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FULL PROGRAMME PROPOSAL

BACHELOR OF ARTS

in Geography and Environmental Studies

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Effect of rising sea level continue to damage the coastal line of trees and coconut palms at Olusuú bay, Small Malaita



September 2025

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1.0 Programme Overview

It is indeed an honor for the School of Humanities (SOH) to present its Bachelor of Arts (BA) academic programme proposal for formal consideration. This section provides an overview of the main components of the programme proposal. Since its establishment in 2015, SOH has been offering subject content for the School of Education (SOE) academic programmes, particularly at the diploma and bachelor's degree levels. From the outset, it has been a long-standing vision of SOH to develop its own academic programs that are need-based, academically rigorous, and relevant to the job market in the Solomon Islands and in the region. Furthermore, the School aspires to develop a comprehensive range of academic programs extending from the undergraduate to the postgraduate level.

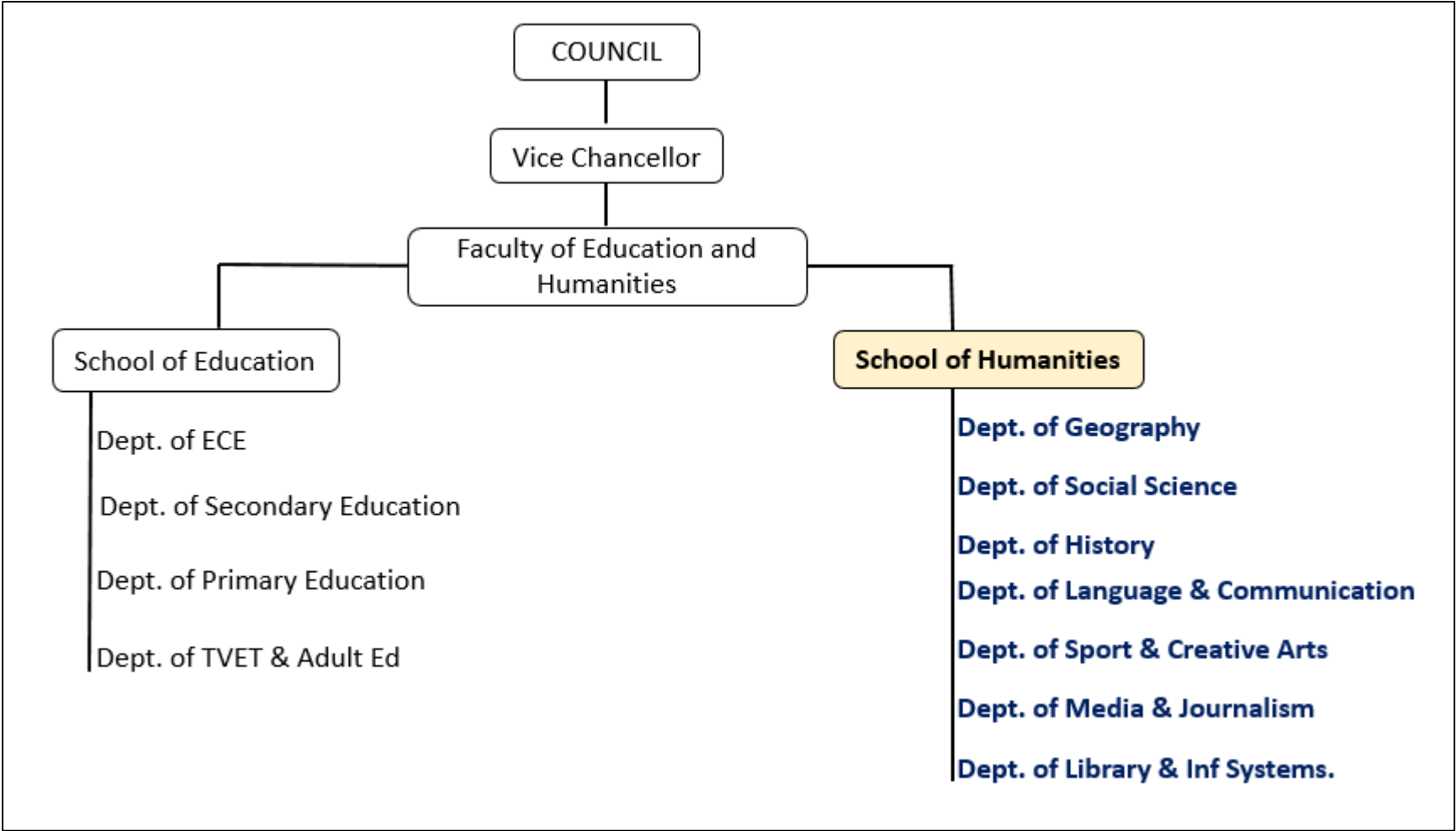
In line with its vision, the SOH commenced an initial stakeholder consultation on November 16, 2022, and conducted several subject-expert consultations earlier in 2023, with visiting academics from various international universities. These consultations focused on identifying the specific subject content required for the BA program to address local needs and context while aligning with international academic standards. The outcomes of the initial consultation reports are encouraging. The SOH is considering these needs to develop a comprehensive BA program structure that includes an exit point at the diploma level for employed individuals seeking to upskill in the workplace, while also providing pathways for those aiming to pursue higher degrees at the postgraduate and master's levels.

The School of Humanities (SOH) has a team of competent academic staff with teaching and social research experience in arts and humanities subjects, capable of delivering the BA program. Academic staff from the Faculty of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry (Environment Department) will also contribute by offering five units to the BA program. These qualified local resources are well-equipped to deliver the program successfully. Additionally, there are opportunities to involve overseas experts, which we anticipate exploring through our ongoing engagement with international colleagues and counterparts.

1.1 FEH Organizational Structure

Under the School of Humanities, there are seven departments with significant potential to expand their scope from an educational focus to broader Arts programmes, thereby enhancing the country’s capacity and creating an additional workforce for various sectors, organisations, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The BA proposal is designed to provide an academic framework and structure for all SOH departments to follow when developing their respective major subjects. The Department of Geography takes the lead in offering the main subject content for the BA major in Geography and Environmental Studies.

Table 1: Council and FEH Organization Structure



2.0 Introduction

The development of the Bachelor of Arts (BA) programme aligns with SINU's Strategic Plan 2021–2025, specifically Goal 1, Objective 1.1: ensuring that the university offers programmes that suit and address the human resource needs of the country. The BA programme would create employment opportunities within the country, under the national institution.

