

Teacher Resource

To access the Australian Urban Observatory, go to auo.org.au

This resource is a geographic information system which has collated data on Australia's 21 largest cities.

What is the Australian Urban Observatory?

The AUO is an award-winning digital liveability planning tool, developed by our team from RMIT University's Centre for Urban Research, which has been specifically designed to support decision makers prioritise policy and planning actions that promote the liveability, health and wellbeing of communities.

Our research team investigates the connections between urban planning and public health – in short, liveability. The Australian Urban Observatory maps key liveability measures across the 21 biggest cities in Australia and currently includes 48 indicators across 9 domains for two time periods (2018 and 2021). These domains include:

- Liveability
- Walkability
- Social Infrastructure
- Transport
- Food
- Alcohol
- Public Open Space
- Employment
- Housing

On our website under [What we Measure](#) each domain has a rationale and explanation of what indicators it measures. This will assist students in understanding why that domain is important to the study of liveability and human wellbeing.

Our aim is to share the knowledge gained through our research with residents and decision makers to improve health and liveability across communities. The AUO maps to three levels of detail, covering 170 Local Government Areas, 3,101 Suburbs and 39,967 Neighbourhoods (ABS SAIs).

AUO as an Education Resource

This education resource provides students and teachers with the opportunity to use geospatial technology in the classroom. Students will explore various GIS mapping tools and liveability indicators within the AUO. A range of skills will be required to investigate map data, identify patterns and trends, make comparisons, and suggest future directions.

The three worksheets are aligned to units in the Australian Curriculum Geography Years 7, 9 and 10. The content covered in the AUO could also be useful to other disciplines including Health and Physical Education and Mathematics. Teachers may choose what content they wish to cover in their classroom and may use the worksheets for assessment purposes. At the end of each worksheet, there is a final extension task, which could form an open-ended research project.

The curriculum table below outlines the specific Australian Curriculum (v9) content descriptors and skills addressed for each year level:

Year	Knowledge and Understanding	Skills
7	Place and Liveability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> factors that influence the decisions people make about where to live, including perceptions of the liveability of places and the influence of environmental quality AC9HG7K05 the location and distribution of services and facilities, and implications for liveability of places AC9HG7K06 the cultural connectedness of people to places and how this influences their identity, sense of belonging and perceptions of a place, in particular the cultural connectedness of First Nations Australians to Country/Place AC9HG7K07 strategies used to enhance the liveability of a place, including for young people, the aged or those with disability, drawing on studies such as those from Australia or Europe AC9HG7K08 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> collect, organise and represent data and information from primary research methods, including fieldwork and secondary research materials, using geospatial technologies and digital tools as appropriate AC9HG7S02 interpret and analyse geographical data and information to identify similarities and differences, explain patterns and trends and infer relationships AC9HG7S03 draw conclusions based on the analysis of the data and information AC9HG7S04 create descriptions, explanations and responses, using geographical knowledge and methods, concepts, terms and reference sources AC9HG7S06
9	Geography of Interconnections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the ways changing transportation and technologies are used to connect people to services, information and people in other places AC9HG9K05 the effects on places of people's travel, recreational, cultural or leisure choices, and the strategies for managing the impacts on these places AC9HG9K06 the ways that places and people are interconnected with other places through trade in goods and services, at all scales AC9HG9K07 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> collect, represent and compare data and information from primary research methods, including fieldwork and secondary research materials, using geospatial technologies and digital tools as appropriate AC9HG9S02, AC9HG10S02 evaluate geographical data and information to make generalisations and predictions, explain patterns and trends and infer relationships AC9HG9S03, AC9HG10S03 evaluate data and information to justify conclusions AC9HG9S04, AC9HG10S04 develop and evaluate strategies using environmental, economic or social criteria; recommend a strategy and explain the predicted impacts AC9HG9S05, AC9HG10S05 create descriptions, explanations and responses, using geographical knowledge and geographical tools as appropriate, and concepts and terms that incorporate and acknowledge research findings AC9HG9S06, AC9HG10S06
10	Geographies of Human Wellbeing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the methods used to measure spatial variations in human wellbeing and development, and how these can be applied to determine differences between places at the global scale AC9HG10K05 reasons for, and consequences of, spatial variations in human wellbeing in Australia, including for First Nations Australians AC9HG10K07 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> create descriptions, explanations and responses, using geographical knowledge and geographical tools as appropriate, and concepts and terms that incorporate and acknowledge research findings AC9HG9S06, AC9HG10S06



How to access the AUO

In order to access the AUO, teachers and students will need to register. Access to the platform is available free of charge. With free access, the level of detail in maps is restricted. Users can view all indicators to a Local Government Level, as well as the Liveability Index and Social Infrastructure Index to Suburb and Neighbourhood levels. It may be important to explain this to students prior to starting the worksheets.

All of the work conducted by the AUO is strictly aligned to RMIT University privacy policies. No data will be shared with other parties. Emails are only sent to inform our partners of relevant AUO data updates, resources and functionality of the AUO by our e-Newsletters which are released on a quarterly basis. There is no sharing of data with other parties. We are well aware of everyone's already overloaded email inboxes – especially teachers!

How to use the AUO

Watch the following tutorial video for help on how to use the platform:
<https://auo.org.au/using-the-indicators/>

What is our definition of liveability?

Our definition of liveability is based on an extensive review completed in 2012 with the ingredients understood as important influences of health. A liveable place is somewhere that is: safe, attractive, inclusive, and environmentally sustainable; with affordable and diverse types of housing, public open space, local shops, health and community services, leisure and cultural opportunities; with opportunities for employment and education all accessible by convenient public transport, walking and cycling.