For teaching
•In Australian and SACE International schools from January 2019 to December 2019
•In SACE International schools only, from May/June 2019 to March 2020

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Mathematical Methods

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2024 Subject Outline | Stage 2

For teaching

* In Australian and SACE International schools from January 2024 to December 2024
* In SACE International schools only, from May/June 2024 to March 2025

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Introduction

Subject description

Mathematical Methods is a 20-credit subject at Stage 2.

Mathematical Methods develops an increasingly complex and sophisticated understanding of calculus and statistics. By using functions and their derivatives and integrals, and by mathematically modelling physical processes, students develop a deep understanding of the physical world through a sound knowledge of relationships involving rates of change. Students use statistics to describe and analyse phenomena that involve uncertainty and variation.

Mathematical Methods provides the foundation for further study in mathematics, economics, computer sciences, and the sciences. It prepares students for courses and careers that may involve the use of statistics, such as health or social sciences. When studied together with Specialist Mathematics, this subject can be a pathway to engineering, physical science, and laser physics.

Mathematical options

The diagram below represents the possible mathematical options that students might study at Stage 1 and Stage 2.



Notes:

Although it is advantageous for students to study Australian Curriculum 10 and 10A in Year 10, the 10A curriculum per se is not a prerequisite for the study of Specialist Mathematics and Mathematical Methods. The essential aspects of 10A are included in the curriculum for Specialist Mathematics and Mathematical Methods.

Mathematical Methods can be studied as a single subject; however, Specialist Mathematics is designed to be studied together with Mathematical Methods.

Capabilities

The capabilities connect student learning within and across subjects in a range of contexts. They include essential knowledge and skills that enable people to act in effective and successful ways.

The SACE identifies seven capabilities. They are:

* literacy
* numeracy
* information and communication technology (ICT) capability
* critical and creative thinking
* personal and social capability
* ethical understanding
* intercultural understanding.

Literacy

In this subject students develop their literacy capability by, for example:

* communicating mathematical reasoning and ideas for different purposes, using appropriate language and representations, such as symbols, equations, tables, and graphs
* interpreting and responding to appropriate mathematical language and representations
* analysing information and explaining mathematical results.

Mathematics provides a specialised language to describe and analyse phenomena. It provides a rich context for students to extend their ability to read, write, visualise, and talk about situations that involve investigating and solving problems.

Students apply and extend their literacy skills and strategies by using verbal, graphical, numerical, and symbolic forms of representing problems and displaying statistical information. Students learn to communicate their findings in different ways, using different systems of representation.

Numeracy

Being numerate is essential for participating in contemporary society. Students need to reason, calculate, and communicate to solve problems. Through the study of mathematics, they understand and use mathematical skills, concepts, and technologies in a range of contexts that can be applied to:

* using measurement in the physical world
* gathering, representing, interpreting, and analysing data
* using spatial sense and geometric reasoning
* investigating chance processes
* using number, number patterns, and relationships between numbers
* working with graphical, statistical and algebraic representations, and other mathematical models.

Information and communication technology (ICT) capability

In this subject students develop their information and communication technology capability by, for example:

* understanding the role of electronic technology in the study of mathematics
* making informed decisions about the use of electronic technology
* understanding the mathematics involved in computations carried out using technologies, so that reasonable interpretations can be made of the results.

Students extend their skills in using technology effectively and processing large amounts of quantitative information.

Students use ICT to extend their theoretical mathematical understanding and apply mathematical knowledge to a range of problems. They use software relevant for study and/or workplace contexts. This may include tools for statistical analysis, algorithm generation, data representation and manipulation, and complex calculation. They use digital tools to make connections between mathematical theory, practice, and application; for example, to use data, address problems, and operate systems in particular situations.

Critical and creative thinking

In this subject students develop critical and creative thinking by, for example:

* building confidence in applying knowledge and problem-solving skills in a range of mathematical contexts
* developing mathematical reasoning skills to think logically and make sense of the world
* understanding how to make and test projections from mathematical models
* interpreting results and drawing appropriate conclusions
* reflecting on the effectiveness of mathematical models, including the recognition of assumptions, strengths, and limitations
* using mathematics to solve practical problems and as a tool for learning
* making connections between concrete, pictorial, symbolic, verbal, written, and mental representations of mathematical ideas
* thinking abstractly, making and testing conjectures, and explaining processes.

Problem-solving in mathematics builds students’ depth of conceptual understanding and supports development of critical and creative thinking. Learning through problem-solving helps students when they encounter new situations. They develop their creative and critical thinking capability by listening, discussing, conjecturing, and testing different strategies. They learn the importance of self-correction in building their conceptual understanding and mathematical skills.

Personal and social capability

In this subject students develop their personal and social capability by, for example:

* arriving at a sense of self as a capable and confident user of mathematics through expressing and presenting ideas in a variety of ways
* appreciating the usefulness of mathematical skills for life and career opportunities and achievements
* understanding the contribution of mathematics and mathematicians to society.

The elements of personal and social competence relevant to mathematics include the application of mathematical skills for informed decision-making, active citizenship, and effective self-management. Students build their personal and social competence in mathematics through setting and monitoring personal and academic goals, taking initiative, and building adaptability, communication, and teamwork.

Students use mathematics as a tool to solve problems they encounter in their personal and working lives. They acquire a repertoire of strategies and build the confidence needed to:

* meet the challenges and innovations of a rapidly changing world
* be the designers and innovators of the future, and leaders in their fields.

Ethical understanding

In this subject students develop their ethical understanding by, for example:

* gaining knowledge and understanding of ways in which mathematics can be used to support an argument or point of view
* examining critically ways in which the media present particular perspectives
* sharing their learning and valuing the skills of others
* considering the social consequences of making decisions based on mathematical results
* acknowledging and learning from errors rather than denying findings and/or evidence.

Areas of ethical understanding relevant to mathematics include issues associated with ethical decision-making and working collaboratively as part of students’ mathematically related explorations. They develop ethical understanding in mathematics through considering social responsibility in ethical dilemmas that may arise when solving problems in personal, social, community, and/or workplace contexts.

Intercultural understanding

In this subject students develop their intercultural understanding by, for example:

* understanding mathematics as a body of knowledge that uses universal symbols which have their origins in many cultures
* understanding how mathematics assists individuals, groups, and societies to operate successfully across cultures in the global, knowledge-based economy.

Mathematics is a shared language that crosses borders and cultures, and is understood and used globally.

Students read about, represent, view, listen to, and discuss mathematical ideas. They become aware of the historical threads from different cultures that have led to the current bodies of mathematical knowledge. These opportunities allow students to create links between their own language and ideas and the formal language and symbols of mathematics.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledge, Cultures, and Perspectives

In partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and schools and school sectors, the SACE Board of South Australia supports the development of high‑quality learning and assessment design that respects the diverse knowledge, cultures, and perspectives of Indigenous Australians.

The SACE Board encourages teachers to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and perspectives in the design, delivery, and assessment of teaching and learning programs by:

* providing opportunities in SACE subjects for students to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and contemporary experiences
* recognising and respecting the significant contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Australian society
* drawing students’ attention to the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and perspectives from the past and the present
* promoting the use of culturally appropriate protocols when engaging with and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

SACE numeracy requirement

Completion of 10 or 20 credits of Stage 1 Mathematics with a C grade or better, or 20 credits of Stage 2 Mathematical Methods with a C grade or better, will meet the numeracy requirement of the SACE.

