



2008

Australian History GA 3: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

This was the fourth year of the revised *VCE Australian History Study Design*. The strength of this year's paper was that students were able to understand the subtleties of the questions and specifically target these subtleties in their answers. This year's assessors noted improvement in this skill.

Section D was not handled as well as in previous years. Some students did not cover the other point of time in their answers. Students who structured their responses to the question's three dot points seemed to be more successful.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Note: Student responses reproduced herein have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.

For each question, an outline answer (or answers) is provided. In some cases the answer given is not the only answer that could have been awarded marks.

Section A

Document chosen	None	A.	B.
%	0	91	9

i.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	4	9	87	1.9

ii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	4	8	24	32	33	2.9

iii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	5	5	14	24	25	15	12	3.6

iv.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	2	2	4	8	14	18	23	15	13	5.3

Document A

This document was by far the more popular response chosen by students.

i.

Students scored full marks by providing two correct responses, and one mark for providing one correct response from the following:

- the plans were based on a false image of the Aboriginal people
- a complete failure to recognise the Aboriginal people's association with their tribal land
- no ideas of private ownership
- no wish to acquire it.

ii.

Students needed to give an explanation of 'unmeaning toil' and then discuss the rejection of the European concept of private property and the labour required to maintain this.

Following is an example of a high level response.

The aborigines did not see the land as something to be acquired, but rather respected the land and moved around in a nomadic lifestyle in order to allow the land to replenish... The aborigines meaning in life came from their deep spirituality, hence the settler's way of life appeared unsubstantial and meaningless.



iii.

Students needed to give examples of how Aborigines responded to plans to assimilate, convert and civilise them. There was some active resistance, some passive resistance, and students should have given specific evidence to support this.

Following is an example of a high level response.

The responses of the Aborigine to the plans to assimilate, convert and civilise them was varied. For example, settler George McCrae was pleased with the assimilation of the Aborigines on his run, describing them as 'docile, tractable and highly intelligent'... However some aborigines reacted by stealing pastoralist's sheep, which resulted in violent encounters. Other Aborigines who attempted to convert to the European way of life by attending Mission stations often found the life unfulfilling and eventually withdrew. As historian Richard Broome notes many aborigines 'lost a sense of purpose and a desire for living.

iv.

This question was answered very well by students. Relevance, knowledge and evidence were the discriminating factors when assessing this question. Correct responses included:

- the forced lifestyle change through European takeover of land
- the effects of introduced European diseases
- changes to diet
- violent encounters with Europeans
- loss of will to live
- effects of mission system
- vices/alcohol
- different concepts of land usage.

Document B

i.

Students scored full marks by providing two of the following responses, and one mark for providing one correct response from the following:

- the Eureka Flag
- the raised weapons
- the circled gathering
- swearing allegiance.

ii.

Students needed to provide two responses and an explanation of each. Grievances included the licence system, the policing of the licence system in the form of licence checks, the restriction of small mining claims, lack of political representation, the presence of the Chinese, etc.

iii.

Students were required to outline consequences of the Eureka rebellion including:

- the licence system was changed
- local miner's courts were set up
- miners were given political representation.

Some students might have considered more immediate effects including:

- there were casualties at Eureka
- rebels were eventually acquitted.

A longer-term view might have also been taken including:

- the idea of banding together in difficult times
- authority can be questioned.

iv.

This question required students to consider the issue from a number of angles and evidence should have been supplied to support points made. Correct points included:

- the increase in population
- the huge economic impact
- the development of Melbourne

2008 Assessment Report



- the improvement of infrastructure (roads, etc.)
- the development of social equality and the political development.

Discriminating factors were relevance to the question, knowledge and evidence used.

Section B

Question 2

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	5	5	16	23	50	3.1

This question was completed well by most students. Students needed to identify two specific hopes prior to 1901 that Federation would address. One mark was awarded for identification of a hope and one mark for explaining this hope.