The Solomon Islands National University (SINU), as the premier institution of higher education in the Solomon Islands, bears a significant responsibility to equip local students with the knowledge and skills required to address the country's unique environmental and societal challenges. The introduction of a Bachelor of Arts Degree degree Geography and Environmental Studies at SINU's within of Education and Humanities (FEH) is pivotal in crucial pressing tackling like resource such as climate change impacts, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development. This program is programme plays a vital role local capacity-building, generating specialized knowledge, specialised providing students with the with both foundation and practical skills required to necessary environmental challenges while advancing socio-economic promoting in the Solomon Islands and the broader Pacific wider

The School of Humanities offers a Diploma in Youth Development Studies, as well as Diplomas and Certificates in Media and Journalism and in Library and Information Systems. These programmes address only part of the professional workforce's needs in the country. While the School of Humanities will continue to provide subject content for the School of Education's teacher training programmes, it will also offer its own BA academic programmes.

2.1 National and Regional Context

The Solomon Islands' geographical and cultural diversity, combined with its vulnerability to environmental challenges such as rising sea levels, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and natural disasters, necessitates targeted education in geography and environmental studies. As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), the country faces unique risks associated with climate change, resource exploitation, and environmental degradation, making sustainable development and environmental stewardship essential pillars of its national agenda.

At the regional level, the Solomon Islands play a crucial role within the Pacific community's environmental and conservation efforts. Therefore, a local programme that integrates geographic, socio-economic, and environmental perspectives is essential to ensure that graduates can contribute meaningfully to both national priorities and regional cooperative efforts in the Pacific.

2.2 Significance of the BA program for SINU and the Solomon Islands

The significance of the BA for SINU and Solomon Islands is outlined below.

- **Strategic National Importance:** SINU's establishment of this program marks a critical investment in human capital for addressing environmental issues aligned with the Solomon Islands' National Development Strategy.
- **Empowering Indigenous Knowledge Systems:** The program recognizes the value of integrating traditional ecological knowledge with scientific approaches to sustainability.

- **Fostering Regional Leadership:** Equipped with advanced training, graduates can represent the Solomon Islands in multinational organizations, such as the Pacific Islands Forum and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.
- **Stimulating Research and Innovation:** As the country lacks significant locally-driven research on environmental and geographic issues, the program will stimulate innovation to solve national and regional problems.
- **Economic Development:** By creating a workforce that is trained for emerging sectors such as ecotourism, alternative energy, and sustainable agriculture, the program contributes to economic diversification and environmental protection.

2.3 Aims and Key Learning Outcomes of the Programme

The Bachelor of Arts in Geography and Environmental Studies aims to produce well-rounded graduates who can contribute to environmental sustainability by combining academic knowledge with practical skills and a strong understanding of the interconnectedness between humans and the environment.

- **Interdisciplinary Perspective:** Graduates will be able to analyse environmental problems from a multidisciplinary perspective, drawing on knowledge from geography, environmental science, social sciences, and humanities.
- **Research Skills:** Students will develop strong research skills, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation, to address real-world environmental challenges.
- **Sustainability Focus:** Graduates will gain a comprehensive understanding of environmental sustainability, including the social, economic, and political dimensions of environmental issues.
- **Communication and Engagement:** Students will develop effective communication skills to convey complex environmental information to various audiences and engage in community-based environmental projects. Through partnerships with local communities, government agencies, and regional organizations, the program empowers Solomon Islanders to take ownership of environmental initiatives and leadership roles in the Pacific.
- **Critical Thinking:** The program encourages critical thinking about the environment and human impact, enabling graduates to evaluate different perspectives and propose effective solutions. It enhances students with the critical thinking skills necessary for continued learning and enables them to connect local environmental concerns to global sustainability movements.
- **Developing Environmental Expertise:** The program aims to cultivate graduates with a strong understanding of the interconnections between human activities and natural systems. This includes knowledge of geographic landscapes, resource management, climate patterns, and sustainability practices.
- **Promoting Applied Learning:** With practical components such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), and field research, the program ensures students can address real-world environmental challenges through data-driven and context-specific solutions.

- **Enhancing Socio-Economic Resilience:** By integrating environmental studies with socio-economic considerations, the program prepares students to engage in policymaking, land-use planning, and community-based adaptations that promote resilience and equitable development.

2.4 Justification for the Programme

The proposed Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Geography and Environmental Studies is a timely and strategic academic initiative that directly supports SINU's **Strategic Plan 2021–2025, particularly Goal 1, Objective 1.1:** "Ensuring that the University offers programmes that suit and address the human resource needs in the country." As the national university, SINU has a core responsibility to develop educational programmes that not only prepare students for employment but also respond to national and regional development challenges. This programme will equip graduates with the academic foundation, practical skills, and critical perspectives needed to address complex environmental and geographic issues in the Solomon Islands and the wider Pacific.

2.4.1 Institutional Relevance and Strategic Alignment

SINU's leadership role in tertiary education requires the development of programmes that are aligned with national development priorities and labour market demands. The BA in Geography and Environmental Studies will:

- Contribute to national capacity-building in the areas of environmental management, land-use planning, and climate change adaptation;
- Prepare graduates for employment in government ministries, provincial agencies, NGOs, and regional organisations;
- Provide a platform for research, innovation, and knowledge generation that supports informed policymaking and community resilience.

This programme also enhances the academic portfolio of the School of Humanities, which currently offers diploma and certificate programmes but does not yet provide full degree-level qualifications that respond comprehensively to national development needs.

2.4.2 Addressing Existing Academic Gaps

At present, the School of Humanities delivers:

- Diploma in Youth Development Studies
- Certificate and Diploma in Media and Journalism
- Diploma in Library and Information Systems
- Certificate in Library and Information Systems

While valuable, these programmes serve only selected sectors of the national workforce. The introduction of a BA programme addresses broader and emerging needs in geography, environmental studies, sustainability, and spatial analysis. It also provides an opportunity for the School of Humanities to expand its academic offerings and contribute more substantially to SINU's degree-level programmes.

2.4.3 National and Regional Context

The Solomon Islands faces significant environmental and developmental challenges as a Small Island Developing State (SIDS). These include:

- Rising sea levels and climate variability;

- Deforestation, resource depletion, and biodiversity loss;
- Increasing exposure to natural disasters and environmental hazards.

The programme responds to these national challenges by offering an integrated academic framework that prepares graduates to engage in environmental governance, sustainable development, and conservation work. Regionally, the programme supports the Solomon Islands' active participation in Pacific-wide environmental initiatives, enhancing the country's visibility and leadership on issues such as climate resilience and ecosystem management.

2.4.4 Strategic Significance of the Programme

The proposed programme offers significant academic, economic, and societal value, including:

- **Strategic National Importance:** Supports national strategies for sustainable development and environmental protection.
- **Empowerment of Indigenous Knowledge:** Integrates traditional ecological practices with scientific knowledge for culturally relevant solutions.
- **Regional Representation:** Equips graduates to participate in regional bodies such as the Pacific Islands Forum and SPREP.
- **Research and Innovation:** Encourages the development of locally led research to inform national policy and action.
- **Economic Development:** Builds a workforce capable of supporting sectors like ecotourism, renewable energy, environmental consultancy, and sustainable agriculture.