Learning scope and requirements

Learning requirements

The learning requirements summarise the key skills, knowledge and understanding that students are expected to develop and demonstrate through learning in Stage 2 Mathematical Methods.

In this subject, students are expected to:

1. understand mathematical concepts, demonstrate mathematical skills, and apply mathematical techniques

2. investigate and analyse mathematical information in a variety of contexts

3. think mathematically by posing questions, solving problems, applying models, and making, testing, and proving conjectures

4. interpret results, draw conclusions, and determine the reasonableness of solutions in context

5. make discerning use of electronic technology to solve problems and to refine and extend mathematical knowledge

6. communicate mathematically and present mathematical information in a variety of ways.

Content

Stage 2 Mathematical Methods is a 20-credit subject.

Stage 2 Mathematical Methods focuses on the development of mathematical skills and techniques that enable students to explore, describe, and explain aspects of the world around them in a mathematical way. It places mathematics in relevant contexts and deals with relevant phenomena from the students’ common experiences, as well as from scientific, professional, and social contexts.

The coherence of the subject comes from its focus on the use of mathematics to model practical situations, and on its usefulness in such situations. Modelling, which links the two mathematical areas to be studied, calculus and statistics, is made more practicable by the use of electronic technology.

The ability to solve problems based on a range of applications is a vital part of mathematics in this subject. As both calculus and statistics are widely applicable as models of the world around us, there is ample opportunity for problem-solving throughout this subject.

Stage 2 Mathematical Methods consists of the following six topics:

* Topic 1: Further differentiation and applications
* Topic 2: Discrete random variables
* Topic 3: Integral calculus
* Topic 4: Logarithmic functions
* Topic 5: Continuous random variables
* Topic 6: Sampling and confidence intervals.

The suggested order of the topics is a guide only; however, students study all six topics. If Mathematical Methods is to be studied in conjunction with Specialist Mathematics, consideration should be given to appropriate sequencing of the topics across the two subjects.

Each topic consists of a number of subtopics. These are presented in the subject outline in two columns as a series of key questions and key concepts, side by side with considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies.

The key questions and key concepts cover the prescribed areas for teaching, learning, and assessment in this subject. The considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies are provided as a guide only.

A problem-based approach is integral to the development of the mathematical models and associated key concepts in each topic. Through key questions teachers can develop the key concepts and processes that relate to the mathematical models required to address the problems posed.

The considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies present problems for consideration and guidelines for sequencing the development of the concepts. They also give an indication of the depth of treatment and emphases required.

Although the material for the external examination will be based on the key questions and key concepts outlined in the six topics, the considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies may provide useful contexts for examination questions.

Students should have access to technology, where appropriate, to support the computational aspects of these topics.

Calculus

The following three topics relate to the study of calculus:

* Topic 1: Further differentiation and applications
* Topic 3: Integral calculus
* Topic 4: Logarithmic functions

Calculus is essential for developing an understanding of the physical world, as many of the laws of science are relationships involving rates of change. The study of calculus provides a basis for understanding rates of change in the physical world, and includes the use of functions, and their derivatives and integrals, in modelling physical processes.

In this area of study, students gain a conceptual grasp of calculus, and the ability to use its techniques in applications. This is achieved by working with various kinds of mathematical models in different situations, which provide a context for investigating and analysing the mathematical function behind the mathematical model.

The study of calculus continues from Stage 1 Mathematics with the derivatives of exponential, logarithmic, and trigonometric functions and their applications, together with differentiation techniques and applications to optimisation problems and graph sketching. It concludes with integration, both as a process that reverses differentiation and as a way of calculating areas. The fundamental theorem of calculus as a link between differentiation and integration is emphasised.

Statistics

The following three topics relate to the study of statistics:

* Topic 2: Discrete random variables
* Topic 5: Continuous random variables and the normal distribution
* Topic 6: Sampling and confidence intervals

The study of statistics enables students to describe and analyse phenomena that involve uncertainty and variation. In this area of study, students move from asking statistically sound questions towards a basic understanding of how and why statistical decisions are made. The area of study provides students with opportunities and techniques to examine argument and conjecture from a statistical point of view. This involves working with discrete and continuous variables, and the normal distribution in a variety of contexts; learning about sampling in certain situations; and understanding the importance of sampling in statistical decision-making.

Topic 1: Further differentiation and applications

Subtopic 1.1: Introductory differential calculus

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What is a rate of change?  A rate of change is a ratio of the change in one quantity compared with that in a second, related, quantity.  How can a constant rate of change be identified?   * Numerically, in a table with a constant added * Algebraically, as a property of a linear function * Graphically, as the gradient of a straight line.   How can the rate of change of a non-linear functionover an interval be considered?   * The average rate of change of functionin the interval from *a* to *b* is      * The average rate of change of functionin the interval from *a* to  is     The average rate of change is interpreted graphically as the slope of a chord or secant. |  |
| What is the derivative of  where *n* is a rational number?  Establish the formula  from first principles when  where *n* is a rational number.  Determine the derivative of linear combinations of power functions involving rational exponents.  The notations   and  can be used for the first derivative. | Use  to differentiate functions such as |
| What types of problems can be solved by finding the derivatives of functions?   * The derivative of a function can be used to find the slope of tangents to the function, and hence the equation of the tangent and/or normal at any point on the function | This is an extension of Topic 6: Introduction to differential calculus from Stage 1 Mathematics. |
| * When an object’s displacement is described by a function, the derivative can be used to find the instantaneous velocity * The sign diagram of the derivative function can be used to find when the function is increasing, decreasing, and stationary * The derivative of a function can be used to determine the rate of change, and the position of any local maxima or minima. | Polynomials and linear combinations of power functions can be used to model many scenarios, such as areas of quadrilaterals, volumes of boxes, numbers of people at an event, and the speed of objects. |
|  | These applications of calculus are included here so that conceptual understanding is built with functions that students have differentiated mainly in Stage 1. As further differentiation skills are developed, these applications are revisited. |

Subtopic 1.2: Differentiation rules

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What are the different algebraic structures of functions?   * Functions can be classified as sums, products, or quotients of simpler functions through an analysis of the use of grouping symbols (brackets) and a knowledge of the order of operations | Correct identification of the algebraic structure of a function allows the correct differentiation process to be applied. |
| How is it possible to differentiate composite functions of the form  This is called the chain rule | Initially consider one application of the chain rule. However, in further subtopics, this rule may be used repeatedly for composite functions. |
| How do we differentiate the product of two functions  This is called the product rule | The product rule can be demonstrated using first principles. |
| How do we differentiate functions of the form  This is called the quotient rule | The quotient rule can be established by applying the product rule to |

Subtopic 1.3: Exponential functions

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| There exists an exponential function such that the derivative and the function are one and the same.  That is, .  This is the case when .  The approximate value of the irrational number *e* is 2.7182818. | By inspection of the graphs of functions of the form  and their derivative graphs, students explore the relationship between exponential functions and their derivatives as a multiple of the original function.  What if a base could be found such that ?  Electronic technology can be used to graph both the original function and the derivative on the same axes. Observation of values of *a* can lead to the conjecture that there is a base close to 2.72 for which the original function and the derivative are the same function.  An alternative method may include using first principles and examining values of    for smaller and smaller values of *h.* |
| What is the derivative of   * The chain rule can be used to show that the derivative of  is given by | The chain rule, product rule, and quotient rule are considered with the inclusion of and |
| Many exponential functions show asymptotic behaviour.  Describe the behaviour of exponential functions as . | Electronic technology can be used to explore the different features of various types of exponential graphs. Suitable functions for exploration include, but are not limited to, the surge function  and the logistic function |