Possible responses included:

- Australian nationalism, i.e. hope for a new nation – still within the British sphere
- defence
- ‘White Australia’
- hope for a fair go for workers
- economic hopes – tariff question.

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	5	6	11	22	24	21	12	3.7

This question required students to examine what place fear had in excluding groups from the new nation. Some students argued that fear was seen in the exclusion of non-Europeans – Asians, Pacific Islanders and Aborigines. They went on to say that this fear could be tied in with failure to understand other cultures, fear of invasion and fear of being outnumbered. Fear of economic disadvantage because of lower wages was also expressed. Better students argued that fear was not the only factor, that exclusion resulted from hopes for racial priority, economic security and loyalty to the British. Some answers included discussion of fear about the role of women in society.

Question 2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Average
%	12	3	5	5	8	11	12	14	14	8	5.4

Generally this was a well answered question and included reference to what extent students agreed or disagreed that Australians benefited from legislation introduced to the new nation between 1901 and 1914. They provided evidence of specific legislation, for example, the *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902*, the *Invalid and Old Age Pension Act 1908*, the *Defence Act*, the *Maternity Allowances Act 1912*, the *Workmen’s Compensation Act*, the *Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904*, and also the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* and the *Pacific Islands Labourers’ Act 1904*. There was emphasis on the issue of benefit, but better answers also made reference to those who did not benefit – Aborigines, Chinese and Pacific Islanders.

Section C

Question chosen	None	a.	b.	c.
%	3	35	28	35

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Average
%	4	1	2	3	2	3	3	4	5	4	7	6	8	7	10	7	7	5	5	2	4	11.5

The discriminating factors for the essays were the relevance of arguments used, depth of knowledge and the extent of evidence supplied from a variety of sources. It was pleasing to see that most students wrote two or more pages in response to the question.

Question 3a.

World War 1

This essay required the discussion of early unity to the support for Britain, pride in new nation with the Gallipoli campaign, then a focus on widespread debate regarding conscription, the ALP split, Irish/English divide, industrial



issues, and then discussion on the amount of change resulting from the war. Students wrote about short-term changes but better answers included the enduring Anzac legend, and the needs of returned servicemen. Discussion of conservative forces within Australian society was also appropriate.

Question 3b.

Depression

This essay required examination of the evidence. Better student responses argued both sides of the question before making their stance on the question clear. Due to the unequal effects of the Great Depression, there was a lot of debate about whether cohesion was strained. Was there cohesion before? There were some signs of lack of political cohesion but these were not major. There was also evidence that the Great Depression increased cohesion, for example, people helping each other in difficult times.

Question 3c.

World War 2

Better answers mainly disagreed with the statement but knowledge of government regulation was required. Issues could have been Manpower regulations, Women's Land Army, ration cards, blackouts, and conscription. The increase in federal government power was also mentioned. Many essays considered that the situation changed in the different phases of the war. Students needed to explain what was meant by the words 'real' and 'genuine' in the question.

Section D

Question chosen	None	A.	B.	C.	D.
%	3	2	80	3	12

Identification

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	8	6	20	28	38	2.8

Evaluation

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	11	7	12	11	14	13	13	9	9	4

Analysis

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	17	5	8	10	13	12	15	11	10	4.1

Some students still presented their answers in essay form, while others framed their answer under the dot points provided and wrote their response as three short answers. Students who adopted the second approach were often better able to keep their responses relevant and to the point. Teachers and students should be aware that both methods are acceptable and can gain full marks, however, the use of the dot point structure ensured that students addressed all aspects of the question. Many students writing in essay form this year did not do well on the other point in time as they failed to address changing attitudes and evidence from the other point in time.

Responses to Section D were marked in the following manner.

