

2011 Australian History GA 3: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

This was the seventh year of the revised *VCE Australian History Study Design*. It was observed this year that many more students' answers addressed the set questions than in previous years; however, time management was an issue for many students. The most successful students were able to manage their time so that they completed all of the questions.

Students needed to be aware of the meaning of terminology used throughout their Australian History studies to fully comprehend the questions.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

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

Document chosen	none	A	B
%	0	56	44

i.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	2	15	83	1.8

ii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	3	18	23	55	3.3

iii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	1	2	8	18	28	26	18	4.2

iv.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	4	3	7	10	14	16	19	15	12	5

Section A

Students were required to answer only Document A or Document B in this section.

Document A

i.

Students received two marks for identifying two examples of the hardship of the emigration experience as seen in the illustration. Some examples of acceptable responses were:

- leaving known society/family
- protecting their children
- travelling on a small ship
- the danger of the journey, including deaths on board and disease on the ship
- the length of the journey.

Students received one mark for each example. There was no need for an elaborate response.

ii.

Students needed to identify and explain two reasons that may have pushed people to leave Britain. These factors should have indicated that life was unsatisfactory in Britain, for example:

- limited opportunities for advancement in Britain
- rigid class structure in Britain
- poor economic outlook in Britain
- seeking adventure
- the plight of the Irish

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- a lack of available land in Britain
- unemployment
- overpopulation
- crime.

Two marks were available for each example: one mark for identifying the push factor and one mark for its explanation.

iii.

This question related to 'pull factors': what were the settlers (individuals and/or groups) hoping to achieve by immigrating to the Port Phillip District? Examples of these factors were:

- land ownership
- economic advancement
- security
- enhanced social position
- being part of a new society that offered more freedom
- getting rich quickly through gold
- following a sense of adventure
- securing a better future for the next generation
- political reform.

The most successful answers referred to examples of groups such as landless labourers, landowners seeking a chance to be wealthier and gain a more prominent place in society (for example, the Hentys and McCrae), women, ambitious working men prepared to work hard, and the poor Irish and Scottish who could hardly be worse off. The desires of settlers from other colonies could be included, such as those from Van Dieman's Land, north of Murray and the Chinese settlers during the Gold Rush. High-scoring responses were relevant to the question, showed a high level of knowledge and supplied evidence that was varied and sophisticated.

iv.

Students needed to evaluate to what extent the underlying motives and hopes were achieved by those who migrated to the Port Phillip District and use evidence/examples to support their claims. Most answers acknowledged the immigration experience as difficult but generally rewarding. The most successful students noted that not all were success stories like the Selby family, but many settlers had improved their economic conditions with land ownership and independence.

Responses also discussed:

- the prosperity that came to some with the gold rushes
- forming a new society
- the achievement of a more relaxed social structure
- the development of the Port Phillip District/Victoria on British lines
- the impact of Eureka
- the development of political rights.

The most successful students used many of these examples and provided answers that remained relevant and showed a high level of knowledge and evidence.

Document B

i.

Students received two marks for identifying two examples from the image that illustrated a harmonious exchange between the Aboriginal people and the European settlers. Some of these responses were:

- the relaxed stance
- arms outstretched in a welcoming manner
- women, children and friendly dogs are present.

Students received one mark for each example. There was no need for an elaborate response.

ii.

Advantages that Europeans gained from contact with the Aboriginal people in the Port Phillip District/Colony of Victoria up to 1860 included:

- land use
- water supply

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- bush survival skills
- sexual relations with Aboriginal women
- source of labour
- resources
- entertainment.

Two marks were available for each example: one mark for identifying the advantage and one mark for its explanation.

iii.

Students needed to discuss some of the key goods received from European settlers, which included alcohol, tobacco, European food from introduced animals and crops, guns and other weapons, and European clothing.

The overall impact was negative, but it was argued successfully by some students that some surviving Aboriginals integrated into European society by using some of these goods.

iv.

The key point to this question was how 'typical' was this scene; responses needed to evaluate to what extent was the harmonious exchange typical. The most successful answers made reference to the image; for example, by discussing whether the bartering was considered to be on equal terms.

Most students argued that this was not a typical scene, although some students did acknowledge that relations at times were harmonious. Most students wrote of the destruction of Aboriginal society brought about by the coming of the Europeans; for example, depopulation, violence and abuse. Some students wrote of Aboriginal assimilation into European society, hence this representation.