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What types of problems can be solved by finding the derivatives of exponential functions?  Derivatives can be used to:   * find the slope of tangents to the graphs of exponential functions, and hence the equation of the tangent and/or normal at any point on the function * find the instantaneous velocity, when an object’s displacement is described by an exponential function * determine the rate of change, the position of any local maxima or minima, and when anexponential function is increasing or decreasing | These applications of calculus were developed in Topic 6: Introduction to differential calculus, Stage 1 Mathematics, using polynomials and linear combinations of power functions. The use of and  within the modelling function shows the need for a way to determine the exact value of *x* such that  is equal to specific values. This is covered in Topic 4: Logarithmic functions of this subject outline. For some examples, approximate values can be determined using electronic technology. |
| Use exponential functions and their derivatives to solve practical problems where exponential functions model actual examples. | Exponential functions can be used to model many actual scenarios, including but not limited to:   * Populations * Chemical reactions * Biological and medical phenomena * Terminal Velocity |

Subtopic 1.4: Trigonometric functions

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| How can sine and cosine be considered as functions?   * Graphing sine and cosine functions in Topic 3: Trigonometry, Stage 1 Mathematics introduced the concept of radian angle measure, the use of sine and cosine to define different aspects of the position of a moving point on a unit circle, and the ability to solve trigonometric equations * When *t* is a variable, conventionally measured in radians, and are periodic functions | Students reinforce their understanding of sine and cosine in terms of the circular motion model with an emphasis on the coordinates of the moving point as functions of time, *t*. |
| What are the derivatives of and   * has a derivative * has a derivative | By inspecting the graphs of sine and cosine, and the gradients of their tangents, students conjecture that    Numerical estimations of the limits and informal proofs based on geometric constructions are used.  The derivative of or  from first principles is not required but provides an extension of the first-principles process to calculate derivatives.  A first-principles calculation from the limit definition provides a proof that the derivatives exist, and enables students to see the results in the context of the gradient-of-tangent interpretation of derivatives from which the limit definition is derived. This traditional calculation proceeds by first computing the limit , which is derived graphically, numerically, and geometrically. The derivatives of the sine and cosine functions in general can be derived from this special case using trigonometric identities. |
| How are the chain, product, and quotient rules applied with trigonometric functions?   * The use of the quotient rule on allows the derivative of to be found * The chain rule can be used to show that the derivative of is given by     and the derivative ofis given by  . | This is an extension of differentiation rules, with a wider range of functions used to build the composite functions.  The reciprocal trigonometric functions sec, cot and cosec, are not required in this subject.  The chain rule, product rule, and quotient rule are considered with the inclusion of sine and cosine functions. |
| What types of problems can be solved by finding the derivatives of trigonometric functions?  Derivatives can be used to:   * find the slope of tangents to the graphs of trigonometric functions, and hence the equation of the tangent and/or normal at any point on the function * find the instantaneous velocity, when an object’s displacement is described by a trigonometric function * determine the rate of change, the position of any local maxima or minima, and when a trigonometric function is increasing or decreasing | These applications of calculus were developed in Topic 6: Introduction to differential calculus, Stage 1 Mathematics, using polynomials and linear combinations of power functions, and using exponential functions. |
| Use trigonometric functions and their derivatives to solve practical problems where trigonometric functions model periodic phenomena. | Trigonometric functions are used to model many periodic scenarios, such as tidal heights, temperature changes, astronomical phenomena, and AC voltages. |

Subtopic 1.5: The second derivative

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What is meant by the ‘second derivative’?   * The second derivative is the result of differentiating the derivative of a function * The notations and can be used for the second derivative | Briefly consider the role of a derivative in describing the rate of change, to enable students to understand that the second derivative describes the rate of change of the first derivative.  Graphical examples, where the rate of change is interpreted as the slope of the tangent, are used to show the relationships between the function, its derivative, and its second derivative. |
| What role does the second derivative play when studying motion along a straight line?   * The second derivative of a displacement function describes the acceleration of a particle, and is used to determine when the velocity is increasing or decreasing | The use of acceleration functions to describe the changes in the velocity is a direct application of the second derivative’s role in describing the rate of change of the first derivative. |
| How can the first and second derivative of a function be used to locate stationary points and points of inflection?   * The sign diagram of the first and second derivative provides information to assist in sketching the graphs of functions * Stationary points occur when the first derivative is equal to zero, and may be local maxima, local minima, or stationary inflections * Points of inflection occur when the second derivative equals zero and changes sign, and may be classed as stationary or non‑stationary * The second derivative can be used to determine whether a curve is concave or convex * Whether the second derivative is positive, negative, or zero at a stationary point is used to determine the nature of the stationary point * The first derivative and second derivative can be used in a combination to determine the nature of a point of inflection | Graphical analysis of functions, their derivatives, and second derivatives (using electronic technology) are used to explore the rules about turning points and points of inflection.  Ensure that students have an opportunity to observe graphs where  without a change in sign.  Note: ‘Concave’ and ‘Convex’ can also be referred to as ‘Concave Down’ and ‘Concave Up’ respectively. |

Topic 2: Discrete random variables

Subtopic 2.1: Discrete random variables

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What is a random variable?   * A random variable is a variable, the value of which is determined by a process, the outcome of which is open to chance. For each random variable, once the probability for each value is determined it remains constant | Use examples to introduce the concept of a random variable, such as the number of heads appearing on a coin tossed 10 times, or the number of attempts taken to pass a driving test. |
| What makes a random variable discrete?   * Discrete random variables have finite (countable) outcomes. Commonly, these outcomes are integer. | Examples of discrete random variables include the number of:   * cars arriving at a set of traffic lights before it turns from red to green * phone calls made before a salesperson has sold 3 products * mutations on a strand of DNA * patients in a doctor’s waiting room at any specific time * tropical cyclones annually, in a specific region. |
| What is a probability distribution of a discrete random variable and how can it be displayed?   * A probability function specifies the probabilities for each possible value of a discrete random variable. This collection of probabilities is known as a probability distribution * A table or probability bar chart can show the different values and their associated probability * The sum of the probabilities must be 1 | A suitable context to explore is the profit/loss obtained by a tradesperson who quotes $1000 for a particular job.  Three outcomes that each have a probability of occurring are that the:   * quote is rejected because it was too high, resulting in zero profit * job is done, costing $800 in materials and labour, resulting in a $200 profit * job is done, costing $1100 in materials and labour, resulting in a $100 loss. |
| What is the difference between uniform discrete random variables and non-uniform discrete random variables?   * For most discrete random variables the probabilities for the different outcomes are different, whereas uniform discrete random variables have the same probability for each outcome | A comparison of the probabilities of rolling a single regular dice with the probabilities of rolling two dice simultaneously can emphasise the difference between uniform and non‑uniform discrete random variables. |

