

GENERAL COMMENTS

It is good practice for students to pay particular attention to the specificities of questions. For example, adhering to the requirements of key instructional terms (for example, 'compare') and noting the number of examples or theories needed when responding to questions.

It is important for students to note that each section of the examination assesses a different area of the *VCE Sociology Study Design*. In VCE Sociology, ethnicity is the study of immigrant groups, not Indigenous Australian cultural groups. Therefore, responses to questions in Section B should not refer to Indigenous Australian cultural groups.

Students included a good amount of evidence to support their responses. It is important, however, for students to signpost this evidence more clearly through the use of quotation marks.

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
%	5	20	74	1.7

This question required students to define Australian Indigenous culture and it was answered well by many students.

Students were required to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the concept of culture
- support their response using examples of Australian Indigenous culture.

The following is an excerpt from a high-scoring response.

Australian Indigenous culture refers to the entire way of life of Indigenous Australians including learned values, beliefs and customs. This is represented by both non-material culture, like the dreamtime story of 'Bunjil the Eagle' and material culture like grinding stones, eel traps and possum skin cloaks.

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	1	25	73	1.7

This question required students to explain the purpose of the 2008 Apology to the Stolen Generations. Many students responded well to this question.

Complete responses made reference to the following:

- It was a formal apology made by former prime minister Kevin Rudd, acknowledging the 'past mistreatment' of the Stolen Generations.
- It identified the need to 'close the gap'.
- It was a form of symbolic reconciliation.

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	8	23	34	23	12	2.1

This question required students to discuss how the Apology changed the perception of Australian Indigenous culture by non-Indigenous Australians.

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Many students answered this question poorly. A large number of responses showed a lack of understanding of the notion of ‘perception’. Many students inaccurately made reference to the interrelated concept of ‘awareness’.

Students were required to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the meaning of perception (that is, the view of Australian Indigenous culture)
- discuss how (in what way) non-Indigenous views were likely to have changed as a result of the Apology (for example, reconciling, empathising)
- link their discussion to the concept of perception (as opposed to awareness)
- use evidence from the Apology to support their explanation.

Question 2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	11	5	13	24	23	15	10	3.3

This question required students to outline the main features of a government policy, referred to in the Apology, that ‘inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss’ on Indigenous Australians. In doing so, students were required to make reference to the representations and/or material studied throughout the year.

Some students inaccurately referred to the Stolen Generations as a policy rather than as a descriptor of a particular group of Indigenous Australians. Additionally, some students inaccurately made reference to the policy of integration, which was not mentioned in the Apology.

To achieve a high score, students needed to do the following:

- identify and outline the features of a policy contained within the Apology
 - assimilation
 - Protector (therefore, Protection and Segregation)
 - reconciliation
 - Close the Gap
 - the 1967 Referendum
 - the ‘Bringing Them Home’ report
- explain how the policy ‘inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss’
- use evidence from the representations and/or material studied throughout the year to support their discussion

The following are excerpts from high-scoring responses.

Assimilation was an Australian government policy implemented in 1951 that ‘involved profound grief, suffering and loss’ for Indigenous Australians. The policy argued that all Indigenous people of ‘mixed-race’ should be absorbed into the dominant population. The aim of the policy was to make the ‘Aboriginal problem’ disappear so that they would lose their cultural identity.

The extent to which this ‘inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss’ is evident in the way that by the 1980s, an estimated 100 000 Indigenous Australians lost touch with their culture, identity, family and language.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	11	6	12	18	19	20	14	3.5

This question required students to explain whether the use of a sociological imagination supports an ethnocentric or culturally relativistic view of Australian Indigenous culture. It was also necessary to refer to the representations and/or material studied throughout the year.

In order to fully address this question, students needed to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the key concepts of a sociological imagination (a term coined by Charles Wright Mills to describe the sociological approach to analysing issues; sociological thinking makes a link between personal troubles and public issues), ethnocentrism (the practice of judging another culture by the standards of one’s own culture) and cultural relativism (the practice of judging a culture by its own standards)
- have an identifiable position, noting that the use of a sociological imagination supports a culturally relativistic view of Australian Indigenous culture

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- explain how the use of a sociological imagination is culturally relative in its approach, that is, the use of a sociological imagination encourages an understanding of public issues and aims to be objective in its analysis. These characteristics encourage culturally relative thinking
- use evidence from the representations and/or material studied throughout the year to support their discussion.

Section B

Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	5	15	80	1.8

This question required students to outline Australia's ethnic diversity. Most students responded very well to this question.

Appropriate answers:

- showed an understanding of the meaning of ethnic diversity
- included a brief outline of Australia's diversity (it is multicultural, has experienced waves of migration and has a range of spoken languages in addition to English).

Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	7	8	15	25	44	2.9

This question required students to demonstrate the extent of Australia's ethnic diversity by drawing a comparison with one other developed country.

To successfully address this question, students needed to:

- include a statement about the extent of diversity within Australia
- make a comparison with one other developed country
- use evidence relating to Australia and one other country to support their discussion.

The following is an excerpt from a good response.

Australia is seen to be a highly ethnically diverse nation, with '28% of the population' from overseas ... as compared to Japan who has a low rate of ethnic diversity with 1.7% of the total population being foreign born.

Question 4c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	8	11	33	32	16	2.4

This question required students to examine whether the experience of ethnicity within Australian society is mainly positive or mainly negative. Responses needed to be supported with clearly articulated reasons and evidence.