3.0 BA Planning Background

The initial planning and design of the programme began earlier in 2020. However, the plan was pursued more vigorously in 2022, during which a series of consultations and expert advice were sought both locally and overseas. A special committee was set up, comprising all heads of departments, including Dr Lincy Penderverana, the FEH Associate Dean of Research, as well as a geographer and development expert.

Two subject experts from the University of Melbourne were involved in providing expert advice regarding the programme structure and suggesting the relevant units for the programme. Dr Debra McDougall is an Associate Professor of Anthropology, and Dr John Cox is a Senior Research Fellow in Anthropology at the University of Melbourne. Dr Debra McDougall has conducted extensive research in the Western Province, particularly in Ranogga, since the late 1990s and continues to engage in research work there as well as at the Kulu Language Institute. Dr John Cox has been involved as a consultant in World Bank development projects in the Solomon Islands for many years.

4.0 Needs for the Programme and the Target Students

The programme is intended for various stakeholders. First, members of the paid employment community, both in the private sector and public service, who need to upskill their qualifications in research, social sciences, and human geography. Second, Year 13 students majoring in Arts and Science are a primary target of the BA programme. Third, UPC Certificate 4 students are also among the main target groups of the BA programme.

The BA programme is offered to students who wish to pursue academic and professional careers in social research, social work, economic development, environmental management, and disaster management.

The range of subjects offered in the programme provides a comprehensive breadth of knowledge in proper academic writing, covering areas such as geography, urban planning, social sciences, research culture, and conservation policies and practices. A focus on research methodologies equips students with the skills to conduct research, collect data, and compile reports, which are invaluable for their future careers. The technical knowledge of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) will enable students to develop and design maps and analyse data sets available at national and regional levels. The combination of these bodies of knowledge and practical skills will empower students to excel in any discipline within the scope of the programme.

Upon completion of the programme, students will be multi-skilled in key areas of geography and environmental disciplines, alongside social sciences, research, and literacy knowledge, enabling them to be competitive across various fields. They will be capable of working in environmental sectors such as climate change, disaster management, urban planning, and conservation, as well as conducting research or managing projects within various NGOs. In particular, geography, as the primary focus of the programme, provides a broad understanding of concepts and practical skills that will enable students to navigate their preferred career pathways. The programme's interdisciplinary design is tailored specifically for educators, as well as for careers across diverse sectors and industries related to these fields.

4.1 Community needs

The BA programme has been developed to meet the growing needs of tertiary students and the working population in the Solomon Islands and abroad. The School of Humanities (SOH) addresses these needs by providing students with the opportunity to pursue their academic ambitions and obtain a Bachelor of Arts degree at Solomon Islands National University. Majoring in Geography and Environmental Studies places emphasis on Geography courses that incorporate interdisciplinary theories from history, social sciences, and development studies, with a focus on the environment and its interaction with humans. This will enable graduates to work across diverse sectors, organisations, and NGOs throughout the country, all of which focus on human development in relation to the environment. Although the BA in Environmental Studies offered by the University of the South Pacific is costly, it has produced graduates employed in various fields within the country. Offering a similar programme at the nation's own institution creates greater study opportunities for disadvantaged students who face limited scholarship options and lack financial support to study overseas.

The need for this programme is clearly demonstrated in the Solomon Islands Government National Development Strategy (NDS) 2016–2025, and the annual scholarship highlights the demand for various qualifications and skills in the arts. Furthermore, in alignment with the NDS, the SIG's bilateral partner organisations have recognised the importance of community and social development, prioritising social scientific knowledge and skills development in counselling, social work, human geography and climate change, the creative industries, anthropology, gender and culture, Solomon Islands studies, and Pacific studies. In this way, investment is being returned to the country, thereby strengthening the economic base of the Solomon Islands. Offering a BA programme at SINU enables significant cost savings. A key point raised during consultations was the importance of developing a workforce in the arts with multi-disciplinary skills, particularly in environmental and social development sectors. The focus on geography and environmental studies encompasses multiple disciplines that intersect with various areas of development in the country. Enhancing students' practical knowledge and skills will enable them to access a wide range of employment opportunities within the Solomon Islands.

All students will have the opportunity to fully benefit from the newly tailored academic programme, which focuses on applied social scientific and ethnographic research to global standards, while maintaining local contextual relevance. The programme will be delivered by highly qualified SOH staff and specialised lecturers, whose leadership and experience in social and political sciences, as well as anthropological research, are renowned.

4.2 Semester Enrolment

Students enrolling for the Department of Geography units in the second semester of year 2022 have reached a total of 382, and a total of 345 students in semester one in 2023. That has contributed to an average enrollment of 2,311 in FEH in semester two in 2022 and semester one in 2023. The table(Figure 1.1)below shows the enrolment list of students under each departments of the School of Humanities in semester one 2023.

This project shows positive result and great provision for the School of Humanities to deliver, and expansion its programmes. And with growing needs for knowledge and skills in geography and climate change in the Solomon Islands and abroad. This programme will attract many high school students who have no placement in other tertiary Universities to continue their study program at the Institution to achieve their academic dreams.

Table 2. School of Humanities total enrolment per Semester (1) 2023

School of Humanities (SOH) Department enrolment for semester 1, 2023	
Semester One	
Departments	Total Number of Enrolled Students
Geography	345
Language, Literacy and Communication	701
Social Science	337
History	186
Creative Arts & Sports	272
Media & Journalism	8
Library	NN

5.0 BA Programme Structure

The BA programme has been structured through collaborative efforts within departments and across relevant faculties to ensure its effective management and successful academic delivery.

5.1 Name of Programme, code and Commencement date

Bachelor of Arts (Bachelor of Arts major in Geography and Environmental Studies) would be the main programme. The programme code name would be “GeoEnv”as its abbreviation.

The programme upon approval, is expected to comment on Semester 1, 2026.

5.2 Program Duration

The duration of the programme would be three years.

5.3 Level of Programme

The BA programme units are pitched at Level 7 in the SINU Qualification Framework (QF) levels as stipulated in the SINU Academic Handbook.

5.4 BA Units compositions.

The BA Programme consist of 24 units. This includes eight (8) major subject units, five (5) minor subject units, seven (7) core units (to be offered across all BA programme courses) and the four (4) SINU generics units (offered in years one and two). In Semester 2 of Year 3, students who have cumulative GPA below 4.5 may enrol in the HCU704 Capstone/Direct Project, while those who have achieved a GPA of 4.5 or higher will take HCU704 Research Methodology in preparation for the Honours Degree.