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| How can estimates of probabilities be obtained for discrete random variables from relative frequencies and probability bar charts?   * When a large number of independent trials is considered, the relative frequency of an event gives an approximation for the probability of that event | Frequency tables and probability bar charts for simple discrete random variables (such as the number of times each student must roll a dice before getting a 6) are converted into probability distributions, which are then interpreted.  Dice with ‘alternative labelling’ (such as 1, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 on the six sides) are also used to create tables showing relative frequencies. Increasing the number of rolls of such dice shows how the approximation of the relative frequency approaches the theoretical probability. Electronic technology is used to simulate very large sets of data. |
| The distribution of a discrete random variable can be represented in the following forms:   * A probability mass function * A table of outcomes, *x*, with corresponding probabilities   How can the expected value of a discrete random variable be calculated and used?  The expected value of a discrete random variable is calculated using , where  is the probability mass function for achieving result *x* and  is the mean of the distribution   * The principal purpose of the expected value is to be a measurement of the centre of the distribution * The expected value can be interpreted as a long-run sample mean | An example of a table of outcomes with corresponding probabilities is:   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | *x* | 2 | 5 | 8 | |  | 0.40 | 0.25 | 0.35 |   An analogy for the expected value is the balancing point: if the probability bar chart is considered as stacked weights on a movable pivot then the system balances when the pivot is placed at the position of the expected value. |
| How is the standard deviation of a discrete random variable calculated and used?   * The standard deviation of a discrete random variable is calculated  where is the expected value and  is the probability function for achieving result *x* * The principal purpose of the standard deviation is to be a measurement of the spread of the distribution | Students may consider calculating variance as an interim step when determining the standard deviation. This supports understanding of the relationship between standard deviation and the mean.  The spreads of discrete random variables are compared using the standard deviation.  Students may prefer to use the standard deviation formula in the following form. |

Subtopic 2.2: The Bernoulli distribution

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What is a Bernoulli random variable, and where are they seen?   * Discrete random variables that only take the values 1 with probability *p* and 0 with probability  are called Bernoulli random variables. These two outcomes are often labelled ‘success’ and ‘failure’ respectively. * The Bernoulli distribution is the possible values and their probabilities of a Bernoulli random variable * One parameter, *p*, the probability of ‘success’, is used to describe Bernoulli distributions. The notation for such a distribution is | The probability distribution of different Bernoulli random variables can be introduced by considering scenarios such as tossing a coin or rolling a dice that has different numbers of sides painted with one of two colours. These probabilities can be shown in a table or on a probability bar chart.  For a Bernoulli random variable the probability of outcomes  and  can be calculated using the probability mass function  .  Other examples of Bernoulli distributions include whether or not an email is read within an hour of being sent, and the random selection of a tool and discovering whether it is defective or not. |
| What is the mean and standard deviation of the Bernoulli distribution?   * The mean of the Bernoulli distribution is *p*, and the standard deviation is given by | Investigation of the means of different Bernoulli distributions, calculated using    leads students to conjecture that the mean of a Bernoulli distribution is equal to *p*. This result can be proved using the algebraic formula for Bernoulli distributions.  A similar investigation for the standard deviation may be used with guidance for formulating the conjecture, followed by completion of the algebraic proof. |

Subtopic 2.3: Repeated Bernoulli trials and the binomial distribution

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What is a binomial distribution and how is it related to Bernoulli trials?   * When a Bernoulli trial is repeated a fixed number of times, the number of successes in these trials consistutes a binomial random variable | Students use tree diagrams to build simple binomial distributions such as the number of heads resulting when a coin is tossed three times. |
| When can a situation be modelled using the binomial distribution?   * A binomial distribution is suitable when the number of trials is fixed in advance, the trials are independent, and each trial has the same probability of success | Students classify scenarios as ones that can or cannot be modelled with a binomial distribution.  In a context where sampling is done without replacement (e.g. an opinion poll), the distribution is not strictly binomial. When the population is large in comparison with the sample, the binomial distribution provides an adequate model for the probability of successes. |
| How can binomial probabilities be calculated?   * The probability of *k* successes from *n* trials is given by where *p* is the probability of success in the single Bernoulli trial. The notation for such a distribution is: | The tree diagram used to determine the probability of obtaining a 6 on a dice twice when the dice is rolled three times, is considered to show that the calculation of binomial probabilities involves:   * calculation of the number of ways that *k* successes can occur within *n* events (using the concepts in Topic 4: Counting and statistics in Stage 1 Mathematics) * probability of success to the power of the required number of successes * probability of failure to the power of the required number of failures.   This formula can be used to algebraically solve problems where either *n*, *k* or *p* is unknown. |

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| How can electronic technology be used to calculate binomial probabilities? | Although an understanding of the binomial probability formula is a requirement of this subject, calculations of binomial probabilities in problem-solving should be done using electronic technology.  Students, given the probability of success, calculate probabilities such as:   * exactly *k* successes out of *n* trials * at least *k* successes out of *n* trials * between and successes out of *n* trials   Students use technology to solve problems using the method of trial and error. |
| What happens to the binomial distribution as *n* gets larger and larger?   * The binomial distribution for large values of *n* has a symmetrical shape that resembles a normal distribution curve | Probability bar charts for binomial distributions of  are built using a spreadsheet (for a specific value of *p*).  Comparing these graphs shows the shape approaching that of a normal distribution. Discussion on adding a smooth curve to emphasise the shape leads to the concept of continuous random variables. |
| What is the mean and standard deviation of the binomial distribution?   * The mean of the binomial distribution is *np*, and the standard deviation is given by   where *p* is the probability of success in a Bernoulli trial and *n* is the number of trials | Both of these expressions can be built by considering a binomial variable as the sum of *n* Bernoulli variables. The mean and standard deviation of the Bernoulli distribution are used to obtain these expressions.  In this subject, the principal purpose of these values is to determine the mean and standard deviation for the distribution of sample proportions in Topic 6: Sampling and confidence intervals. |

Topic 3: Integral calculus

Subtopic 3.1: Anti-differentiation

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| Is there an operation which is the reverse of differentiation?   * Finding a function whose derivative is the given function is called ‘anti-differentiation’ * Anti-differentiation is more commonly called ‘integration’ or ‘finding the indefinite integral’ | Briefly consider simple derivatives.  Posing a question about determining the original function, if its derivative is known, introduces integral calculus. |
| What is the indefinite integral   * Any function  such that is called the indefinite integral of * The notation used for determining the indefinite integral is |  |
| Are there families of curves that have the same derivatives?   * All families of functions of the form  for any constant *c* have the same derivative. Hence, if  is an indefinite integral of  then so is  for any constant *c* |  |
| What are some types of functions that can be integrated?   * By reversing the differentiation processes, the integrals of can be determined | The processes for evaluating these integrals are developed by considering the relevant differentiation processes and examining what must be done to reverse them.  This can be understood through the relationship between  and  such that  Or alternatively between  and *y* |

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| * Reversing the differentiation processes and consideration of the chain rule can be used to determine the integrals of (for ), , , and for linear functions | The use of substitution to find the integral of nested functions is not required. |
| What is needed to be able to determine a specific constant of integration?   * When the value of the indefinite integral is known for a specific value of the variable (often an initial condition), the constant of integration can be determined * Determine the displacement given the velocity in a linear motion problem | Determine , given and |