In order to address this question fully, it was necessary to:

- have an identifiable position
- provide two or more reasons as to why the experience of ethnicity is mainly positive or mainly negative
- use evidence from the representations and/or material studied throughout the year to support the explanation.

The following is an excerpt from a high-scoring response.

Cambodian-Australian Michael Lim stated that his experience of ethnicity in Australia has been 'incredibly positive' due to the 'wide range of diversity within Australian society' and 'acceptance of the expression of other cultures' due to the Multiculturalism policy.

Question 5a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	11	11	22	32	24	2.5

This question required students to describe a specific ethnic group that they had studied throughout the year. It was also necessary to outline two cultural activities unique to this group.

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The following is an excerpt from a high-scoring response.

A specific ethnic group is the Chinese-Australian ethnicity. These are people who identify as Chinese and have descendants from China. They primarily speak Mandarin and Cantonese and within Victoria are located predominantly in the region of Springvale. Cultural activities include celebrating Chinese New Year by attending festivals and gathering with loved ones to celebrate new life. Another activity is cooking and eating noodles on birthdays as one participant in a questionnaire stated, it 'symbolises that we will live a long and purposeful life'.

Question 5b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	23	29	35	13	1.4

This question required students to describe how the ethnic group identifies itself.

In order to fully address this question, students needed to:

- outline more than one way in which the group identifies itself (for example, language, shared history, symbols, clothing, religious practices, values and customs)
- explain how and in what way the factor that is unique to the group represents the group.

Question 5c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	16	23	37	24	1.7

This question required students to identify one challenge faced by the ethnic group. They were also required to explain how the group responded to the challenge.

Students' responses needed to:

- outline the challenge faced by the ethnic group (for example, racism, learning a new language or seeking employment)
- explain how the group responded to the challenge faced (for example, liaising with community agencies).

Section C

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	3	4	7	13	18	19	17	11	5	2	1	4.7

This question required students to discuss how and why the concept of community has changed over time. It was also necessary for responses to reference sociological theories.

Students' responses needed to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the concept of community
- make reference to sociological theories (for example, Ferdinand Tönnies, Manuel Castells)
- outline how the concept of community has changed over time (for example, from traditional to modern, rural to urban and personal contact to internet-based connections)
- identify the likely cause of change to the concept of community (for example, information and communications technology, industrialisation, multiculturalism, shifting social values and education)
- explain how the concept of community has changed over time (for example, new types of communities, removal or exclusion from groups and exposure to new cultures).

The following is an excerpt from a high-scoring response.

Theorist Ferdinand Tönnies explained the change of community due to the industrial revolution. He outlined the post-industrial community as Gemeinschaft. This is where relationships were rural and agrarian, where there were close connections and personal relationships, like family and neighbourhood. A community like this would be the Amish community ... Community post the industrial revolution however was described as Gesellschaft (society). This was where relationships were fleeting and impersonal with a more bureaucratic lifestyle with a loss of personal connection between people. An example of this type of community would be Goodlife Gym where people gather for the common purpose to workout, not developing friendships and

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then leaving. A more contemporary theory of community is that developed by Manuel Castells explaining the effects of information communication technology.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	3	5	13	14	16	17	14	8	6	3	1	4.5

This question required students to discuss whether information and communications technology leads individuals to become socially isolated or whether it expands their community involvement through digital networks. It was necessary for students to refer to sociological theory and material studied throughout the year in their responses.

In order to successfully address this question, students needed to:

- have an identifiable position
- demonstrate an understanding of the concepts of community and information and communications technology
- refer to Manuel Castells's theory of network society
- use evidence from material studied throughout the year to support their explanation.

The following is an excerpt from a high-scoring response.

A community studied this year is the Cherrill Rowston School of Ballet (CRSB), located in Black Rock Victoria. The group offers a range of dance classes ... The introduction of ICT at the CRSB has positively impacted the community by expanding community involvement ... The CRSB Facebook page allows all members to be aware of the events at the school, and to maintain and enhance social connections with each other, as suggested by Manuel Castells. Maddi a female dancer at the studio, stated that the page 'gets everyone involved in social events' and 'improves friendships between students which creates a more enjoyable environment'.

Section D

Students made reference to many relevant and interesting social movements. Good examples included the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, White Ribbon, Greenpeace Australia Pacific, Coalition Against Duck Shooting, Lock the Gate Alliance, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals and Burger Off! Tecoma.

As mentioned earlier, it is important that students pay close attention to the specificities of the essay question. Factors such as key instructional terms (for example, discuss, analyse or compare), the need to reference theory or key concepts (for example, types of movements) and the type of evidence required should be carefully considered prior to responding to the question.

Question chosen	none	8	9
%	3	27	70

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	3	4	7	4	8	12	11	6	7	9	6	4	4	3	3	3	1	1	0	8.5

Question 8

This question required students to compare two types of social movements and examine their ability to bring about social change.

In order to answer this question fully, students needed to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the concepts of social movements and social change
- compare two types of social movements (that is, show similarities and differences, emphasising similarities)
- compare each movement's ability to bring about social change
- have an accurate understanding of the key features of the types of movements (for example, alternative, redemptive, reformative and revolutionary)
- examine the degree to which both social movements have been able to bring about social change
- use detailed evidence studied throughout the year to support their response.

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Question 9

This question required students to explore how social movements influence social change. It was necessary for students to assess both who and what was changed over time.

In order to answer this question fully, students needed to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the concepts of social movements and social change
- explore how social movements influence social change (for example, power, stage of movement)
- discuss who and what was changed over time
- demonstrate a detailed understanding of one specific social movement
- use detailed evidence studied throughout the year to support their response.