5.5 Teaching Modality.

The modes of teaching delivery include face-to-face sessions on campus, field visits, and research attachments to provide students with practical exposure and a deeper understanding of real-world contexts. Blended mode of delivery might be applied to some of the units.

5.6 Nomenclature of Award

Bachelor of Arts Degree Award (BA)

6.0 Programme Regulations

The BA programme will be guided by current SINU academic policies..

6.1 Admission Requirement for the BA Programme

- The BA programme admits Form 7 (Year 13) students with a GPA of 3.0 and above. A major in Arts subjects is an advantage.
- Pass in University Preparatory College Certificate Level 4 with a GPA of 3.0 and above +
- Pass in Form 7 (Year 13) Arts subjects or equivalent from any tertiary schools abroad with a GPA of 3.0 and above.
- Students who have come straight from Form 7 (Year 13), with Form 7 passes of GPA 3.0 and above:
 - They will enrol in the Bachelor programme and do level 5 units as per the programme structure.
- Students who did their University Preparatory College Certificate Level 4 in SINU with passes of GPA 3.0 and above:
 - They will enrol in the Bachelor programme and do level 5 units as per the programme structure.
- Students who have graduated with diploma in arts subjects or equivalent from any tertiary schools abroad with a GPA of 3.0 and above.
 - They will enrol in the Bachelor programme and do level 5 units as per the programme structure.

- Students who have been enrolled in Graduate Diploma, but do not have a Bachelor degree:
 - If they have a Diploma, then they will be given appropriate cross credits for the Diploma and enroll in the Bachelor programme to do level 5 units as per the programme structure.
- Students who have been enrolled in BA programme in other tertiary Universities, but did not complete nor graduating with the BA Degree, and wish to apply or transfer to SINU to complete the BA programme.
 - They will enrol in the Bachelor programme as per the programme structure. Academic Policies (AP) Section 14.4.2, a student who has carried out studies at another institution may be granted credit subject to the qualification being approved for credit. Section 14.6.4, in the case of a three-year Bachelor's degree, a maximum of two thirds of the total credits of the qualification may be credited.

In-service students who have Graduate Diploma in Arts and have worked or taught for 5 years or more will be given cross credits (CC) for the Diploma, and recognition of prior learning (RPL) for the years of teaching. And they will enrol in the BA programmes and do level 5 units as per the programme structure.

6.2 Pre-requisite Units

The subject and core units in the designed programme are pre-requisite level units. Year 1 (Level 5 units) are pre-requisites for Year 2 (level 6 units) and, Year 2 (level 6 units) are pre-requisite for Year 3 (level 7 units). Students can be allowed to do year 2 (Level 6 units) provided the pre-requisite units in year 1 (level 5) are completed with pass grade. The same applies in doing year 3 (level 7 units); the pre-requisite units in year 2 (level 6) must be completed first with pass grade. Similarly, a pass in all required 24 units will enable a student to undergo a mini research thesis with fieldwork.

6.3 Diploma Exit and credit point.

And students who have successfully completed a total of 16 units with a total of 240 credit point and wish to exit will graduate with an Advance Diploma in Arts.

Table 3: Credit Point distribution of the BA programme.

Programme	Year	Units	Credit points (CP)
Advance Diploma in Arts	1	8	120
	2	8	120
Bachelor of Arts	3	8	135
			375

7.0 Bachelor of Arts Programme Structure

Table 4: BA in Geography and Environmental Studies Course outline

Year	Semester	Units	C/Points	Q/Framework	Value attainment	
One	1	GEO501 Introduction to Human Geography	15	500 Level	Technical and theoretical within a broad field <i>Knowledge</i>	
		ICT501 Introduction to Information and Communication Technology (core 1)	15			
		SNU500 Academic English (generic 1)	15			
		ENV501 Community and Environment -FAFF	15			
	2	-----				
		GEO503 Introduction to Physical Geography	15			
		HCU500 Critical thinking (core 2)	15			
Two	1	SNU 600 Ethics (generic 4)	15	600 Level	Highly theoretical in a broad field with depth in one area <i>Analysis</i>	
		GEO601 Fundamental to Geotechnics and Geomorphology	15			
		HCU601 What is culture (core 3)	15			
		ENV700 Human Environment Interaction. -FAFF.	15			
	2	-----				
		ENV605 Population and Community Ecology	15			
		GEO602 Geography in Tourism	15			
Three	1	ENV706 Protected Areas & Key Biodiversity.- FAFF	15	700 Level	Highly theoretical with significant knowledge which involve critical and analytical thinking and application <i>Application</i>	
		HCU602 Introduction to Research (core 4)	15			
		HCU700 Indigenous Knowledge	15			
		GEO701 Biogeography	20			
	2	HCU701 Advance Academic Writing Skills (core 5)	15			
		GEO703 Geography Information System (GIS).	15			

	1	HCU704 Capstone/Direct Project (Exiting to graduation)/ Research proposal (proceed to Honours degree)	20			
		GEO702 Geography in Disaster Management	20			
		ENV712 Environmental Legislation and policy -FAFF	15			
		GEO704 Statistical Method in Geography	15			
	2		15			375

7.1 Summary of Units for BA Programme.

Table 5: Summary of total number of courses

Major Subjects units	Minor Subjects units	CORE UNITS (BA)	GENERIC (SINU)	
8	5	7	4	24

8.0 Bachelor of Arts – Study Planner

Provides the Study Planner for the BA programme.

8.1 Bachelor of Arts (Geography and Environmental Studies)

Table 6: BA of Arts in Geography and Environmental Study planner

First Level	Semester 1	Major GEO 501 Introduction to Human Geography – NB noted as core unit for all BA students	Generic SNU500 Academic English	Minor ENV501 Community and Environment	Core ICT501 Introduction to Information and Communication Technology
	Semester 2	Major GEO 503 Introduction to Physical Geography	Core HCU500 Critical Thinking	Generic SNU601 Solomon Island Studies	Generic SNU 502 Data Analysis
Second Level	Semester 1	Major GEO601 Fundamentals of GeoTectonics and Geomorphology	Generic SNU600 Ethics	Minor ENV605 Population and Community Ecology	Core HCU601 What is culture?
	Semester 2	Major GEO602 Geography in Tourism	Minor ENV 700 Human Environment Interaction	Core HCU602 Introduction to Research	Minor ENV 706 ENV706 Protected Areas/ Managing Key Protected Areas
Third Level	Semester 1	Major GEO701 Biography	Core HCU701 Advanced Academic Writing Skills	Major GEO703 Geography Information Systems	Core HCU702 Indigenous Knowledge
	Semester 2	Major GEO702 Geography in Disaster Management	Major GEO 704 Statistical Methods in Geography	Minor ENV 712 Environmental Legislation and Policy	Core – choose 1 Honours introduction (minimum GPA pre-requisites) HCU 704 Research Methodologies HCU704 Capsone/Direct paper

