



2012

Australian History GA 3: Examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

On the whole, responses to the 2012 History: Australian examination showed that students had good knowledge of Australian History. Students were able to give relevant answers, which was a marked improvement on previous years.

Students were assessed in accordance with the assessment criteria published on page 12 of the *VCE History: Australian History Assessment Handbook 2005–2015* (available on the VCAA website).

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.

Document chosen	none	A	B
%	0	74	26

i.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	0	11	89	1.9

ii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	1	2	17	26	54	3.3

iii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	2	2	8	21	30	21	16	4.1

iv.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	1	1	4	8	15	17	22	16	15	5.5

Section A

Students were required to answer questions for either Document A or Document B in this section.

Document A

i.

Students received two marks for identifying two examples from the visual representation that indicated that Aborigines were excluded from the new society.

Examples of this exclusion were

- being literally on the fringe of society (with the visual showing Aborigines on the edge of the representation)
- the sale of their land
- being threatened by a gun.

ii.

Students needed to identify and explain two examples from the representation that showed the values and/or aspirations of British settlers. In each case, one mark was awarded for correctly identifying an example and one mark was awarded for the explanation.

Responses included

- owning land as a basis for position in society

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- clearing of land to put it to use
- development of towns/cities
- acquiring wealth
- achieving law and order.

iii.

In this question students needed to comment on the arguments that the British used to justify their claim that they had the right to sell the land. The example of an excellent answer below does this by mentioning reasons for selling the land – terra nullius – and the justification of not putting it to use in the view of the settlers. It also enhances the argument by inserting quotations from relevant sources. Other responses gave reasons such as Christian values, Europeans deeming themselves to be superior and the difficulty of establishing a permanent settlement without the sale of land.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The British believed that because there was no organised policy of the land and that because the Aborigines were not 'improving it' (Shaw) that it was free for occupation and ownership. This is defined by the term 'terra nullius' which reflects the idea that land is a gift from God and should be used for its best purpose. For this reason, the British believed land belonged to 'he who should first cultivate it' (Windeyer). They perceived that the Port Phillip District was really for the 'immediate reception of civilised man' (Mitchell). However, there was some attempt to come to an agreement with the Aborigines who had occupied the land for over 40,000 years; this came in the form of Batman's treaties. Aboriginal Elders signed a document which gave Batman over 600,000 hectares of land north of Melbourne and near Ballarat in exchange for some of the Europeans unwanted goods. However, Aborigines were not entitled to sell clan land and they most probably did not realise they were doing so.

iv.

Students needed to discuss 'to what extent' in answering this question. Most students observed that the dispossession of the land caused great disruption to the Aboriginal people, such as destroying their nomadic lifestyle, which had enabled them to find food and water previously. This resulted in tension with settlers and in some cases caused violence. However, the more successful students looked at other reasons, such as disease, being the main damaging consequence, and the fact that some Aboriginal people adapted and worked for the settlers. To gain full marks students needed to show accurate knowledge of the historical issues in a highly relevant answer that addressed and challenged the statement.

Document B

i.

Students received two marks for identifying two occupations from the image.

Typical responses included

- gold-digging (diggers)
- policing (police)
- shopkeeping (merchants).

ii.

Students needed to identify and explain two environmental consequences of the search for gold that were depicted in the image.

These consequences included

- land-clearing
- damage by vehicles (horse and cart/hooves of horses)
- digging up the land.

iii.

Students needed to show accurate knowledge of the historical issues and evidence to achieve full marks for this question. The most successful students observed that between 1851 and 1854, the relationship between the miners and the government deteriorated over the cost of the mining licence, which led to the Eureka rebellion. Discussion of key players – for example, Peter Lalor and Governor Hotham – enhanced their responses. Carboni's writings and Serle's analysis of the period were good sources to use.



iv.

Students needed to discuss the changes that were brought about by gold. These changes included increased population, wealth, infrastructure, the push for democracy and an increasing diversity of ethnic groups. There were the negative effects of racial problems and environmental problems, such as sewerage and waste in the city of Melbourne. To attain full marks students needed to address to what extent gold brought about change to the development of Victoria by 1860.

Section B

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	3	2	18	17	60	3.3

Students needed to explain two fears that motivated the movement towards Federation. One mark was awarded for identification of an idea and one mark was awarded for an explanation of this idea. Possible responses included

- the fear of not being able to defend themselves from invasion
- the fear of non-British immigration.

This question was answered extremely well by most students.

The following is an example of a high-scoring student response.

One fear that motivated Federation was annexation. The relative proximity of Australia to threats such as Germany in Papua New Guinea, France in the New Hebrides and a Russian Fleet in the Pacific Ocean left Australia feeling vulnerable and ultimately 'the awareness of a common threat revealed the need for a common response' (Lewis). A second fear was invasion. 'The desire for uniform control of immigration and a white Australia was the major force which sustained, nurtured and ensured the triumph of the Federation movement' (Norris). Colonists feared the large number of Chinese immigrants which had appeared during the gold rush, as well as Japanese immigrants as a result of the 1894 treaty between Japan and Britain. They based this on scientific theories such as social Darwinism which claims that inequality is genetic and only the superior races will survive rather than racial prejudice. Therefore the fear of this 'inferior' race invading Australia motivated Federation.