Subtopic 3.2: The area under curves

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| How can the area under a curve be estimated?   * The area under the graph of a function  is approximated by upper and lower sums of the areas of rectangles of equal width on a domain for which the function | This subtopic can be introduced by briefly considering the areas of polygons, then discussing the difficulty of generalising this concept to figures with curved boundaries. Students start with simple graphs where area is worked out using geometric principles (e.g. cross-sectional areas, and the determination of approximation of *π* or other irrational numbers).  Students can consider appropriate methods for finding the upper and lower sums for functions that contain a turning point within the domain. |
| How can the estimate of the area be improved?   * Decreasing the width of the rectangles improves the estimate of the area, however requires more rectangles to span the domain | After students have calculated areas under a curve using electronic technology, they consider what process the technology is using to evaluate these areas by addition and multiplication operations only. |
| How can integration be used to find the exact value of the area under a curve?   * The exact value of the area is the unique number between the upper and lower sums, which is obtained as the width of the rectangles approaches zero | Students are introduced to the correct notation and use electronic technology to calculate areas. In many cases the technology will only give an approximation for the area, leading to the need for an algebraic process to calculate the exact value of definite integrals. |
| * The definite integral can be interpreted as the exact area of the region between the curve and the *x*-axis over the interval  (when for ) | This subtopic can be developed without reference to the algebraic computation of the antiderivative. |
| How is the area above a function that is below the *x*-axis calculated?   * When is a continuous function such that  for  the exact area of the region between the curve  and the *x*-axis over the interval  is given by:   How is the area between the functionsandover the interval calculated?   * When  is above , that is , the area is given by | The computation of carefully chosen integrals (using electronic technology) leads students to observe the following results: |

Subtopic 3.3: Fundamental theorem of calculus

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| How can exact values of definite integrals be calculated?   * The statement of the fundamental theorem of calculus     Where  is such that | The fundamental theorem of calculus is now introduced to address the need for exact values for areas under curves. |
| What results can be interpreted from the direct application of the fundamental theorem of calculus? | These results may have been discovered when the areas under curves were being explored. They can now be verified by applying the fundamental theorem of calculus.  The theorem can be explored, and proved geometrically to show that the fundamental theorem of calculus links the processes of differentiation and integration. |
| How can the fundamental theorem of calculus be applied to evaluate areas?   * In the exploration of areas in Subtopic 3.2, the use of technology meant that the exact value of areas (or the exact value of one of the end points of the area) could not always be obtained. The fundamental theorem of calculus can be used in those circumstances |  |

Subtopic 3.4: Applications of integration

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What useful information can be obtained by calculating the area under a curve?   * Applications can be modelled by functions, and evaluating the area under or between curves can be used to solve problems * When the rate of change of a quantity is graphed against the elapsed time, the area under the curve is the change in the quantity over the elapsed time | The types of functions that may be suitable for this subtopic are given in Subtopic 3.1.  When curves describe, for example, tunnels, and drainage pipe cross-sections, the calculation of different areas has practical applications. |
| How can integration be used in motion problems?   * The total distance travelled by an object is determined from its velocity function * An object’s position is determined from its velocity function if the initial position (or position at some specific time) is known * An object’s velocity is determined from its acceleration function if the initial velocity (or velocity at some specific time) is known | The following examples of rates of change models can be considered:   * The rate at which people enter a sports venue * Water flow during a storm * The velocity of a vehicle * Traffic flow through a city * The electricity consumption of a household. * Population growth. |

Topic 4: Logarithmic functions

Subtopic 4.1: Using logarithms for solving exponential equations

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| Given what value of *x* will produce a given value of *y*?   * The natural logarithm is the logarithm of base *e* * When  then * Natural logarithms obey the laws: | Examining a table of the non-negative integer powers of *e* enables students to understand the extent and rapidity of exponential growth, and also raises the following questions:   * In a population growth model , when will the population reach a particular value? * In a purely mathematical sense, what power of *e* gives 2, or 5, and so on? Looking for some of these values (by trial and error with a calculator) gives approximations for some specific natural logarithms, encountered previously as the multipliers for the derivatives of  and |
| How are natural logarithms used to find the solutions for problems involving applications of differential calculus with exponential functions?   * finding the slope of tangents to the graphs of exponential functions, and hence the equation of the tangent and/or normal at any point on the function * finding the instantaneous velocity, when an object’s displacement is described by an exponential function * determining the rate of change, the position of any local maxima or minima, and when an exponential function is increasing or decreasing | This subtopic allows for extension of the problem-solving approaches used in exploring applications of differential calculus. The use of logarithms allows solutions to be found.  An example of suitable functions to explore is the logistic function: |

Subtopic 4.2: Logarithmic functions and their graphs

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What are the features and shape of the graph of and its transformations?   * The graph ofis continuously increasing, with an *x*-intercept at  and a vertical asymptote * The graph of is a transformation of the graph of   The values of *k*, *b*, and *c* determine the nature of this transformation in terms of dilations and/or translations. | Electronic technology can be used to graph for different values of *a*, which enables students to formulate conjectures about the properties of this family of curves.  Similarly, electronic technology can be used to explore the translations (caused by *k*, *b*, and *c*) within the graph of .  How are the graphs of  and  related?   * Like all inverse functions, the graphs of  and are reflections of each other in the line |

Subtopic 4.3: Calculus of logarithmic functions

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What are the derivatives of and ?   * The function has a derivative * The function has a derivative | Using electronic technology to study the slope of tangents along the curve leads students to the conjecture that . The proof (using implicit differentiation) is not required in this subject.  The derivative of  can be established using the chain rule. |
| What is the indefinite integral of ?   * Provide * What is the indefinite integral of   Provided | The integral of  can be considered by reviewing the relationships between functions and their derivatives through anti‑differentiation. |
| What types of problems can be solved by finding the derivatives of logarithmic functions?  The derivative of logarithmic functions can be used to:   * find the slope of tangents to the function * find the instantaneous velocity, when an object’s displacement is described by a logarithmic function * determine the rate of change, the position of any local maxima or minima, and when the function is increasing or decreasing |  |
| Use logarithmic functions and their derivatives to solve practical problems. | Logarithmic functions can be used to model many scenarios, such as the perception of loudness and acidity. |

Topic 5: Continuous random variables

Subtopic 5.1: Introduction to continuous random variables

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What is a continuous random variable?   * A continuous random variable can take any value (sometimes within a set domain) | A comparison between discrete and continuous random variables can be made using people’s ages (given in years) and heights. |
| How can the probabilities associated with continuous random variables be estimated?   * The probability of each specific value of a continuous random variable is effectively zero. The probabilities associated with a specific range of values for a continuous random variable can be estimated from relative frequencies and from histograms | An exploration of histograms for decreasing width ranges of continuous random variables shows that a smooth curve would be suitable to illustrate probabilities. |
| How are probability density functions used?   * A probability density function is a function that describes the relative likelihood for the continuous random variable to be a given value * A function is only suitable to be a probability density function if it is continuous and positive over the domain of the variable. Additionally, the area bound by the curve of the density function and the *x*-axis must equal 1, when calculated over the domain of the variable | The properties of all probability density functions can be explored using:   * the uniform function * the linear function * the quadratic function * the cosine function |
| * The area under the probability density function from *a* to *b* gives the probability that the values of the continuous random variable are between *a* and *b* | These functions would give the opportunity to revise the evaluation of areas using definite integrals (calculated using the fundamental theorem of calculus or using electronic technology).  The fundamental theorem of calculus can be used for questions such as:   * determine the value of *k* that makes a probability density function in the domain |