Key:

Generic Units – 4 units - all undergraduate students
Major – minimum 8 units
Minor – minimum 5 units
Core to all BA students – 7units
Honours Stream – commencing in Year 3

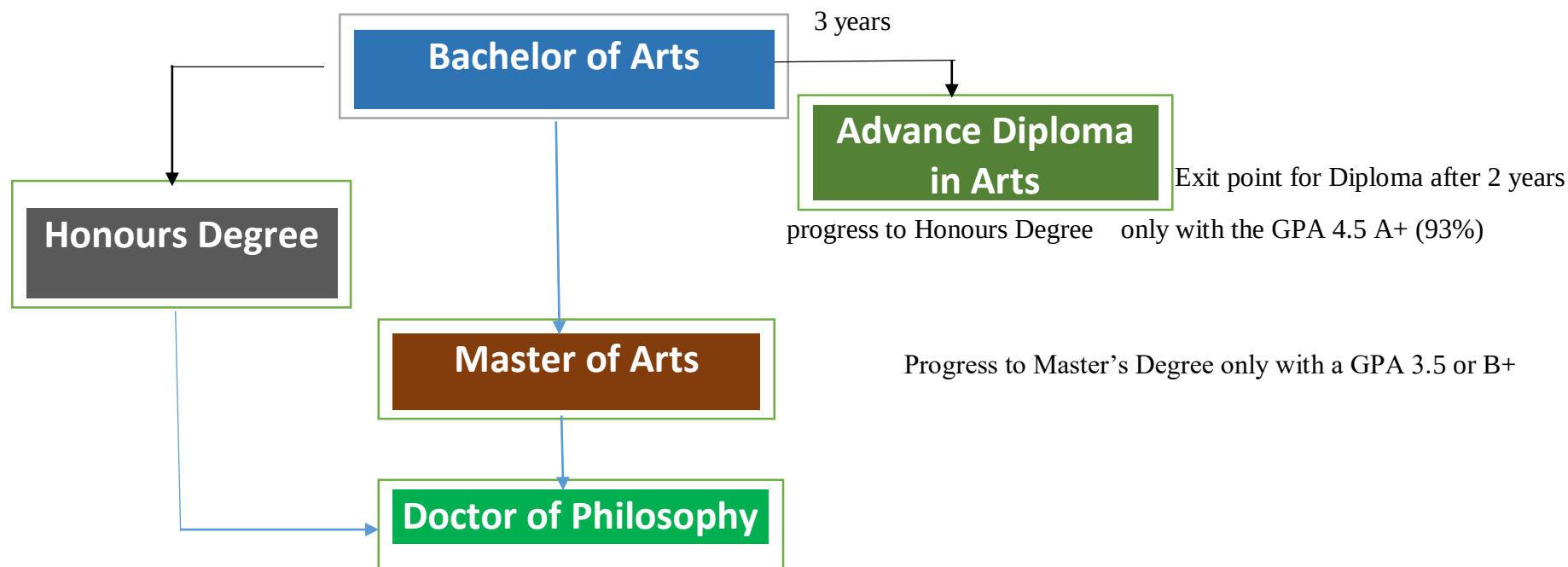
9.0 Exit and progression programme structure

The BA programme comprises a total of 24 units with a value of 375 credit points. An exit point for Advanced Diploma with a total of 16 units, a value of 240 credit points. Students with GPA of 4.5 have the option to do an Honours degree. Those with a GPPA less than 4.5 may enrol in the HCU704 Capstone/Direct Project. Upon completion of Unit HCU704 Capstone/Direct Project, students with a GPA of 3.5 have the option to progress to Postgraduate Diploma and then to Master's degree level.

Table 7: Exit and progression Structure

Level	QA	Semesters	Major	Minor	Core	Generics	Total	TOTAL UNITS PER LEVEL	Credit point
500	Certificate	Semester 1	1	1	1	1	4		
		Semester 2	1	-	1	2	4		
600	Diploma	Semester 1	1	1	1	1	4		
		Semester 2	1	2	1	-	4	16 (exit) Advance Diploma	240
700	Degree	Semester 1	2	-	2	-	4		
		Semester 2	2	1	1	-	4	24	375

10 Comprehensive Programme structure



The diagram sets out the SOH's Arts programme structure, both the progress and exit point for students pursuing this programme¹.

¹ The structure sets out the plan for progression up to the PhD level. The Honours Degree will be processed through the programme development process after the BA programme is passed through the Senate.

11.0 Programme Learning knowledge and Skills

The BA programme structure allows the students to strategically develop and acquire knowledge and skills under each respective department academic programme. The BA programme begins with the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies.

11.1Acquiring knowledge of Skills

Students are expected delve into diverse subjects to gain a comprehensive understanding of the Earth's physical environment and its interaction with human societies. Through a combination of theoretical coursework, practical field work, and research-oriented methodologies. Through the program discipline students to acquire foundational knowledge in areas such as Geography Information System (GIS), Physical geography, Human geography, Urban management, disaster management and Environmental sustainability.

Students will be engaging in interdisciplinary studies that bridge the natural and social sciences, fostering a holistic perspective on environmental issues.

11.2Developing skills to conduct research

The crucial aspect of the programme is the development of research skills, particularly in conducting social research. Students learn methodology for gathering and analysing qualitative and quantitative data related to human-environmental interactions.

The research skills are for students to design and conduct interviews, and perform observational studies to investigate topics such as land use patterns, environmental attitudes, urbanization issues, trends and sustainability practices. Through hands-on research projects, students hone their abilities to critically assess human and environmental interactions that contributes to evidence-based solutions.

11.3Understanding the Place of Geography and Environmental Studies;

Within the broader academic landscape, Geography and Environmental Studies occupy a unique position, integrating knowledge from various disciplines to address pressing global changes. Students examine the role of geography in shaping human societies and ecosystems, exploring concepts such as spatial inequalities, and cultural landscapes. They will also analyze the interconnectedness of environmental systems and human activities. By understanding the spatial dimensions of environmental problems, students will develop skills to propose sustainable strategies to mitigate environmental degradation and resilience in diverse geographic contexts. Moreover, students to gain insights on fostering environmental stewardship, fostering a deeper appreciation for the complexity of our planet.

12.0 Graduate Profile

On completion of the BA, the students should be able to emulate the following attributes

- **Academically and Professionally competent**

Graduates remain intellectually apt and professionally competent and relevant in their career of choice whether it be in an academic institution setting or out in the field.

- **Research based professionals**

Graduates are shaped by the culture of research. New ideas and problems encountered are approached through the trajectory of social research to avoid the fantasy of assumptions. Social research becomes the driving force behind effective and productive outcomes at the work place.

