



Increasing your local knowledge

## Location and Geography

All places have characteristics that give them meaning and character and distinguish them from other locations, including physical and human characteristics. Physical characteristics include elements such as rivers and mountains. Human characteristics can be noted in architecture, land use, town planning, communication and transportation networks. Languages, as well as religious and political ideologies, help shape the character of a location. These notes aim to provide clues to help you understand the nature of your location and its impact on potential students.

### **UNDERSTANDING LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY**

Geography helps to understand where things are located and why. These may be cities, rivers, businesses, or just about anything else that can be mapped, from oil wells to shopping centres. However, geography is more than names on a map. If you have knowledge of the geography of a particular location, you'll be better equipped to anticipate the issues that might arise when engaging with students, such as distance or difficulty travelling to college. So what are the benefits of understanding the particular characteristics of your location? Since students are influenced by their surrounding geography, it helps to know where they are coming from. Most personal decisions are influenced by geographic considerations, and choosing where and what to study are no exceptions.

By understanding the geography of a region, course providers can gain greater insight into their potential students' behaviour. For example, a comparison between rural isolated regions with urban areas would provide a contrasting profile in terms of students understanding of formal education.

### **SUGGESTED QUESTIONS**

- Give examples of how your location can have an impact on potential students
- Describe the most important aspects of your location that must be taken into consideration when engaging with potential students
- Discuss relevance
- Discuss how these issues may influence the way you engage with students

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

- Local sources
- [General register Office for Scotland](#)