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| How are the mean and standard deviation of continuous random variables calculated?   * the mean:      * the standard deviation     How are the mean and standard deviation calculated using an algebraic process for a probability density function on the domain   * the mean | This section reinforces understanding of the usefulness of the mean as the expected value of a random variable — the long-run sample mean. Similarly, this section reinforces the role of the standard deviation in describing the spread of a random variable. |
| * the standard deviation | Students may prefer to use the standard deviation formula in the following form. |

Subtopic 5.2: Normal distributions

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What are normal random variables, and for what scenarios do they provide a suitable model?   * Natural variation means that many random variables have the majority of values close to the mean, with symmetrically lower probabilities as the values get further above or below the mean. Under some conditions these variables can be classed as ‘normal random variables’ | When investigating an explanation for why normal distributions occur, students build a spreadsheet that generates a large amount of data from the sum of a finite number of random numbers. Potentially useful examples are found in manufacturing processes (e.g. the length of a concrete sleeper or the weight of a container of butter). |
| What are the key properties of normal distributions?   * The normal distribution is symmetric and bell-shaped. Each normal distribution is determined by the meanand the standard deviation. The notation for such a distribution is: | Investigations of different normal distributions demonstrate the symmetrical shape, the position of the mean, and the standard deviation’s role in determining the spread.  The importance of the standard deviation is emphasised using the 68:95:99.7% rule. |
| What is the probability density function for the normal distribution? | With the aid of electronic technology, students explore the features of the graph of the function to confirm that it is a probability density function. Different values of andare used to explore the effects of these parameters on transforming the density function for different distributions.  The position of the inflections, in terms of standard deviations, is explored using the skills learned in the calculus topics. |
| How can the percentage of a population meeting a certain criterion be calculated for normal distributions?   * When the normal distribution is used to model data, the area under the curve within an interval is interpreted as a proportion or a probability | The normal distribution functions of electronic technology should be used, rather than evaluating areas using the probability density function for calculations of proportions or probabilities. |
| How can the normal distribution be used to determine the value above or below which a certain proportion lies?   * When one limit of a known area (upper or lower) is known, the other can be obtained | Electronic technology should be used to calculate, within a normal distribution, the upper and/or lower bounds of an interval that contains a specific proportion of the population. |
| What is the standard normal distribution?   * All normal distributions can be transformed to the standard normal distribution with  and  by using the formula: | Through calculations, students develop an understanding that:   * for all normal curves, the value of  does not depend onand and is equal to .   *Z* can be interpreted as the number of standard deviations by which *X* lies above or below the mean.  The standard normal distribution provides one basis for the derivation of confidence intervals in Topic 6: Sampling and confidence intervals. |

Subtopic 5.3: Sampling

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What is the result when independent observations of a random variable *X*, with mean  and standard deviation , are added together?   * For *n* independent observations of *X*, the sum of the observations  is a random variable * The distribution ofis called its sampling distribution * The sampling distribution of has mean  and standard deviation . | Students can start by collecting observations of random variables, for example, by rolling dice, and progress to using electronic technology to simulate random processes. One collection of *n* observations is called a sample.  Once students understand the ideas behind the simulation process, they can take many samples from a distribution, calculate their sum, and analyse the distribution of these values. A variety of distributions should be used. The sizes of samples taken should be varied so that the characteristics of sampling distributions can be deduced.  The distribution of can be calculated explicitly in simple cases, for example, if a fair dice is rolled twice and the values of the two faces added.  A binomial variable *X* can be considered as the sum of *n* independent Bernoulli variables. This leads to the fact that *X* has mean *np* and standard deviation |
| What is the result when the sample mean of independent observations of a random variable *X*, with mean  and standard deviation , is calculated?   * For *n* independent observations of *X*, the sample mean of the observations * is a random variable * The distribution of  is called its sampling distribution * The distribution of the random variable  has a mean and standard deviation | The sample mean of independent random variables is related simply to the sum of the variables by the factor .  All conclusions about the sampling distribution of the sum correspond to conclusions about the sampling distribution of the sample mean. |
| What is the form of the sampling distributions ofand  if *X* is normally distributed?   * For any value of *n*,  is normally distributed, with mean  and standard deviation | Simulated observations from a normal random variable can be obtained using electronic technology and used to illustrate that the sum and the sample mean are always normally distributed. |
| * For any value of *n*,  is normally distributed, with meanand standard deviation   What is the form of the sampling distributions of  and  if the distribution of *X* is not normally distributed?   * Provided *n* is sufficiently large,  is approximately normally distributed, with mean  and standard deviation * Provided *n* is sufficiently large,  is approximately normally distributed, with meanand standard deviation   This result is commonly known as the central limit theorem. | Students can simulate observations from non-normal random variables. Many samples from a non-normally distributed random variable can be taken, their sum or sample mean calculated, and the distribution of these values analysed. The sizes of samples taken should be varied so that students can appreciate that the size of *n* that provides approximate normality depends on the degree of non-normality of the population distribution.  Students could explore problems such as calculating the probability of buying an individual can of soft drink (labelled 375 mL) that contains less than 375 mL compared with the probability of buying a six-pack of the same cans of soft drink with an average content of less than 375 mL.  The normal approximation to the binomial distribution can be seen as an example of the central limit theorem.  Given a distribution, *X*, that is not normally distributed, students should understand that as the sample size, *n*, increases both  and  become more closely approximated by a normal distribution. |
| What is a simple random sample of observations from a population?   * A simple random sample of size *n* is a collection of *n* subjects chosen from a population in such a way that every possible sample of size *n* has an equal chance of being selected | A simple random sample can be selected from a finite population by sampling randomly with or without replacement. |
| How is a simple random sample linked to sampling distributions?   * If one simple random sample of *n* individuals is chosen from a population, and the value of a certain variable *X* is recorded for each individual in the sample, the sample mean of the *n* values for this one sample is one observation of the random variable denoted | When a single subject is sampled from the population and the value of *X* is recorded, the distribution of *X* is a discrete distribution that corresponds to the population histogram.  For sampling with replacement from a finite population, the results for the sum and sample mean of independent random variables apply directly. |

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| * If *X* has population meanand population standard deviation then the sampling distribution of  is approximately normal with meanand standard deviation provided that the sample size *n* is sufficiently large but also small compared with the population size *N* * Approximate probabilities for  can be calculated from the sampling distribution | For a simple random sample, the results for the sum and sample mean of independent random variables apply approximately, provided the sample size is small relative to the population size. This is because sampling with and without replacement behave similarly when the sample size is small relative to the population size.  Students can conduct physical and electronic sampling experiments to illustrate the properties of sample means of simple random samples and explore the effects of sample size and population composition. |