- **Innovative and Creative**

Graduates will instill a critical mind where knowledge and experience informed by intellectual capability has the ability to become innovative to create new ideas to enhance development and change.

- **Problem Solver**

Graduates are compellingly active rather than passive at work place, skillfully knowledgeable on to become problems solvers in an organizational setting.

13.0 Future Programme Design

The BA programme commences with Major in Geography and Environmental Studies and may be expanded to majors developed by the other other departments in the School of Humanities, which is comprised of seven departments including Geography. Each of the departments will undertake stakeholder consultation to determine priorities for major development. Departments may develop a single major or may collaborate with another department to offer a double major. For example, the Department of Social Science might develop a single BA major in Conflict Resolution, while the Departments of Media & Journalism and the Department of Sports & Creative Arts can develop a double BA major in Media and Sports.

14.0 BA in Geography and Environmental Studies

Below are the summary content and overview of the Geography and Environmental studies units that will be offered for the BA program.

15.0 Geography Major Units

15.1GEO501 – Introduction to Human Geography

This course examines the relationship of human being with the geographical environment. With this interaction, both influence each other and as a result different kind of human landscape develops. It introduces the basic principles of Human Geography and provides a context in which to understand lands and people other than ourselves. This course will encourage students to know the first law of Geography introduced by Waldo R. Tobler's in 1969, i.e. "Everything is related to everything else. But near things are more related than distant things." There is a 'geographical' way to see people, places, and events, and it differs from the way a sociologist, an economist, or a political scientist, for example, might view the same phenomena. By understanding the concepts of Human Geography, one will be able to influence the way people view the universe and humanity.

15.2GEO503 – Introduction to Physical Geography

The courses introduce the basic concepts of Physical Geography that involves the examination of the physical environment, with processes the creates landform and shape the earth's environment. Global physical world patterns, such as those relating to the makeup of the earth, weathering and mass movement, ocean currents and wind interaction, and other physical process to be emphasized. These concepts will help students to understand the creation of the physical world as a systematic system, rather than a random formation. The earth system

approach will be used in the course introducing the physical components and processes of the earth, that focus on how geographic sciences are applied to address real world issues.

15.3 GEO601 Fundamentals of Geotectonics and Geomorphology

This course will introduce you to two main dimensions of Physical geography. This course is a first-year degree course that examines the physical elements of geography. Physical geography is a discipline that is part of a much larger area of understanding called geography. ‘What we see create more interest’. Whenever anyone visits a new place, it’s natural that s/he enjoys the natural landscape with all its features. This landscape is the result of developed landforms due to internal or external forces.

15.4 GEO602 Geography of Tourism

Global tourism has been growing at a remarkable rate in the post Second World War period. The world’s annual tourism growth rate is over 7%. Tourism is about pleasure and enjoyment, but its global growth and expansion are now creating serious societal problems and issues that require a fundamental understanding of tourism so that the impacts and problems it can cause can be managed and controlled. By integrating the 5 themes (Location, Place, Human-Environment interaction, Region and Movement) of Geography in the study of tourism helps students to understand where and why tourism sites are located, the movements of people created by tourism, and the changes tourism brings to the cultural and physical landscapes.

15.5 GEO701 Biogeography

This unit introduces the student to the concept of biogeography, its interpretation and application; interaction between living organisms with climate and physical environment with special reference to Solomon Islands and other South Pacific Islands. The unit examines the biosphere from a geographic perspective. It considers the evolution of plant and animal communities and biomes. The biosphere includes all life forms that exist on earth. This is an integrative course which examines concepts and knowledge from physical geography, geology, ecology and evolutionary biology. Topics include: the origin and dispersal of plants and animals; biotic communities; ecological relationships; and the impact of human activity on the biosphere; terminologies such as Prevention, Preparedness and Recovery. Key Emphasis on Climate Change threats and Impacts in relation to Disaster Risk will also be covered. Teaching concepts are regionally and International accepted which aligned with the DRM International Community, with practical examples that will be covered within the country’s context and internationally. This is to ensure that students have the sufficient knowledge and understanding of Disaster Risk Management core theories.

15.6 GEO702 Geography in Natural Disaster Management

The Disaster Risk Management unit will cover core concepts and terminologies of Disaster Risk Management, to enable students to understand the interaction between natural hazards, vulnerabilities and impacts in societies. Key explanation of disaster influencing factors, and its key characteristics will be taught for broader knowledge of understanding, in explaining the natural phenomena. The unit will cover the key phases of the natural disaster and its natural impacts.

15.7 GEO703 Geographic Information System

This unit introduces students to the basic concepts of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and Remote Sensing (RS) and illustrates these concepts with short exercises using local data. In this course, emphasis is placed on both theoretical and practical topics to give students the ability to apply these techniques in their decision making. These exercises demonstrate how GIS can help visualize land use opportunities, limitations and planning scenarios in the field of Geography.

15.8 GEO704 Statistical Method in Geography

It is a fact that Geography affects data and this data plays prime role in Statistics. It provides the extra dimension of location to Statistics. Statistics is the quantification of the facts and findings among some data. It refers to information in terms of numbers or numerical data. As Geography is the 'spatial science', it also contains much information in both formats i.e., quantitative and qualitative. This unit allows users to understand, compare and analyse information/ statistical data for informed decision making about all sorts of places from Cities and Suburbs to Regional Areas or Local Government Areas. Statistics allow the user to see not just how the data varies but also **where** it varies. We are living in a global information society where the amount of information and its flow to society is increasing. Many are now recognizing that statistics plays a major role in shaping and providing scientific information that is useful in almost every aspect of human life. Modern decision making, whether done by a national government or an international agency, is increasingly using statistical methods to improve the quality of information. An effective statistical geography is one which supports many uses and enables comparisons over time. Such an increasing appreciation of the role, power and importance of statistics is now leading to a higher priority being attached to statistical capacity development in many developing countries. Geospatial data must then be added to other socioeconomic and demographic data so as to facilitate informed decision-making among policy makers.

16.0 Environmental Studies Minor Courses

16.1 ENV501 Community and Environment

Community and Environment, focuses on The Community and Environment unit offered and provides professional training for careers in today's evolving community environmental field. The interdisciplinary unit curriculum is designed to clarify career goals for those who may be considering environmental work, as well as enhance the skills of professionals already in the field.

Learners also have access to activities of the School of Natural Resources, which supports an interdisciplinary network of initiatives including research, conferences, speakers and the normal lecture and tutorials. The Community and Environmental unit is open to students with a certificate and is especially appropriate for people in community and environmental organizations who want to increase their environmental expertise, mid-career professionals seeking to apply their skills to environmental work and business people working with communities on environmental issues. Students interested in earning a under graduate degree can apply this unit within diploma environment courses toward a degree in other community and environmental disciplines.