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	10	6	12	16	21	18	17	3.6

This question required students to examine to what extent the culture of the bush influenced the development of national identity between 1888 and 1914.

The answer below does this particularly well by examining the bush culture while also including other factors that influenced this national identity. Students and teachers should also note the use of highly relevant sources to support the response.

'The convict derived bush ethos formed the most important basic component of the national mystique' (Ward). Colonists associated themselves with the bush, despite colonies being highly urbanised, as it made them think good of themselves in comparison to the dank, dirty city streets (particularly in Port Phillip District which was nicknamed 'Smellbourne'). The emergence of typically Australian motifs which resulted from this association with the bush (such as native flora and fauna, eg wattles, dingos, kangaroos and banksias) reflected a growing sense of nationalism. The establishment of the Heidelberg School in which typically Australian art was produced by artists such as McCubbin and Streeton, as well as literature by writers such as Patterson all demonstrated colonists association with the bush and a sense of national identity that accompanied it. However, this was also affected by a growing sense of egalitarianism in Australian society which differed from that of Britain. 'Australia didn't like the mother country's class-divisions, particularly the notion that when classifying human beings past and pedigree determined the future' (Carlyon). In Australia, Jack was not only as good as his master, but probably better. Therefore, a sense of independence from Britain, equality and the bush ethos helped to develop Australia's identity.

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Question 2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	8	2	5	4	7	9	13	15	16	11	10	6.1

Students were required to evaluate the extent to which legislation passed after Federation was motivated by a focus on inclusion rather than exclusion. The most successful students looked at both sides of this question – legislation regarding ‘inclusion’ and legislation regarding ‘exclusion’. As some students pointed out, some legislation did both. The idea of inclusion of marginalised Australians reflected this desire for a new and better society. Women, the aged and low-paid workers were all recipients of social reform not evident in the older societies of Europe. However, it was also argued that inclusion was prominent in the thinking of early lawmakers. It was believed that the new society had to be protected from outsiders who could, if allowed to enter Australia, cause wages to drop and living standards to fall. The ‘White Australia Policy’ was a motivation to exclude on these grounds.

The sample answer below does this to a very high standard, containing accurate and relevant detail and sound evidence supported by key sources.

While several pieces of legislation passed after Federation aimed to create an inclusive, egalitarian society, in many ways legislation also limited individuals involvement in the new nation. This is reflected in the first two pieces of legislation passed which limited immigration. The 1901 Immigration Restriction Act called for dictation test (which could be conducted in any European language) to determine whether hopeful immigrants could enter the country. ‘It was a lie and a sham, but it was diplomatically acceptable’ (Lewis) as it was based on education. In 1902 it saw 618 immigrants turned away. Similarly, the 1902 Pacific Islander Labourers Act ordered that the immigration of Kanakas was to be stopped and all current workers were to be deported by 1906. This was due to the development of a ‘US pre civil war plantation economy’ (Lewis) in the tropics which posed a threat to Australian jobs and contradicted the sense of egalitarianism which the constitution outlined. These two acts of parliament explicitly excluded certain individuals from the new nation.

In contrast, the 1902 Franchise Act which gave women the right to vote extended a sense of inclusion to them. Women were considered full citizens under this Act. Furthermore the 1904 Conciliation and Arbitration Act encouraged equality and inclusion by establishing an independent judiciary – to hear disputes between employers and employees. This meant that workers were to be treated fairly and was further enhanced by the 1907 Harvester judgement which established a minimum wage. The 1908 Old Age & Invalid pension Act was one of the most ‘progressive pieces of legislation of the time’ (Lewis) and reflected the growing Australian motif ‘of a fair go’ (Lewis). Unemployed individuals as well as the elderly (which made up over 60% of the population at the time of Federation) and single mothers were able to access support from the government. Similarly, the Maternity Act of 1912 further included women in the nation by extending their rights and providing them with £5 upon the birth of their child – more than double the basic wage. Finally, the Defence Act of 1909 which called for military training for 12-26 year old men was an inclusive act as it reflected the need for a civilian army.

Therefore the majority of legislation passed following Federation reflected a sense of inclusion for all White-Anglo-Saxon Protestants and extended rights to them, but it effectively excluded Asians and Pacific Islanders from the nation.

Section C

Question chosen	none	a.	b.	c.
%	2	41	24	33

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	1	2	3	3	2	3	5	3	5	6	7	9	9	9	8	7	8	3	5	12.6

Most students wrote very good essays on their area of study. The discriminating factors for the essays were the relevance of arguments used, the depth of knowledge demonstrated and the extent of evidence supplied from a variety of sources.



Question 3a.