Topic 6: Sampling and confidence intervals

Subtopic 6.1: Confidence intervals for a population mean

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What type of random variable is a sample mean?   * If a sample is chosen and its mean calculated then the value of that sample mean will be variable. Different samples will yield different sample means * Sample means are continuous random variables * For a sufficiently large sample size, the distribution of sample means will be approximately normal. The distribution of sample means will have a mean equal to, the population mean. This distribution has a standard deviation equal to , where  is the standard deviation of the population and *n* is the sample size | Students are familiar with the concept of sample means from study of Subtopic 5.3: Sampling. Briefly consider that a sample mean cannot be used to make definitive statements about the population mean, but can be used as a guide only.  Students explored the distribution of sample means in Subtopic 5.3: Sampling. |
| How can a single sample mean (of appropriately large sample size) be used to create an interval estimate for the population mean?   * An interval can be created around the sample mean that will be expected, with some specific confidence level, to contain the population mean | Knowing the approximately normal distribution of sample means and the 68:95:99.7% rule, it can be seen that approximately 68% of sample means will be within one standard deviation of the unknown population mean and that approximately 95% of sample means will be within two standard deviations of the unknown population mean. |
| How can the upper and lower limits of a confidence interval for the population mean be calculated?   * If  is the sample mean of a sufficiently large sample and is the population standard deviation, then the interval:     can be created. The value of  is determined by the confidence level required | This formula can be introduced by considering the approximate 68% confidence interval using and the approximate 95% confidence interval using  Other confidence levels (i.e. 90% and 98%) require the calculation of  using students’ knowledge of the standard normal distribution and of how to calculate (using electronic technology) the upper or lower bounds of an interval within a normal distribution that contains a specific proportion of the population.  If  is not known,  the sample standard deviation may be used as an approximation for  if a sufficiently large sample is taken.  Although an understanding of the confidence interval formula is a requirement of this subject, calculations of confidence intervals in problem‑solving should be done using electronic technology. |
| Can a confidence interval be used to state facts about a population mean?   * Not all confidence intervals will contain the true population mean * The inclusion or not of a claimed population mean within a confidence interval can be used as a guide to whether the claim is true or false, but definitive statements are not possible | Simulation (using electronic technology to calculate the different intervals) can show the variation in confidence intervals (especially their approximate margin of error ) caused by different sample means, different sample standard deviations, and different confidence levels. |

Subtopic 6.2: Population proportions

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| What is a population proportion and what does it represent?   * A population proportion *p* is the proportion of elements in a population that have a given characteristic. It is usually given as a decimal or fraction * A population proportion represents the probability that one element of the population, chosen at random, has the given characteristic being studied   What is a sample proportion?   * If a sample of size *n* is chosen, and *X* is the number of elements with a given characteristic, then the sample proportion is equal to | Discussions about the number of left-handed students in a class can introduce the concept of a sample proportion. Compare this to the proportion of a population that is left-handed. By quickly surveying nearby classes, the effect of sample size on how close a sample proportion is to a known population proportion can be explored. |
| What type of variable is a sample proportion?   * A sample proportion is a discrete random variable. The distribution has a mean of *p* and a standard deviation of   What happens to the distribution offor large samples?   * As the sample size increases, the distribution ofbecomes more and more like a normal distribution | To justify that a sample proportion is discrete, students consider a sample size of 10. Sample proportions of  (0.5) and  (0.6) would be possible, but a sample proportion of 0.55 would not.  The mean and standard deviation can easily be derived from the mean and standard deviation of the binomial distribution. |

Subtopic 6.3: Confidence intervals for a population proportion

| Key questions and key concepts | Considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies |
| --- | --- |
| Can facts about a population proportion be gained from a sample proportion?   * An interval can be created around the sample proportion that will be expected, with some specific confidence level, to contain the population proportion |  |
| How can the upper and lower limits of a confidence interval for the population proportion be calculated?   * If is the sample proportion, then the interval  can be created. The value of is determined by the confidence level required | This formula matches the structure of the formula for the confidence interval for a population mean, and allows for revision of its creation by considering the position within the distributions (compared to the population proportion) of individual samples proportions.  Although an understanding of the confidence interval formula is a requirement of this subject, calculations of confidence intervals in problem-solving should be done using electronic technology. |
| Can a confidence interval be used to state facts about a population proportion?   * Not all confidence intervals will contain the true population proportion * The inclusion or not of a claimed population proportion within a confidence interval can be used as a guide to whether the claim is true or false, but definitive statements are not possible. | Simulation (using electronic technology to calculate the different intervals) can show the variation in confidence intervals (especially their approximate margin of error ) caused by different sample proportions and different confidence levels. |

Assessment Scope and Requirements

All Stage 2 subjects have a school assessment component and an external assessment component.

Evidence of Learning

The following assessment types enable students to demonstrate their learning in Stage 2 Mathematical Methods.

School assessment (70%)

* Assessment Type 1: Skills and Applications Tasks (50%)
* Assessment Type 2: Mathematical Investigation (20%)

External assessment (30%)

* Assessment Type 3: Examination (30%)

Students provide evidence of their learning through eight assessments, including the external assessment component. Students undertake:

* six skills and applications tasks
* one mathematical investigation
* one examination.

Assessment Design Criteria

The assessment design criteria are based on the learning requirements and are used by:

* teachers to clarify for students what they need to learn
* teachers and assessors to design opportunities for students to provide evidence of their learning at the highest possible level of achievement.

The assessment design criteria consist of specific features that:

* students should demonstrate in their learning
* teachers and assessors look for as evidence that students have met the learning requirements.

For this subject, the assessment design criteria are:

* concepts and techniques
* reasoning and communication.

The specific features of these criteria are described below.

The set of assessments, as a whole, must give students opportunities to demonstrate each of the specific features by the completion of study of the subject.

Concepts and Techniques

The specific features are as follows:

CT1 Knowledge and understanding of concepts and relationships.

CT2 Selection and application of mathematical techniques and algorithms to find solutions to problems in a variety of contexts.

CT3 Application of mathematical models.

CT4 Use of electronic technology to find solutions to mathematical problems.

Reasoning and Communication

The specific features are as follows:

RC1 Interpretation of mathematical results.

RC2 Drawing conclusions from mathematical results, with an understanding of their reasonableness and limitations.

RC3 Use of appropriate mathematical notation, representations, and terminology.

RC4 Communication of mathematical ideas and reasoning to develop logical arguments.

RC5 Development, testing, and proof of valid conjectures.\*

\*In this subject students must be given the opportunity to develop, test, and prove conjectures in at least one assessment task in the school assessment component.

School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Skills and Applications Tasks (50%)

Students complete six skills and applications tasks.

Skills and applications tasks are completed under the direct supervision of the teacher.

The equivalent of one skills and applications task must be undertaken without the use of either a calculator or notes.

In the remaining skills and applications tasks, electronic technology and up to one A4 sheet of paper of handwritten notes (on one side only) may be used at the discretion of the teacher.

Students find solutions to mathematical problems that may:

* be routine, analytical, and/or interpretative
* be posed in a variety of familiar and new contexts
* require discerning use of electronic technology.

In setting skills and applications tasks, teachers may provide students with information in written form or in the form of numerical data, diagrams, tables, or graphs. A task should require students to demonstrate an understanding of relevant mathematical concepts and relationships.

Students select appropriate techniques or algorithms and relevant mathematical information to find solutions to routine, analytical, and/or interpretative problems. Some of these problems should be set in context, for example, social, scientific, economic, or historical.

Students provide explanations and arguments, and use correct mathematical notation, terminology, and representations throughout the task.

Skills and applications tasks may provide opportunities to develop, test, and prove conjectures.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

* concepts and techniques
* reasoning and communication.

Assessment Type 2: Mathematical Investigation (20%)

Students complete one mathematical investigation.

Students investigate mathematical relationships, concepts, or problems, which may be set in an applied context. The subject of a mathematical investigation may be derived from one or more subtopics, although it can also relate to a whole topic or across topics.

A mathematical investigation may be initiated by a student, a group of students, or the teacher. Teachers should give some direction about the appropriateness of each student’s choice, and guide and support students’ progress in an investigation. For this investigation there must be minimal teacher direction and teachers must allow the opportunity for students to extend the investigation in an open-ended context.

