dispositions that enable them to be confident and self-directed learners as well as concerned citizens who are prepared to actively contribute to society.

SYLLABUS AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Syllabus Aims

The GP Syllabus aims to encourage students to:

- understand better the world and themselves by fostering a critical awareness of continuity and change in the human experience;
- broaden their global outlook and deepen their understanding of local issues as well as how issues of regional and global importance relate to Singapore;
- appreciate the interrelationship of ideas across time, space and disciplines;
- develop critical and inventive thinking skills;
- develop critical reading skills and engage in independent research; and
- develop the skills of communicating clearly, accurately and effectively using the English language.

Learning Outcomes

The GP course enables students to develop the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions outlined below.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
<p>By the end of the GP course, students will be able to demonstrate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an understanding of issues of local, regional and global significance; • critical and inventive thinking skills through sound reasoning and the formulation of informed and insightful personal responses; and • an understanding of how the English language is used to shape meaning and the use of the language for effective communication.
VALUES
<p>The GP course provides students with opportunities to further develop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect through appreciating the diverse views and perspectives of others; • Responsibility through seeking out accurate, credible and current information in order to make informed decisions; • Integrity through clarifying and articulating ethical principles and having the moral courage to stand by their convictions or concede their errors; • Care through developing empathy and the desire to contribute to their community and the world; • Resilience through persevering in the pursuit of knowledge, understanding and personal growth in a dynamic and complex world; and • Harmony through contributing to a safe learning environment for the discussion of issues and appreciating the need for both unity and diversity in multi-cultural societies.
DISPOSITIONS
<p>Through the GP course, students develop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an active interest in local, regional and global issues and trends; • a willingness to acknowledge and consider different perspectives; • a questioning mind towards information, ideas and issues; • a motivation to participate in discussions in a respectful and informed manner; • an inclination to reflect on their own thinking, beliefs and values; • a willingness to stand up for their convictions; • an open mind towards managing uncertainties faced in new and unfamiliar contexts; and • an appreciation of their responsibilities towards the local, regional and global communities.

SECTION 2: CONTENT – KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

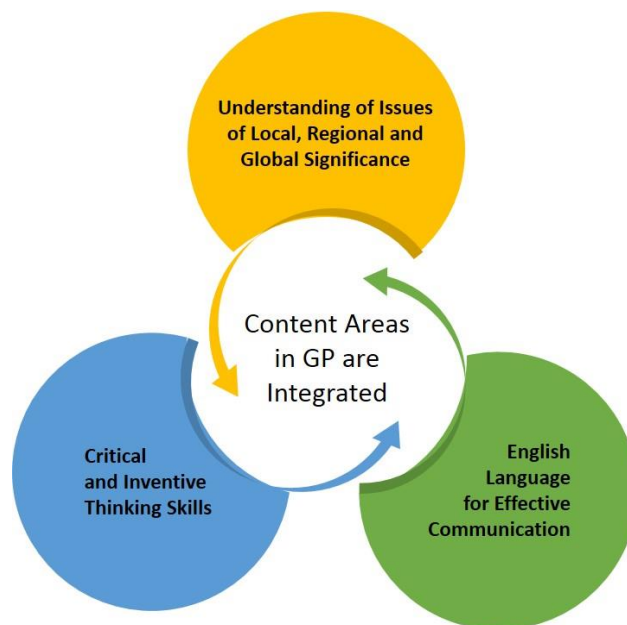
Area 1: Understanding of Issues of Local, Regional and Global Significance

Area 2: Critical and Inventive Thinking

Area 3: English Language for Effective Communication

2. CONTENT – KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The GP content comprises both knowledge and skills in three areas – *Understanding of Issues of Local, Regional and Global Significance*, *Critical and Inventive Thinking*, and *English Language for Effective Communication*.



The understanding of issues involves the active application of critical and inventive thinking skills as students examine the significance of these issues in the local, regional and global contexts. The teaching of English language skills is important to GP as it supports access to materials that develop understanding and sound reasoning. Language is also the means by which students communicate their understanding and reasoning. Knowledge and skills in these three areas are taught in an iterative and integrated manner.