16.2 ENV605 Population and Community Ecology

This unit emphasizes an integrative approach to ecology. Students will learn the structure and function of populations and communities. Students will also learn the theoretical explanations for community assembly and disassembly and the patterns in space and time. The unit will also look at the properties of stability and productivity, evaluating these using a variety of community types as examples. Special emphasis will be given to variety of communities in the Solomon Island's Environment.

16.3 ENV700 Human Environment Interaction

This unit offers students basic concepts of Human-Environment interaction, on areas on physical environment and human beings behaviour. In this subject, students will develop a critical ability to understand the reciprocal relationship between environment and human beings on ethics, social-cultural, economic, medical, natural hazards, methods with mapping tools and environment management. Students should explore old and new ideas within the disciplines and have the capability to relate examples on community level to global level. Assessments and field research will be conducted to give variety of learning techniques to expand their understanding on research questions in their chosen disciplines in future.

16.4 ENV706 Protected Areas/ Managing Key Protected Areas

Protected Areas (PAs) are recognized as a major conservation tool of global conservation policy to protect the earth's ecosystem and species diversity, with more than 15% of terrestrial area and more than 7% of the marine realm under protection. Biodiversity loss is a global concern of governments, environmentalists, ecologists, conservation practitioners, advocates, industries and most importantly local and indigenous communities who depend on the natural environment for daily sustenance and livelihoods. Protected areas are established to maintain the ecological integrity of particular landscapes or seascapes or to protect and/or restore or rehabilitate key ecosystems or habitats that have been degraded and in other cases, to conserve unique or special plants or animals in its natural habitat. Students will be introduced to Protected Areas global status, its concepts, principles and how they contribute to biodiversity conservation, climate change resilience, sustainable development and preservation of culture and traditional practices. This Unit also explores the different Protected Areas governance and management categories and how they are designed, established and managed in the Pacific and Solomon Islands context. Further, the unit will also look at major societal expectations and ecological, socio-economic and cultural considerations for effectively designing and managing a Protected Area. The Unit is structured in this manner: I. PAs – Background, Status, Principles and Concepts. II. PAs and global conventions, strategies and programs. III. PAs Categories and Governance Types. IV. PAs, People and Communities. V. Managing Protected Areas. VI. Protected Areas in the wider landscape and seascapes.

16.5 ENV712 Environmental Legislation and Policy

This unit will introduce students to the differences between, legislations, policies, provincial ordinances and explore international treaties/conventions that Solomon Islands is signatory to and ratify. It guides students through the processes of how legislations, policies and ordinances are derived and adopted or enacted. Their effectiveness, policing and implications on public behaviour, will form part of the student's policy evaluation and recommendation strategies. They will have at their disposals certain national legislation, policies and provincial ordinances especially those pertinent to the environment. Students will appreciate the step-in policy formulation such as; identify the problem, lists of alternative solutions, analysis and recommendation. Similarly, students will be introduced to the international treaties that Solomon Islands is a signatory to and their importance to the environment development of the country.

17.0 BA Core Units

The following Unit would be the core Units that integrates with the Geography Courses for holistic academic discipline that prepares and enhance the students' knowledge, on other important disciplines to practical and knowledge base learning outcomes.

17.1 ICT501 Introduction to Information Communication and Technology (core 1)- FST

In this unit, students will learn the introduction of computer programming using high level language for software development. Upon completion of this unit, students will have firm knowledge about the concept and usability of the structured programming methodology. The students will further develop skills in writing software using C++ programming language.

17.2 HCU² 501 Critical Thinking

Ennis (1985) defines critical thinking as a reflective and reasonable thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do, while McPeck (1981) theorizes that critical thinking as the propensity and skill to engage in an activity with reflective skepticism. Foundational to the theories is the essence of skeptical, reflective, and reasonable thinking. Critical thinking entails evaluative, and analytical theorization in judging the merit of ideas that lead to personal decision. The unit will introduce the students to the science of critical thinking and explore various ways where critical thinking is applied. Students will learn the art of being critical than passively receptive to ideas.

17.3 HCU 601 What is Culture?

The term culture has been broadly used in various disciplines and have different conceptual framework. This unit defines what is culture in social science and humanities. It explores the development of culture in human society and its functional role in creating order and social cohesiveness. Students will be introduced to the significance of culture and how cultural ideas developed to shape religious beliefs, economic, political, and legal systems. The study will also explore kinship system and social structures of society. Further exploration will be on cultural theories and a number of key concepts relevant to various field in Solomon Islands and the Pacific region.

17.4 HCU 602 Introduction to Research

This unit will develop students to think critically and cultivate the fundamental research skills and knowledge to understand, conduct and evaluate data and research. It will also make sense of the impact of AI and research data in the current dynamic working environment and changing society. Research is a systematic process of inquiry that enables us to discover new knowledge, solve problems and make informed decision across various fields, and so HCU602 aims to equip students into thinking critically using research thinking lens, a gap that this unit is attempting to bridge. In the unit, students will explore the content topics such as; thinking research, research principles and ethics, research and Artificial Intelligence (AI), research processes, data types and sources citation, management and integration; as well as uncovering what we mean by good research, the type and criterion of research approaches that are practiced. HCU602 will be offered as a generic unit in the School of Humanities for ALL undergraduate programs. The unit will be taught by the Humanities staff whose area of expertise is within Research

17.5 HCU 701: English for Academic and Professional Purposes (EAPP)

An advanced English unit written for the final year students pursuing the Bachelor of Arts Programme studies in the School of Humanities. The four modules in the unit include: critical reading and analytical skills, writing for academic and professional purposes, academic English for research, Communication skills and seminar presentations. The unit is designed to equip students holistically with an aim to improve proficiency in academic and professional literacy skills needed for advancement of study goals and participation at the work place and community. This unit outline contains the information about unit modules and topics, fundamental concepts and skills, as well important resources, requirements, key areas of support, and assessments.

17.6 HCU702 Indigenous Knowledge

For many people “*indigenous*” or “*indigeneity*” is a word best left alone because of its being associated with “backwardness”, “abject poverty”, “high illiteracy”, “high population rate”, “high crime rate”,

² The initial ACO refers Arts Core units. The core units are to be taught across all the BA programmes.

“archaic cultural practices”, “unbridgeable communication barriers due to language diversity”, “poor health care systems”, “superstition and cultic belief systems”, “chronic government instability”, etc. For these people **“indigenous”** or **“indigeneity”** overall conjures images of cultures left behind by development.

However, over the past decades the word **“indigenous”** or **“indigeneity”** has been accorded new meaning and significance in light of the human-created catastrophes by which our earth is being threatened such as climate change, unabated conspicuous consumption which is fast depleting the earth’s resources, geopolitics, cyber-space insecurity, etc. There is increasing recognition that **indigenous knowledge**, for example, can be effectively applied to solve some of the world’s challenges such as environmental degradation.

