

**Victorian Certificate of Education  
2014**

SUPERVISOR TO ATTACH PROCESSING LABEL HERE

STUDENT NUMBER           Letter

**AUSTRALIAN POLITICS**  
**Written examination**

**Thursday 6 November 2014**

**Reading time: 11.45 am to 12.00 noon (15 minutes)**

**Writing time: 12.00 noon to 2.00 pm (2 hours)**

**QUESTION AND ANSWER BOOK**

**Structure of book**

| <i>Section</i> | <i>Number of questions</i> | <i>Number of questions to be answered</i> | <i>Number of marks</i> |
|----------------|----------------------------|---|------------------------|
| A              | 4                          | 4   | 60                     |
| B              | 4                          | 1   | 20                     |
|                |                            |   | Total 80               |

- Students are permitted to bring into the examination room: pens, pencils, highlighters, erasers, sharpeners and rulers.
- Students are NOT permitted to bring into the examination room: blank sheets of paper and/or white out liquid/tape.
- No calculator is allowed in this examination.

**Materials supplied**

- Question and answer book of 20 pages.
- Additional space is available at the end of the book if you need extra paper to complete an answer.

**Instructions**

- Write your **student number** in the space provided above on this page.
- All written responses must be in English.

**Students are NOT permitted to bring mobile phones and/or any other unauthorised electronic devices into the examination room.**

**SECTION A****Instructions for Section A**

Answer **all** questions in the spaces provided.

**Australian democracy****Question 1** (15 marks)

The current method used to elect the Australian Senate was introduced in 1984 as a way of reducing the high informal vote. It allows voters to choose to vote either above or below the line on the ballot paper.

If they vote below the line, a voter must number the square of every candidate. On the 2013 Victorian Senate ballot, that meant writing the numbers 1 to 97 in the order of the voter's preference. However, if they voted above the line, the voter simply had to place a single number 1 in the square of their preferred party. This is called group ticket voting.

In 2013, Victoria elected Ricky Muir representing the Australian Motoring Enthusiast Party to the Senate. Ricky Muir received less than 0.5 per cent of the primary or first preference votes. This is far below the quota of approximately 14.3 per cent of the formal votes required to be elected to the Senate. The ABC election analyst Antony Green said, 'It would all be a bit of a joke except that these Senators have just been handed six-year terms in high-paying and well-staffed Senate seats with significant powers over how the country is governed'.

Select the most appropriate answer (**A.–D.**) for **parts a.** and **b.**, and write your answers in the boxes.

- a.** Which statement is the most accurate in relation to the system used to elect the Australian Senate in 2013? 1 mark
- A.** Each of the 76 senators represents a single electorate.
  - B.** Since 1984, there have been two ways in which voters can cast a formal Senate vote.
  - C.** The Senate voting system reduces the chance for minor party candidates to be elected.
  - D.** The method used to count Senate votes is less complicated than the method used to count House of Representatives votes.

- b.** Which of the following voters cast a formal vote for the Australian Senate in 2013? 1 mark
- A.** a voter who left the ballot paper blank
  - B.** a voter who voted below the line and did not put a number in every square
  - C.** a voter who wrote the number 1 accidentally in two boxes above the line on the ballot paper
  - D.** a voter who numbered every box below the line without giving any thought to who they were voting for





## Australian democracy in perspective

### Question 2 (15 marks)

Politics has become increasingly oriented around opinion polling ...  
 The focus on polling in the media and within political parties means that leaders have less time than they did in the past to arrest<sup>1</sup> a decline in their popularity ...  
 The degree of leadership instability this engenders<sup>2</sup> also makes it more difficult for a political leader to make the case for a controversial policy reform.

Source: Nicholas Barry (La Trobe University) and Natalie Mast (University of Western Australia), 'Keating, reform and the difficult notion of "political capital"', The Conversation (website), 16 December 2013

<sup>1</sup>arrest – stop

<sup>2</sup>engenders – creates

- a. What is **one** key difference between the terms 'head of state' and 'head of government' as they are used in the Australian political system? 2 marks

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- b. Outline a recent example of an Australian prime minister who has found it difficult 'to make the case for a controversial policy reform'. 3 marks

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### Domestic policy

#### Question 3 (15 marks)

The Independent MP Cathy McGowan has told Guardian Australia she won't align with any political party following her ousting<sup>1</sup> of prominent Coalition [MP] ... Sophie Mirabella in the seat of Indi.

McGowan said she was 'very relieved and very proud' to have won the closely-fought contest for the rural Victorian electorate ...

McGowan said she will be 'working out' her position on national issues such as asylum seekers ahead of the resumption of parliament, but ruled out any deal with any party.

Source: Oliver Milman, 'Cathy McGowan: "I will very much remain an independent"', Guardian News & Media Ltd (website), 18 September 2013

<sup>1</sup>ousting – defeat

- a. In relation to Australian politics, what is meant by the term 'an independent member of parliament'? 2 marks

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- b. Outline **two** ways in which Cathy McGowan could use her role in the House of Representatives to seek to influence Australian domestic policy. 4 marks

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## Foreign policy

### Question 4 (15 marks)

The United States–Australia Alliance is based on a proud history of shared values and a long tradition of cooperation at all levels of government, business, and civil society.

The Alliance remains an anchor of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

The breadth and depth of this unshakeable partnership is a reflection of more than six decades of trust, respect, and friendship.

Source: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (website), AUSMIN 2013 Joint Communiqué, media release, 20 November 2013

Minister Bishop: We took the opportunity today to discuss a range of issues regarding our region in particular, the Indian Ocean Asia-Pacific. We looked at the challenges – economic, security, strategic – that face the region.

Source: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (website), AUSMIN Press Conference, transcript, 20 November 2013

- a. In relation to Australian foreign policy, what is meant by the term ‘bilateral alliance’? 3 marks

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- b. Outline **two** specific regional issues that affect Australia and the United States. 4 marks

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**SECTION B – Essay questions****Instructions for Section B**

Answer **one** of the following four questions in the space provided.

**Question 1** (20 marks)

‘An effective democracy will encourage a diverse range of political views and opinions.’

Discuss this statement in relation to the Australian political system.

**OR**

**Question 2** (20 marks)

‘Australia does not protect the democratic rights and freedoms of its citizens as well as other democratic nations.’

To what extent do you agree with this statement? This question should be answered with reference to Australia and **one** other political system you have studied this year.

**OR**

**Question 3** (20 marks)

‘The executive is the most significant influence in the formulation of Australian domestic policy.’

Discuss this statement in relation to **one or more** contemporary Australian domestic policy issues you have studied this year.

**OR**

**Question 4** (20 marks)

‘Australian foreign policy has not changed significantly in recent years.’

To what extent do you agree with this statement?



