Examples that were considered included Batman's Treaty, William Buckley, Barak and the Native Police.

SECTION B

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	5	6	20	21	48	3

Some key objectives of Federation were:

- realising the growing sense of nationalism
- creating a strong, uniform Australian defence force
- achieving common immigration laws
- achieving common tariff laws.

One mark was awarded for each example and a second mark for explaining each point.

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	9	11	17	21	22	12	9	3.1

Students needed to address the 'extent' to which society was dominated by white British males from 1888 to 1901.

Acceptable responses included the following information.

- The question of male domination provided issues to discuss – the traditional male role of the breadwinner in society in late 19th century – hence the Great Strikes of the 1890s aimed at improving working conditions.
- The bushman tradition in art and literature – usually a male situation, although some writers focused on the role of women; for example, *The Drover's Wife*.
- Britain was certainly the preference – the making of a society based on British values.
- White was the ethnic priority – the attitudes to Aborigines, Chinese and Queensland Islander workers were used as examples.
- Men were the key movers in the push for Federation in 1901 but students could also discuss the role of key women; for example, Catherine Helen Spence.

Most students agreed that society was dominated by white British males, although some pointed out the arguments of many women for an equal political footing and discussed the role of women in society generally.

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Question 2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	14	4	5	4	6	10	10	14	14	9	10	5.6

The idea of an egalitarian society needed to be discussed – the question of equal rights/equal opportunity, along with a discussion of those who were excluded from the egalitarian model; for example, Aborigines, Chinese and women.

To score well, responses needed to contain an evaluation and use examples that connected with the concept of egalitarianism. There had to be some general discussion of the issue, not just a list of legislation passed between 1901 and 1914. However, demonstrating knowledge of relevant legislation as part of an evaluation of the issue scored well.

Some of the issues that could be discussed included that aspects of egalitarianism were covered in the *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902* – (almost) all could vote; in the Harvester Judgement, which sought to establish a decent living standard; and in social welfare legislation introduced after Federation. However, counter-arguments included the exclusions from the legislation, and therefore the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* was highlighted.

The most successful responses illustrated an understanding of the question, provided relevant examples and kept on track.

SECTION C

Question chosen	none	a.	b.	c.
%	2	40	26	33

It was noted that many students had improved their essays by using evidence from a variety of sources and directing their responses to the question asked. The most successful responses did this extremely well. The discriminating factors for the essays were the relevance of arguments used, the depth of knowledge shown and the extent of evidence supplied from a variety of sources.

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
%	2	1	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	3	7	6	8	10	9	8	7	7	6	3	2	12

Question 3a.

This essay asked students to argue to what extent the crisis of World War I led to the development of an Australian national identity and a move away from loyalty to the British Empire.

The forging of an Australian national identity can be seen in the readiness to go to war and the enthusiasm shown, and in the pride in and fostering of the Anzac story. There was a keen sense of proving the worth of a new nation. It could be argued that there was a move away from loyalty to the British Empire as the war progressed – possibly due to the high casualty rate. This is reflected in the debates over conscription, and many centred on the Irish question. The role of Billy Hughes was also discussed.

The most successful students addressed both aspects of the question.

Question 3b.

This question asked students to discuss to what extent Australian governments and society failed to respond adequately to the economic hardship of the Depression. The extent of economic hardship needed to be established and the question of what could be considered an adequate response by government and society was discussed in the most successful essays. Most answers focused on the varied impact of the Depression.

Discussion of the various aspects of government response included reference to state and federal governments; for example, Jack Lang. Relevant issues included the plans (Niemeyer, Lang and government relief schemes), public works (the Shrine and the Great Ocean Road) and Susso.

The response of society was varied. Some wealthy people helped those badly affected by the Depression, while others such as Sydney Myer barely acknowledged the Depression. There was some discussion of exploitation at this time; for example, landlords, and also discussion about people supporting each other and responding to others' physical and emotional needs.

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Many students mentioned the ongoing legacy of the Depression in society over time; for example, greater government involvement in economic affairs and social welfare.

The most successful responses addressed separately the issues of the response by governments and the response by society.

Question 3c.