Students demonstrate their problem-solving strategies as well as their knowledge, skills, and understanding in the investigation. They are encouraged to use a variety of mathematical and other software (e.g. computer algebra systems (CAS), spreadsheets, statistical packages) to enhance their investigation. The generation of data and the exploration of patterns and structures, or changing parameters, may provide an important focus. From these, students may recognise different patterns or structures. Notation, terminology, forms of representation of information gathered or produced, calculations, evidence of technological skills, and results are important considerations.

Students complete a report for the mathematical investigation.

In the report, students interpret and justify results, and draw conclusions. They give appropriate explanations and arguments. The mathematical investigation may provide an opportunity to develop, test, and prove conjectures.

The report may take a variety of forms, but would usually include the following:

* an outline of the problem and context
* the method required to find a solution, in terms of the mathematical model or strategy used
* the application of the mathematical model or strategy, including
* relevant data and/or information
* mathematical calculations and results, using appropriate representations
* the analysis and interpretation of results, including consideration of the reasonableness and limitations of the results
* the results and conclusions in the context of the problem.

A bibliography and appendices, as appropriate, may be used.

The format of the investigation report may be written or multimodal.

The investigation report, excluding bibliography and appendices if used, must be a maximum of 15 A4 pages if written, or the equivalent in multimodal form. The maximum page limit is for single-sided A4 pages with minimum font size 10. Page reduction, such as two A4 pages reduced to fit on one A4 page, is not acceptable. Conclusions, interpretations and/or arguments that are required for the assessment must be presented in the report, and not in an appendix. Appendices are used only to support the report, and do not form part of the assessment decision.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

* concepts and techniques
* reasoning and communication.

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Assessment Type 3: Examination (30%)

Students undertake a 130-minute external examination.

The examination is based on the key questions and key concepts in the six topics. The considerations for developing teaching and learning strategies are provided as a guide only, although applications described under this heading may provide contexts for examination questions.

The examination consists of a range of problems, some focusing on knowledge and routine skills and applications, and others focusing on analysis and interpretation. Some problems may require students to interrelate their knowledge, skills, and understanding from more than one topic. Students provide explanations and arguments, and use correct mathematical notation, terminology, and representations throughout the examination.

A formula sheet is provided with the examination booklet.

Students may take two unfolded A4 sheets (four sides) of handwritten notes into the examination room.

Students may have access to approved electronic technology during the external examination. However, students need to be discerning in their use of electronic technology to find solutions to questions/problems in examinations.

All specific features of the assessment design criteria for this subject may be assessed in the external examination.

Performance Standards

The performance standards describe five levels of achievement, A to E.

Each level of achievement describes the knowledge, skills, and understanding that teachers and assessors refer to in deciding how well students have demonstrated their learning, on the basis of the evidence provided.

During the teaching and learning program the teacher gives students feedback on their learning, with reference to the performance standards.

At the student’s completion of study of each school assessment type, the teacher makes a decision about the quality of the student’s learning by:

* referring to the performance standards
* assigning a grade between A and E for the assessment type.

The student’s school assessment and external assessment are combined for a final result, which is reported as a grade between A and E.

Performance Standards for Stage 2 Mathematical Methods

| - | Concepts and Techniques | Reasoning and Communication |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A | Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of concepts and relationships.  Highly effective selection and application of mathematical techniques and algorithms to find efficient and accurate solutions to routine and complex problems in a variety of contexts.  Successful development and application of mathematical models to find concise and accurate solutions.  Appropriate and effective use of electronic technology to find accurate solutions to routine and complex problems. | Comprehensive interpretation of mathematical results in the context of the problem.  Drawing logical conclusions from mathematical results, with a comprehensive understanding of their reasonableness and limitations.  Proficient and accurate use of appropriate mathematical notation, representations, and terminology.  Highly effective communication of mathematical ideas and reasoning to develop logical and concise arguments.  Effective development and testing of valid conjectures, with proof. |
| B | Some depth of knowledge and understanding of concepts and relationships.  Mostly effective selection and application of mathematical techniques and algorithms to find mostly accurate solutions to routine and some complex problems in a variety of contexts.  Some development and successful application of mathematical models to find mostly accurate solutions.  Mostly appropriate and effective use of electronic technology to find mostly accurate solutions to routine and some complex problems. | Mostly appropriate interpretation of mathematical results in the context of the problem.  Drawing mostly logical conclusions from mathematical results, with some depth of understanding of their reasonableness and limitations.  Mostly accurate use of appropriate mathematical notation, representations, and terminology.  Mostly effective communication of mathematical ideas and reasoning to develop mostly logical arguments.  Mostly effective development and testing of valid conjectures, with substantial attempt at proof. |
| C | Generally competent knowledge and understanding of concepts and relationships.  Generally effective selection and application of mathematical techniques and algorithms to find mostly accurate solutions to routine problems in a variety of contexts.  Successful application of mathematical models to find generally accurate solutions.  Generally appropriate and effective use of electronic technology to find mostly accurate solutions to routine problems. | Generally appropriate interpretation of mathematical results in the context of the problem.  Drawing some logical conclusions from mathematical results, with some understanding of their reasonableness and limitations.  Generally appropriate use of mathematical notation, representations, and terminology, with reasonable accuracy.  Generally effective communication of mathematical ideas and reasoning to develop some logical arguments.  Development and testing of generally valid conjectures, with some attempt at proof. |
| D | Basic knowledge and some understanding of concepts and relationships.  Some selection and application of mathematical techniques and algorithms to find some accurate solutions to routine problems in some contexts.  Some application of mathematical models to find some accurate or partially accurate solutions.  Some appropriate use of electronic technology to find some accurate solutions to routine problems. | Some interpretation of mathematical results.  Drawing some conclusions from mathematical results, with some awareness of their reasonableness or limitations.  Some appropriate use of mathematical notation, representations, and terminology, with some accuracy.  Some communication of mathematical ideas, with attempted reasoning and/or arguments.  Attempted development or testing of a reasonable conjecture. |
| E | Limited knowledge or understanding of concepts and relationships.  Attempted selection and limited application of mathematical techniques or algorithms, with limited accuracy in solving routine problems.  Attempted application of mathematical models, with limited accuracy.  Attempted use of electronic technology, with limited accuracy in solving routine problems. | Limited interpretation of mathematical results.  Limited understanding of the meaning of mathematical results, their reasonableness or limitations.  Limited use of appropriate mathematical notation, representations, or terminology, with limited accuracy.  Attempted communication of mathematical ideas, with limited reasoning.  Limited attempt to develop or test a conjecture. |

Assessment Integrity

The SACE Assuring Assessment Integrity Policy outlines the principles and processes that teachers and assessors follow to assure the integrity of student assessments. This policy is available on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au) as part of the SACE Policy Framework.

The SACE Board uses a range of quality assurance processes so that the grades awarded for student achievement, in both the school assessment and the external assessment, are applied consistently and fairly against the performance standards for a subject, and are comparable across all schools.

Information and guidelines on quality assurance in assessment at Stage 2 are available on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.gov.au).

Support Materials

Subject-specific Advice

Online support materials are provided for each subject and updated regularly on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au). Examples of support materials are sample learning and assessment plans, annotated assessment tasks, annotated student responses, and recommended resource materials.

Advice on Ethical Study and Research

Advice for students and teachers on ethical study and research practices is available in the guidelines on the ethical conduct of research in the SACE on the SACE website (www.sace.sa.edu.au).