Metacognition, the awareness and understanding of one's own thinking, is an important part of GP learning. As students think about their own thinking, they are able to improve their learning and increase their ability to transfer their learning to new contexts and tasks. In building knowledge and skills in the three areas, students develop skills of metacognition to become self-directed learners.

AREA 1: UNDERSTANDING OF ISSUES OF LOCAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL SIGNIFICANCE

In GP, students discuss issues and appreciate the interrelationship of ideas within and across issues. It is important that students relate new knowledge to prior knowledge as well as make and re-examine connections among ideas and across issues. By doing so, students go beyond the learning of facts and discrete topics to develop understanding at a conceptual level, which is transferable to other issues.

The understanding of issues of local, regional and global significance involves actively applying critical and inventive thinking skills to the examination of issues that are timeless and/or current. The skills are outlined below.

- Identify and gather relevant information and ideas through independent research.
- Consider various perspectives on issues in relation to the Singapore context and our shared values.
- Critically examine the significance of issues on the individual, our society, our region and the world.
- Synthesise ideas across issues and develop conceptual understanding.

An examination of issues of local, regional and global significance requires students to draw on current affairs as well as general knowledge related to:

- society and culture
- economics
- politics
- the arts and humanities
- science and technology
- the environment

AREA 2: CRITICAL AND INVENTIVE THINKING

Critical and Inventive Thinking² in GP involves sound reasoning through active and skilful analysis and evaluation of information and ideas. GP develops curiosity and creativity in students through active inquiry into new knowledge, generation and/or co-construction of ideas and adaptation of ideas in formulating an informed and insightful personal response. Sound reasoning is developed in tandem with the language skills for communication. The skills related to critical and inventive thinking in the GP course are outlined below.

- **Analysis:** identify the relationships between components in a text³
 - identify the components of a text and how they relate to one another
 - infer meanings
- **Evaluation:** assess the strengths and weaknesses of an argument
 - assess the accuracy and credibility of information or its source
 - assess the cogency of an argument
 - assess the significance of an argument and its implications and consequences
- **Creation:** form well-reasoned, informed and insightful personal responses
 - synthesise ideas, arguments and/or evidence from various sources
 - generate ideas both individually and collaboratively
 - apply and adapt ideas to other contexts

² The term 'Critical and Inventive Thinking' takes reference from the MOE 21CC Framework.

³ Text refers to any text that is spoken, written, visual or multi-modal.

AREA 3: ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Students will understand how the English language is used to shape meaning. They will apply this understanding as they access texts and communicate effectively.

Students will understand and demonstrate the following:

- how the organisation and development of ideas communicate a stance;
- how the appropriate use of language contributes to persuasion, effective expression of ideas and an informed and insightful personal response; and
- how the revision of ideas and language use enhance relevance and clarity in the expression of ideas and an informed and insightful personal response.