- Identification of the attitudes reflected in the representation. Use evidence from the representation to support your answer.
Students were awarded two marks for identifying attitudes contained in the representation and two marks for evidence/explanation.
- Evaluation of the degree to which the representation reflects attitudes about the issues that you have studied at that particular point in time.
Students were awarded up to eight marks in this section, providing they wrote about the time the representation was taken from. Discriminating factors included the quality of the response in relation to knowledge, relevance and evidence.
- Analysis of changing attitudes in relation to this issue. To support your comments, use evidence from the other point in time that you have studied.
Students were awarded four marks for analysing the changing attitudes in relation to the issue and four marks for evidence from the other point in time.

A. Attitudes to Indigenous rights



Students referred to the 1967 Referendum and that the representation reflected the view that *The Age* was urging a 'yes' vote. Better students recognised the representation as a means of improving Aboriginal lifestyle by offering hope to end discrimination and as a means of honouring Aboriginal people.

Some students noticed that the 'yes' vote projected a better perception internationally of the Australian people's treatment of the Aboriginal population. The referendum was passed by the electorate so there was general agreement with the general point made by *The Age* article.

Students then commented that the 1972 Tent Embassy resulted in widespread debate. Generally there was a negative response to the Embassy, especially to this type of protest by the broader community, even though there was some sympathy for the underlining principles of their grievances.

Peoples' attitudes had changed – they were more receptive to Aboriginal rights as a result of the 1967 Referendum, but were still cautious to how far these rights should be encouraged. This is evident by the lack of support for the Tent Embassy.

B. Attitudes to the Vietnam War

This document showed that Gough Whitlam, as leader of the Opposition, was very critical of the Liberal Government continuing its support of the Vietnam War. He was arguing that the usual reasons given for this support were no longer valid and he also argued that the nation no longer supported Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

Students noted that this view was becoming more widespread and used the example of the appeal of the moratorium demonstrations. Better students cautioned this point of view by highlighting that the Coalition Government was still re-elected in 1969 although with a reduced majority.

To address the other point in time, 1965, students pointed to the Domino theory, SEATO Treaty with some disagreement from the Opposition (ALP-Caldwell), trade unions and radical students. Most students then explained the changing view with reference to the Tet Offensive, media coverage and the My Lai massacre.

C. Attitudes to the environment

Most students recognised that this document reflected the view that *The Age* editorial was against the damming of the Franklin River. Students suggested that this was mainly on environmental grounds, although arguments based around economics were mentioned.

Another point discussed by students was the role of the government and the federal government's right to intervene in a state issue. Better students went on to discuss the role of protestors against the dam and increased environmental concern nationwide. They also commented on the approaching federal election, where the ALP was elected, and the continued strong economic resistance in Tasmania.

In addressing the other point in time, students remarked how attitudes had changed significantly since the flooding of Lake Pedder in 1972. They mentioned how environmental issues were not as much of a concern then. They discussed how the flooding went ahead as proposed by the Hydro-Electric Commission, and was justified as necessary for employment and industry reasons. Protests came from the Australian Conservation Foundation and the Lake Pedder Action Committee. Better students noted that the federal government considered this a state issue in 1972 but, in 1983, believed it had to intervene.

D. Attitudes to immigration

In this representation, *The Canberra Times* article supported the ending of the White Australia Policy and stated that most Australians were of this opinion. It criticised the White Australia Policy as being racist and out of step with how Australia wanted to be regarded internationally. It stated that Australians were now on good terms with their Asian neighbours and that harmonious relations could be achieved.

At this point in time, this view was becoming more widespread. International condemnation was a factor and harmonious relations were being debated.

From the other time period, the 1970s, the arrival of Vietnamese boat people created debate; there was acknowledgement of a debt owed in regard to the Vietnam War and acceptance of boat people. However, these attitudes changed from this initial acceptance of the boat people to later in the decade with concern about how many Vietnamese people would come and what effect this would have on employment, and exactly where they would live. Better students

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recognised that although the White Australia Policy had been officially removed, attitudes had changed between the two time periods.

Better students also noted that discrimination on racial grounds in the 1970s was less tolerated than in the 1960s but that the 1960s was when these attitudes began to change.