



GENERAL COMMENTS

It is important to note that each section of the 2013 Sociology examination paper assessed a different area of the *VCE Sociology Study Design*. The strongest answers included examples related to the key knowledge and skills being assessed.

It was essential that students thoroughly address the question posed, rather than give prepared answers. Students who demonstrated a good understanding of key concepts, accurately applied sociological theory and provided supporting evidence generated the strongest responses.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

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

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what the answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

The statistics in this report may be subject to rounding errors resulting in a total less than 100%.

Section A

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	35	17	48	1.1

This question required students to describe the main aspects of the Northern Territory Emergency Response – ‘The Intervention’. Many students responded well to this question.

Complete answers made reference to the following.

- It was a response to the *Little Children are Sacred Report* commissioned by the Northern Territory Government.
- It was led by the Australian Government, commencing on 21 June 2007.
- It encompassed a range of restrictions within Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory, including bans on alcohol and pornography, compulsory health checks and welfare quarantines.
- There were mixed responses among Indigenous communities.

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	17	16	38	29	1.8

This question required students to outline how one past government policy suppressed Australian Indigenous culture. This question was answered well by many students. They needed to

- identify and provide an outline of a suppression policy (i.e. protection, segregation, assimilation or integration)
- reflect an understanding of the concept of suppression (e.g. the domination of one culture over another by a deliberate policy or through economic or technological superiority)
- explain how the policy suppressed Australian Indigenous culture (e.g. loss of language).

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	28	39	33	1.1

This question required students to summarise how Indigenous Australians have responded to the government policy they outlined in Question 2a. Students were required to

- make reference to the particular government policy named in Question 2a.
- provide a specific example of an Indigenous Australian response.

The following is an excerpt from a good response.

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One response to the suppression policy was the Cummeragunja Walk Off in 1939. Over 150 Indigenous Australians walked off the Cummeragunja mission in protest at the callous treatment, poor working conditions and exploitation by management, demonstrating that they would no longer tolerate such treatment.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	4	23	72	1.7

This question required students to show an understanding of material and non-material culture by identifying an example of each concept from the representations provided. In order to fully address this question, students needed to

- provide an example of material culture from one representation
- provide an example of non-material culture from the other representation.

The following are excerpts from good responses.

Material culture refers to the tangible objects and creations of a group or society. For example, Dennis Thorpe's painting 'Hunting and Gathering'.

Non-material culture, however, refers to the knowledge, values, beliefs, languages, symbols and social norms transmitted across generations. An example from representation b, is the non-Indigenous belief that Indigenous people need to paint in a 'realistic style'.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	7	11	25	32	20	6	2.7

This question required students to explain the effects that one of the representations is likely to have on the perception of Australian Indigenous culture.

To achieve a high score, students needed to

- demonstrate an understanding of Australian Indigenous culture
- identify the likely perception (i.e. positive or negative)
- outline the effects of the representation on Australian Indigenous culture (for example, generalisations, healing, pride, hope, challenging ethnocentric views)
- use evidence from the representation to support their explanation.

The following are excerpts from good responses.

The article would have a very positive effect on the perception of Indigenous Australians especially by non-Indigenous Australians. It is often over-reported in the media that Indigenous Australians have high rates of imprisonment, but it is never mentioned when people try to break out of cycle of imprisonment ... it would also make people understand that reoffending is caused by lack of identity and opportunity.

The representation 'A New Penguin Leunig' may impact upon the understanding of Indigenous culture as a strong and unique culture, and may promote healing between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	9	4	13	17	29	20	9	3.5

This question required students to describe the difference between an ethnocentric and a culturally relativistic study of Australian Indigenous culture. Strong responses did more than just define the key concepts. It was important for students to explore what is different about the approaches. This question required students to

- demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of ethnocentrism (for example, the practice of judging another culture by the standards of one's own) and cultural relativism (for example, the practice of judging a culture by its own standards)
- describe one difference between ethnocentric and culturally relativistic studies of Australian Indigenous culture
- use evidence from the representations or material studied throughout the year to support their discussion.

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The following is an excerpt from a good response.

One difference between an ethnocentric and a culturally relativistic study of Australian Indigenous culture is that ethnocentrism creates stereotypes and generalisations of the culture, whereas cultural relativism promotes understanding, tolerance and acceptance of the culture.

Section B

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	32	39	30	1

This question required students to outline two examples of ethnic hybridity in Australia. Most students responded very well to this question.

Appropriate answers included

- two examples of ethnic hybridity
- an understanding of the concept of ethnic hybridity (for example, new cultural forms resulting from a mixture of two or more cultural influences).

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	5	9	18	25	29	13	3

This question required students to identify whether sociologists prefer the term 'ethnicity' over 'race' when engaging in sociological enquiry.

Students were required to

- have an identifiable position
- show an understanding of the concepts of ethnicity (for example, a social group, categorised by a distinctive way of life with set customary values) and race (for example, a socially constructed category of people who share biologically transmitted traits that members of a society consider important, such as skin colour)
- provide two or more reasons why sociologists prefer the term 'ethnicity'
- use evidence from material studied throughout the year to support their explanation.

The following is an excerpt from a good response.

Sociologists prefer the use of the term ethnicity rather than race when categorising people as it allows for an understanding of a particular group rather than a judgement their physical appearance. Suzanne E, an Egyptian Australian South East Melbourne explained that, 'I prefer when people ask me about my culture rather than assuming my cultural identity. It's a form of respect'.

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	11	25	41	22	1.8

This question required students to explain the difference between the policies of assimilation and multiculturalism.