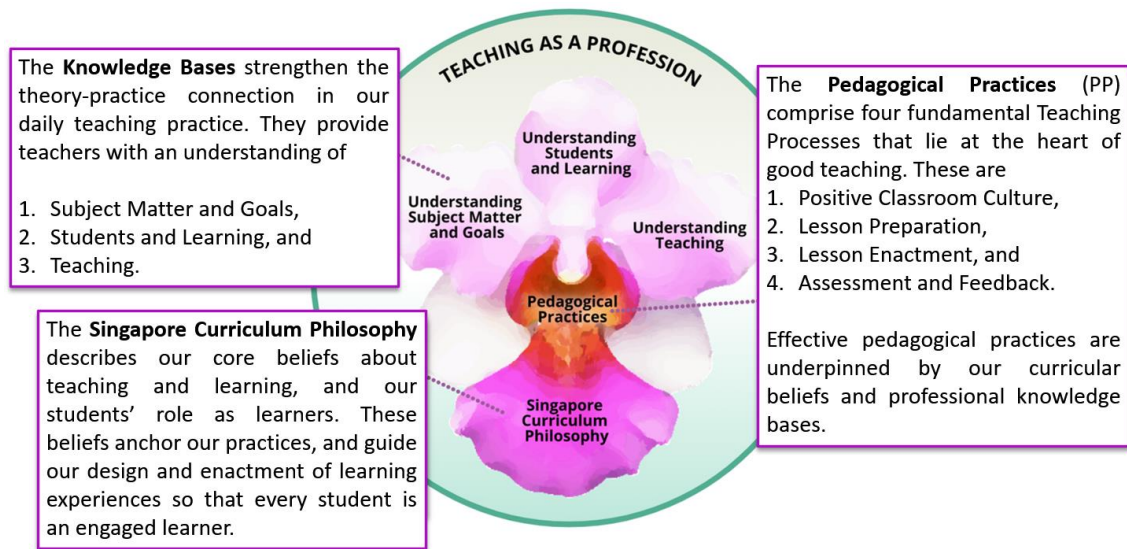
SECTION 3: PEDAGOGY

The Singapore Teaching Practice
Principles for the Teaching and Learning of General Paper
Recommended Pedagogical Approaches for General Paper
The Place of ICT in General Paper

3. PEDAGOGY

THE SINGAPORE TEACHING PRACTICE

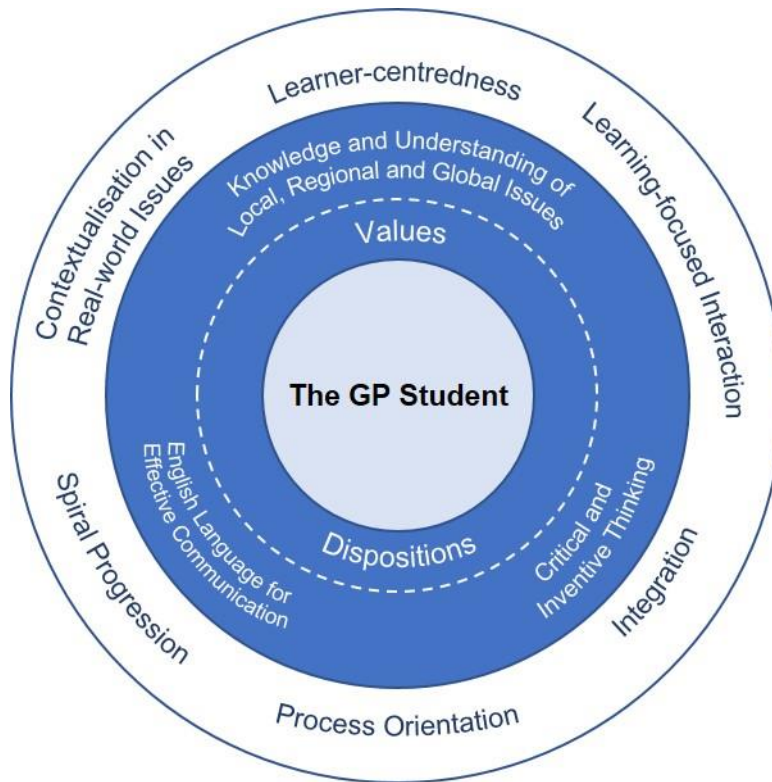
The Singapore Teaching Practice (STP) is a model that makes explicit how effective teaching and learning is achieved in Singapore. Anchored on the notion of teaching as a profession, the STP draws on Singapore educators' beliefs about how students learn, and teachers teach. It is represented in the form of an orchid to reflect the Singapore context within which teachers practise their craft.



GP teachers are guided by the STP and the Principles for the Teaching and Learning of GP in considering their pedagogical approaches. To enable students with different learning needs and interests to achieve the learning outcomes, GP teachers engage in Pedagogical Practices comprising the four fundamental Teaching Processes that lie at the heart of good teaching: positive classroom culture, lesson preparation, lesson enactment as well as assessment and feedback.

PRINCIPLES FOR THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF GENERAL PAPER

The Learning Outcomes and the Principles for the Teaching and Learning of GP are represented diagrammatically below. With the GP student at the core, the Learning Outcomes of GP are represented in the second ring and the Principles for the Teaching and Learning of GP are reflected in the third ring.



Overview of the Teaching and Learning of General Paper

The Principles of GP teaching and learning are encapsulated in CLLIPS:

- Contextualisation in Real-world Issues
- Learner-centredness
- Learning-focused Interaction
- Integration
- Process Orientation
- Spiral Progression

Contextualisation in Real-world Issues

The teaching and learning of critical and inventive thinking skills and the English language are contextualised in real-world issues that cut across disciplines and are contemporary and/or timeless.