Students needed to argue to what extent they agreed with the statement, ‘Debates, such as those on conscription, indicated that deep divisions had emerged in Australian society during World War I’. The most successful responses focused on conscription and the divisions it created – sectarian (Catholic and Protestant), political (Hughes and the ALP) and moral (equality of sacrifice), but the discussion of divisions that emerged were needed for a full answer. These other divisions were loyalty to Britain, the treatment of soldiers returned from war and policies towards the ‘aliens’ in the community.

Some useful sources for World War I included CEW Bean, Ernest Scott and Stuart Macintyre.

Question 3b.

Students needed to argue to what extent they agreed with the statement, ‘Unemployment threatened the cohesion of Australian society during the Depression’. The most successful answers were those that recognised that unemployment threatened the cohesion of society but that it wasn’t the only factor affecting social cohesion. Students noted that unemployment challenged the government and that there was a further class divide between the rich and poor, family breakdown and many people relying on various charities. However, there was the alternative view that many went on as usual, and, although wages were lower, people could buy more, and that families and friends helped each other. Therefore, the extent to which unemployment threatened cohesion could contain a range of views.

Some useful sources for The Depression of the 1930s in Australia included Wendy Lowenstein and David Potts.

Question 3c.

Students needed to argue to what extent they agreed with the statement, ‘The threat posed by Japan intensified the need for unity in Australian society during World War II’. The most successful answers observed that Japan’s pact with Axis powers, Germany and Italy increased the need for unity, so when Japan bombed Pearl Harbour in 1941, and both Darwin and Broome in 1942, this unity was heightened. Unified support increased for the involvement of women in supporting the war effort at this time; however, this support was not so much evident in the period of 1939 to 1942 when Australia troops were fighting in Europe. To gain high marks, responses needed to show accurate historical knowledge, be relevant to the question and use sources as evidence.

Some useful sources for World War II included Manning Clark and Joan Beaumont.

Section D

Representation chosen	none	A.	B.	C.	D.
%	1	7	86	2	4

Identification

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	4	3	18	31	44	3.1

Evaluation

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	5	6	10	13	15	12	14	11	12	4.5

Analysis

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	11	4	6	9	12	13	16	14	16	4.7

Some students presented their answers in essay form, while others framed their answer using the dot points given in the question, writing their response as three short answers. However, it should be noted that some of the most successful answers integrated their discussion of the three requirements into a single extended response.

Many students neglected to address the other period in each of the sections. However, as is clearly stated on the examination paper itself, students are required to analyse changing attitudes in relation to the issue chosen. In order to support their comments regarding change, students should include evidence from the other point in time



studied. Students should refer explicitly to dates to identify both points in time. Both points in time should be discussed thoroughly and references to each supported with evidence.

A. Attitudes to Indigenous rights

The image was urging the voters to vote 'yes' in the 1967 Referendum. The use of the child reflects the idea that the vote will determine what sort of lives future generations of Aborigines will lead. It also conveys the sentiment that by voting 'yes', voters may help to right the wrongs of the past. The most successful students made the point that this sentiment did not carry over to the 1972 Tent Embassy. The media was more divided over the issue and many felt that the Aborigines were going too far in their demands.

B. Attitudes to the Vietnam War

The photograph from 1970 by Richard Hogg was opposing the war and the use of Australian troops. The view was that our government was willing to follow US foreign policy blindly, thus the reference to 'Aussie Boys aren't Yankee Toys' on the banner. Polls showed a significant reversal of opinion regarding the sending of troops to Vietnam, with 72% FOR in 1964 but just 48% FOR in 1970. Explanation of this change of attitude was done effectively by the more successful students, who referred to the fact the war had gone on so long, the increase in deaths of Australian conscripts, the media's TV footage and the 1968 My Lai Massacre (publicised in 1969).

C. Attitudes to the environment

The document, written in 1972, supported the flooding of Lake Pedder as an economic necessity, which was the view of the media and politicians of the time. By 1983, the Franklin Dam issue was both political and environmental. There were well-coordinated protest groups, activists and politicians who began to use people power. The more successful students pointed out that the Lake Pedder experience enabled the Franklin Dam protests to succeed.

D. Attitudes to immigration

The writer of this letter puts forward the view that the rate of immigration because of 'boat people' is of no real concern and we, as a nation, should be proud of our acceptance of Asian migrants. Although some groups were still opposed to immigration, the introduction of the policy of multiculturalism in 1972 had been accepted by most in society. Many Australians sided with the humanitarians on this issue. In 1964–1966, the 'White Australia Policy' was still being adhered to. The change in attitudes between the two periods was because of Australia's geographical position, an embarrassment in the region, being a large country with a small population, which was the opposite of our nearest neighbours. A greater tolerance of and a desire not to be seen as upholding racist views were the motivating factors behind changes in attitudes in the 1970s. Concerns included the number of migrants arriving in Australia and a perceived threat to jobs. However, more tolerant attitudes in the community at large, as well as a desire to distance themselves from racist views, were forces behind people's changing attitudes in the 1970s.