To successfully address the question, students needed to

- demonstrate a clear understanding of both policies
- outline the difference between the two immigration policies. These differences included
 - assimilation promoted a monoculture, whereas multiculturalism celebrates cultural diversity
 - assimilation is ethnocentric, while multiculturalism is a culturally relative perspective
 - the policies occurred at different time periods.



Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	13	10	16	15	14	12	10	7	4	1	0	3.5

This question required students to describe one ethnic group in Australia. In doing so, students needed to explain the interaction that had occurred between the ethnic group and a social institution.

Good responses reflected a detailed understanding of the case study the student had carried out throughout the year. Stronger responses also provided supporting evidence from multiple sources, rather than relying on a single source (e.g. a documentary).

To address this question fully, it was necessary to

- identify and describe an ethnic group
- identify and describe a social institution
- reflect an understanding of the concept of a social institution (for example, groups, beliefs or patterns of behaviour within society that are involved in the socialisation of individuals and groups)
- describe the interaction between the social institution and the ethnic group
- support their discussion of the interaction with examples from material studied throughout the year.

The following is an excerpt from a good response.

The Karen people are an ethnic group. The Karen people are from the Thai/Burma border and they have been forced to flee their country due to a decades long military dictatorship and cultural oppression ... when the Karen people arrived in Australia they had trouble adapting. Most Karen people cannot speak English, don't have qualifications that are recognised in Australia, family and friends, and financial issues ... The Bendigo Baptist Church ... helps by offering a cleaning program called Eleven41. This program provides Karen refugees with employment, improves their language skills, moral support ... and friend.

Section C

Question 10

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	5	8	18	16	12	12	11	9	6	1	1	4

This question required students to explain how a social movement they had investigated in their studies came into existence.

Students' answers needed to

- demonstrate an understanding of the concept of social movement
- identify and describe a specific social movement
- identify and describe one social movement emergence theory; either
 - (relative) deprivation theory, or
 - New Social Movement theory
- explain how the social movement came into being, with reference to a specific emergence theory
- use evidence to support their discussion.

The following is an excerpt from a good response.

New Social Movements (NSM) refers to post-industrial social movements from the late 1960s that place greater emphasis on the alteration of social and cultural values. The characteristics of the NSM theory include sense of collective identity, opposition to mainstream politics, global presence and the use of ICT to create a global message. The NSM theory ... why Greenpeace came into being, as Greenpeace focuses on altering socio-cultural values rather than focusing on ... the economy as old social movements did ... Greenpeace also affirms many of the characteristics outlined in NSM theory. For instance, Greenpeace has a prominent global presence with 2.85 million supporters worldwide. Greenpeace also uses ICT ... to create a globalised message. For example, Greenpeace has a website (www.greenpeace.org) which creates a global message as it is accessible by anyone around the world.

Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	10	8	12	13	13	9	10	10	9	3	2	4.2



This question required students to explain how a social movement changed as it passed through the different stages of the social movement life cycle. In order to successfully address this question, students needed to

- show an understanding of the concept of social movement
- identify and describe a social movement
- explain at least two phases of the social movement life cycle (i.e. emergence, coalescence, bureaucratisation and/or decline)
- explain how their chosen social movement moved through these stages
- reflect an understanding that social movements change over time
- provide evidence to support their discussion.

The following is an excerpt from a good response.

The 'Lock the Gate Alliance' is a national grassroots organisation consisting of thousands of individuals and over 160 local groups concerned about inappropriate mining, particularly coal seam gas mining ... Emergence involves the recognition of dissatisfaction among many individuals and groups. In 2010, members of the directly effected by the gas mining expressed their concerns amongst one another. Coalescence is the stage in which individuals come together as an organised collective. The grassroots organisation established itself as the 'Lock the Gate Alliance' during this stage, as an organised group rather than individual dissatisfied farmers. During the bureaucratisation stage, the movement develops organised strategies and may often take on a leader. The Lock the Gate Alliance demonstrated this stage through organised rallies and petitions at Queensland Gas Company (QGC) headquarters. ... signage and slogans such as 'Don't frack with me' and 'Lock the Gate'.

Section D

Question chosen	none	12	13
%	1	51	48

Questions 12 and 13

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Average
%	3	4	4	5	7	6	8	8	8	6	8	7	8	5	5	4	3	1	1	0	0	8.4

While there were a greater number of good responses, there remain areas for improvement. In addition to applying sociological theory and/or concepts, students are encouraged to use ample evidence to support their discussion.

It is very important that teachers and students carefully consider the communities selected for study throughout the year. While groups such as workplaces, prisons and motorcycle gangs all have the potential to be viewed as community groups, consideration needs to be given to the capacity for students to adequately respond to all key knowledge areas related to this area of study.

Question 12

In order to answer this question fully, students needed to

- demonstrate an understanding of the concepts of community and sense of community
- provide a detailed description of the chosen community, including an overview of the different ways individuals within the community would experience a sense of community
- assess whether it is possible for a single shared sense of community to exist
- use detailed evidence studied throughout the year to support their discussion.

Examples of appropriate communities included

- community groups such as the Freemasons, Lions and Rotary Clubs
- sporting clubs
- local council/shire community centres
- schools
- religious groups.

Question 13

In order to answer this question fully, students needed to

- demonstrate an understanding of the concepts of community and information and communications technology
- provide an outline of the chosen community
- accurately refer to one or more sociological theories (i.e. Ferdinand Tonnies and Manuel Castells)
- discuss, using examples, the way that ICT has impacted on the chosen community.

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Relevant examples included

- the use of mobile phones for safety purposes among the members of the Maiden Gully Fire Brigade
- the Bendigo Special Development School using apps to assist their students' learning and behaviour
- the Peninsula Strikers Soccer Club Facebook page listing training schedules and game fixtures
- Team Melbourne using a website to support same-sex attracted individuals in the areas of sport and recreation.