This Unit examines a gamut of issues related to the points described via questions such as: What does indigenous mean?; Who is indigenous?; What is indigenous knowledge and why should it be accorded importance?; How important is indigenous knowledge in today’s rapidly globalizing and deculturalizing world?; Does indigenous knowledge have a role to play in public education? What role can indigenous knowledge play in protecting the environment? Why should SINU students enrol in this Unit?, etc.

17.7 HCU 704 Research Methodology

This course is an advance research unit intended to prepare prospective higher achiever students who have met the academic requirement and are destined to study towards a Honors Degree. The unit will assist the students in the process of developing their research proposals and research questions. The unit will also cover areas including selecting an appropriate research methodology, integrating fieldwork with theory.

17.8 HCU 704 Capstone/Direct Project

This unit is designed for final year students who could not manage to do the Honours Degree but aim to undertake a professional career employment and development. It is a career oriented designed unit. Students will be given an opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills they learn by solving a real world problem at a work place. Students will design and develop a solution based approach to particular project and present it for examination. The unit is a 100% project work.

Students will choose an existing capstone problem to solve or to develop a direct project where students consider to be a viable project to investigate. Both approaches can be considered under this unit.

18.0 Generics Courses

For the BA program the students will also undertake the generic units offered at the University to align with the existing course structure.

18.1 SNU³500 Academic English

SNU500 is a foundational unit for first year students pursuing undergraduate studies in faculties and schools at the Solomon Islands National University. Consisting of four modules that focus on critical reading, academic writing, English pronunciation, oral communication and presentation skills, the unit

³ SNU refers to generic units approved by SINU to be to all students studying in all faculties, schools and departments across SINU.

is geared towards preparing students for effective university studies through proficiency in both written and spoken English. This unit outline contains information about unit topics, fundamental expectations and unit requirements for students of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), Assessments. There are also some key areas of support which are usually needed during the course of your studies.

18.2 SNU502 Data Analysis

(Existing unit offered by the FST)

18.3 SNU600 Solomon Islands Studies

Solomon Islands Studies was conceived and developed in 2019 upon the realization that, despite going into its sixth year of operation as a premier national educational institution, Solomon Islands National University does not yet have a Unit of study which focuses specifically on the pre-history, indigenous cultures, religions, philosophies, epistemologies, languages and geography of Solomon Islands society.

Fundamentally, Lack of such a Unit means is that there is a serious knowledge gap in the education students are getting at SINU. What is more serious and also ironic is that the gap has to do with the lack in students' education of foundational knowledge about Solomon Islands society which owns and operates Solomon Islands National University (SINU).

Therefore, in addressing the knowledge gap, SINU management mandated that the Unit be developed by the Faculty of Education and Humanities and taught by the staff of the School of Humanities. The Unit is compulsory, meaning it is a faculty-wide requirement to be taken by every SINU student regardless of the chosen field of academic or professional pursuit.

18.4 SNU601 Ethics

Ethics is about knowing the difference between 'right' and 'wrong' or 'good' and 'bad', or how we ought to live. This can involve the most basic everyday practices such as an employee habitually showing up for work at 9:00am fully knowing the prescribed time is 7:30am, Or a lecturer giving a student a high grade (A+) for work that is well below required academic standards fully knowing that doing so violates university and teaching professional ethics.

Ethics or ethical knowledge is fundamental as it functions as the road map which guides how we conduct ourselves in the world, personally and professionally. Any act, knowingly or unknowingly, committed which runs afoul of prescribed ethical principles can have dire consequences both on the actor and society. Corruption, for example, is a familiar euphemism generally given for an act committed in violation of ethical principles which can have dire consequences on an individual and society.

19.0 Programme Credit Points and Contact Hours

The BA programme credit points system is aligned with the SIQF and SITESA standard. The credit point system is determined by the number of contact hours. A total of 15 credits point per unit, 60 credit points by semester and 120 credit point for one academic year. Students are allowed to enrol to a maximum of four units per semester and eight units per full academic year.

BA Levels 5-7 programmes have 15 credit points per unit and expected to have:

- Determination of programme credit points (CP) for all units levels.

- Per semester with 4 units. $15 \text{ CP}/4\text{units} = 60 \text{ CP}$
- Per academic year 8 units. $15 \text{ CP}/8 \text{ units} = 120 \text{ CP}$
- Per full 3 years program 24 units. $15/20\text{CPs}/24 \text{ units} = 360/375\text{CP}$ (3 units with 20 credit points)
- Therefore, 15 CP = 150 notional hours of total study and learning per unit

20.0 Supervision and Staff of the Programme

20.1 Coordination and Supervision

The programme will be coordinated by a Programme Coordinator and Head of Department in the School of Humanities with the assistance of the Head of School. The Programme Coordinator will coordinate the overall delivery of the programme and Head of Department will be responsible for the department and daily operation and delivery of units within the programme.

20.2 Current SOH Staff

The programme will be taught by the SOH lecturers with full time and part-time tutors. All staff are employed and contracted by the Solomon Islands National University (SINU). The current total number of SOH staff is 19.

20.3 Department staff and other academic staff

The table below provides the basic information about the academic MQR who will directly responsible to teach the BA units including the subject, core and generic units. Not only that but lecturers from other faculties will also be teaching in the programme.

Table 8: Number of Academic Staff and their MQR

Staff		Units type	Number of units	MQR
Lecturer	Tutor			
3	2	Major	8	M/PhD
2	2	Minor	5	
4	2	Core units	7	M/PhD
4	3	Generic units	4	M/PhD
13	9			

21.0 Cost and financial implications

The cost of the programme will be minimal as the designated academic staff to teach the BA programme units are existing staff of FEH and FAFF. The projection is to recruit one new lecturer, and 1 full time tutor for Geography Department in 2026.

22.0 Challenges and Opportunitites

While the program has significant potential, it must address challenges such as: - Limited resources for advanced laboratories and research infrastructure. - Providing scholarships or financial aid for deserving students. - Forming academic partnerships and collaborations with regional universities and initiatives.

Opportunities include building collaborations with global academic institutions, leveraging regional environmental grants, and engaging international experts to ensure the program remains relevant and competitive.

23.0 Conclusion

The Bachelor of Arts in Geography and Environmental Studies at the Solomon Islands National University is poised to be a transformative program. By equipping students with theoretical insights, applied skills, and research capabilities, it directly addresses many of the sustainability challenges unique to the Solomon Islands and aligning them with global efforts to build a sustainable future. This program not only symbolizes a leap in the academic capabilities of SINU but also signifies a commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable development that can positively impact every facet of life in the Solomon Islands.