Learner-centredness

Learner-centredness means putting learners at the heart of the teaching and learning process and empowering them to be active participants and owners of their learning.

Learning-focused Interaction

Learning-focused interaction entails providing an intellectually stimulating and safe learning environment for collaboration and discussion. Students exercise mutual respect when considering and discussing diverse views both in the classroom and online.

Integration

The integration of real-world issues, critical and inventive thinking skills, and the use of the English language for effective communication in GP provides opportunities for students to critically explore perspectives, make connections, and appreciate how language is used to convey meaning.

Process Orientation

Process orientation involves scaffolding and modelling of learning processes for the development of critical and inventive thinking and communication skills.

Spiral Progression

The process skills of critical and inventive thinking and communication are taught, revised and revisited at increasing levels of sophistication for students to develop a deeper understanding of issues and demonstrate mastery of skills.

RECOMMENDED PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES FOR GENERAL PAPER

While there can be no exhaustive list of pedagogical approaches prescribed for GP, this section outlines three recommended pedagogies that draw on the Principles for the Teaching and Learning of GP and the Singapore Teaching Practice:

- Explicit Instruction;
- Dialogic Teaching; and
- Collaborative Learning.

Explicit Instruction

Explicit Instruction is an approach in which teachers explain, structure, scaffold and sequence knowledge, and higher order thinking and language skills to help students understand the purpose, process and targets of their learning. It also involves building on what students know and equipping them with skills to take incremental ownership of their own learning.

Dialogic Teaching

The dialogic approach involves teacher-student, teacher-students, student-student, and student-students discussions. Through the use of dialogue, teachers provide opportunities for purposeful interrogation of information, ideas and issues that generate and formulate multiple perspectives in order to deepen understanding. The continuous process of negotiation and knowledge co-construction enhances students' thinking.

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative Learning refers to the intentional grouping of students to achieve a shared learning goal in the classroom and/or online. Collaborative Learning includes intentional design, co-labouring of group members and learning activities that encourage construction and co-construction of meaning from knowledge and experiences. To support Collaborative Learning, students are also explicitly taught ways to discuss and work effectively in groups.

THE PLACE OF ICT IN GENERAL PAPER

With its many affordances, ICT serves as an enabler which contributes to a culture where learning is student-directed, collaborative, continuous and iterative. ICT allows greater personalisation of learning for students, enabling them to learn anytime and anywhere. ICT platforms help teachers to integrate a wider range of authentic resources and contexts for GP learning.

SECTION 4: ASSESSMENT

Formative and Summative Assessment in General Paper

4. ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the process of gathering and analysing evidence about learning. It provides timely and targeted feedback to move students' learning forward. This process is integral to help students become self-directed learners. Assessment also enhances learning as information serves as feedback for teachers to modify teaching practices in response to students' learning needs.

Assessment can take the form of performance tasks, school-based tests or national examinations. The underlying goal of all forms of assessment should be to facilitate meaningful learning where the learning process is developmentally appropriate, caters to students' varied needs, and helps them achieve the Desired Outcomes of Education. Teachers will assess students both formally and informally at a frequency decided by the school using different modes of assessment in a balanced and learner-centred manner.

FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN GENERAL PAPER

A balanced and learner-centred assessment system consists of both formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment is carried out during the instructional process for the purpose of improving teaching and learning. In formative assessment, both teachers and students understand and focus on the learning goals, take stock of current levels of understanding, and work towards narrowing the learning gap between current understanding and the learning goals. Summative assessment aims to certify learning for reporting to stakeholders about students' learning achievements. The A-level national examination is an example of summative assessment. Both formative and summative assessment inform and support teaching and learning.

**SECTION 5:
REFERENCES AND
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Curriculum Planning and Development Division, Ministry of Education, wishes to acknowledge the contributions of the teachers, Heads of Department, principals, lecturers and institutions who participated in the process of the development and refinement of the General Paper syllabus.

ISBN: 978-981-18-6161-1