

VCE History

2022–2026

Written examination – End of year

Section B – Essay

Assessment criteria

This information applies to the following examinations: Ancient History, Australian History and Revolutions.

The essay question in Section B will be assessed against the following criteria:

- construction of a coherent and relevant historical argument that addresses the specific demands of the essay question
- demonstration of historical knowledge that is accurate and appropriate for the essay question
- application of historical thinking concepts such as cause and consequence, continuity and change, and/or historical significance
- use of sources as evidence to support a historical argument, including a range of primary sources, perspectives and historical interpretations

Assessors mark holistically, relating student performance to the published criteria and ranking students over the full range of marks available. Determination of the mark is assisted by the descriptors in 'Expected qualities for the mark range'. These descriptors have been written to reflect the level of achievement expected at a particular mark or mark range. Both the criteria and the descriptors are fully explored and directly related to the range of student responses during the assessor training process.

The historical thinking concepts are explained in the section 'Characteristics of the study' on pages 6 and 7 of the *VCE History Study Design 2022–2026*. These concepts underpin the treatment of key knowledge and key skills, and they are an explicit criterion in the expected qualities for the mark range.

Expected qualities for the mark range

Mark(s)/Range	Expected qualities
18–20 very high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> constructs a well-developed and persuasive argument that is relevant throughout; specific demands of the question are addressed comprehensively supports argument effectively and efficiently with highly relevant, accurate and extensive historical knowledge effective and sophisticated application of historical thinking concepts demonstrated throughout uses a wide range of accurate and relevant primary sources and historical interpretations as evidence; evidence is seamlessly and strategically integrated into argument
15–17 upper high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> constructs a developed argument that is relevant throughout; specific demands of the question are addressed supports argument comprehensively with detailed and accurate historical knowledge accurate application of historical thinking concepts demonstrated throughout uses a range of accurate and relevant primary sources and historical interpretations as evidence; evidence is integrated into argument
12–14 upper medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develops a coherent argument that may be conventional at times; relevant and focused but at times departs from the specific demands of the question supports argument with mostly appropriate and accurate historical knowledge general application of historical thinking concepts uses some relevant primary sources and/or historical interpretations as evidence; evidence is appropriately contextualised
9–11 medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> develops a response that is mostly narrative or descriptive; mostly relevant and generally focused on the demands of the question supports argument with generally accurate historical knowledge limited and broad application of historical thinking concepts uses a limited range of mostly relevant primary sources and/or historical interpretations as evidence; supports response with mostly descriptive use of content as evidence from sources
6–8 upper low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> presents a broad response of some relevance; question is addressed in a basic way supports argument with historical knowledge that is limited in appropriateness, accuracy or specific detail simple and basic application of historical thinking concepts in parts of response uses only few primary sources and/or historical interpretations as evidence; supports response with limited identification of content as evidence from sources
3–5 low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a response is attempted with some relevance little demonstration of historical knowledge limited use of historical thinking concepts little use of content from sources
1–2 very low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> little is written; only few ideas of relevance response barely addresses the question
zero	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no evidence of meeting the assessment criteria