This question asked students to argue to what extent 'World War II redefined Australian social attitudes and foreign relations.'

The key word here was 'redefined'; students needed to address whether this always means permanent change or whether some temporary changes could be relevant.

Most answers discussed a redefining of Australian social attitudes, and some discussed how deep these were. Key issues were enemy internment, black market activity, union actions, conscription, US servicemen in Australia and the changing role of women.

The redefining of foreign relations focused on Curtin's appeal to the USA in late 1941–42 and included the dispute between Curtin and Churchill over the deployment of Australian troops.

Some students argued successfully that this was of necessity a permanent change while the changes in social attitudes were temporary. Both aspects of the question needed to be considered.

SECTION D

Question chosen	0	1	2	3	4
%	3	9	72	3	13

Identification

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	6	4	20	26	44	3

Evaluation

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	10	5	10	11	14	13	13	11	12	4.4

Analysis

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	18	4	7	8	10	10	15	13	15	4.3

Generally students seemed to understand that responses in this section must include:

- identification of the attitudes reflected in the representation – explanation of at least two points (four marks)
- evaluation of the degree to which the representation reflected the attitudes about the issue at that particular point in time (eight marks)
- analysis of changing attitudes in relation to the issue; use of evidence from the other point in time studied (eight marks).

A. Attitudes to Indigenous rights

This document referred to the 1967 referendum and is highly supportive of a yes vote, with its key argument being one of human rights. There is reference to Australia's international standing on this issue. Students used some of the following points in their responses: the success of this referendum (it was supported by 90 per cent of the public), a 'no' vote could have damaged our image in the international arena and it was the very least non-Indigenous Australians could do to support the Aborigines. This representation was a strong reflection of attitudes of the time.

For the other point in time, students needed to explain the reaction to the Aboriginal Tent Embassy of 1972. This reaction was mixed, with some support, but much general criticism of the form of protest. Reactions were more diverse than in 1967, with significant media criticism. Some points included were: the general population were now more

receptive to Aboriginal rights, but considered this going too far; there was some sympathy for the underlining principles of their grievances; and the most successful students identified the reasons behind the protests as being land rights and Aboriginal rights, and that Aboriginal affairs had become an important issue in national politics.

B. Attitudes to the Vietnam War

This editorial from *The Australian* of 8 May 1970 referred to a Moratorium march. *The Australian* newspaper was supportive of the Moratorium campaign and was opposed to the Vietnam War. The article was strongly critical of government attempts to discredit the campaign. By 1970 there was strong public opposition to Australia's involvement in this war; hence the large numbers involved in the Moratorium marches.

The other point in time was 1965, when there was widespread support for involvement in the war, and *The Australian* newspaper was opposed in 1965.

The most successful responses included evidence from the period 1965 to 1970 to explain the difference in attitude between the two periods of time. This evidence included: TV footage of the war, the Tet offensive, the My Lai Massacre and protests in the US at the time.

C. Attitudes to the environment

This photograph was from the 1983 federal election campaign and showed aspects of the protest in favour of stopping the damming of the Franklin River. The protests were widespread but the Liberal Party policy was to not intervene in this issue.

This was an issue that divided society, but the federal election of March 1983 was won by the ALP, led by Bob Hawke, and their policy was to use the federal government's power to stop the dam.

The other point in time was the 1972 flooding of Lake Pedder, when the protest was committed but small and when there was limited, and too late, involvement by the ALP government that was elected in December of that year.

The most successful students linked the two periods by stating that if it was not for the Lake Pedder protest, the Franklin River campaign may not have been successful.

D. Attitudes to immigration

This article referred to Vietnamese 'boat people' arriving in Australia in 1977 and expressed the mixed reaction in Australia to this form of immigration. The article acknowledged Australia's moral responsibility for some of these refugees but expressed concern for the impact of this movement on Australia's population. There was a sense of caution against being deceived by how genuine some of these people were.

This article was quite accurate in reflecting the caution of a lot of Australians, and of the Australian government at this time, although PM Malcolm Fraser was sympathetic to the plight of refugees.

The other point in time was the phasing out of the White Australia Policy in the mid-1960s, when international pressure was important and the White Australia Policy was generally seen to be outdated.

The most successful students pointed to the fact that at both periods of time the attitude was cautionary, and they provided evidence of this.