

VCE Politics

Units 1 and 2: 2024-2028

Units 3 and 4: 2025-2028

Characteristics of the study:
Thinking politically

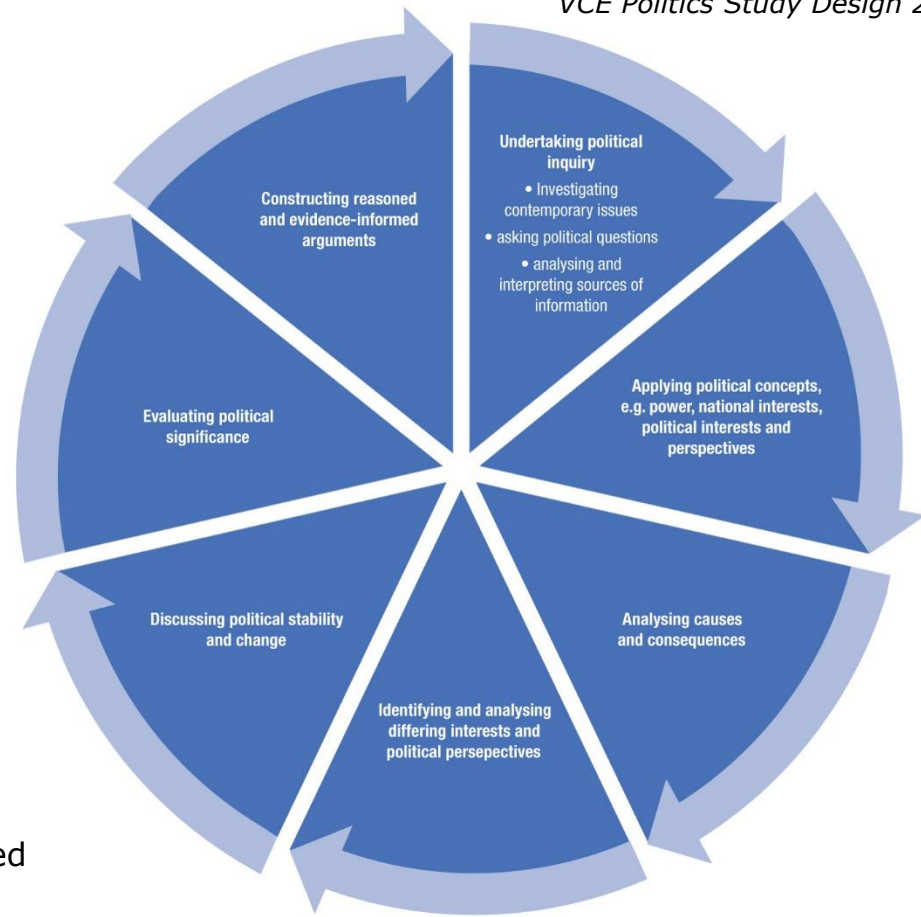
Acknowledgement of Country

The VCAA respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and pays respect to the ongoing living cultures of First Peoples.



Characteristics of the study

1. Undertaking political inquiry
2. Applying Political concepts
3. Analysing causes and consequences
4. Identifying and analysing differing political interests
5. Identifying and analysing differing political perspectives
6. Discussing political stability and change
7. Evaluating political significance
8. Constructing reasoned and evidence-informed arguments



Characteristics and Key Skills

Characteristics of the study	Unit 3 Outcome 1	Unit 3 Outcome 2	Unit 4 Outcome 1	Unit 4 Outcome 2
Undertaking political inquiry	Ask and analyse a range of political questions to investigate one global issue	Ask and analyse a range of political questions to investigate one contemporary crisis	Use and analyse a range of political questions to investigate how an Indo-Pacific state uses power to achieve its national interests	Use and analyse a range of political questions to investigate how Australia acts in the region to achieve its national interests
	Analyse and interpret a range of sources of information on one global issue	Analyse and interpret a range of sources of information on one contemporary crisis	Analyse and interpret a range of sources of information on one Indo-Pacific state and its pursuit of its national interests	Analyse and interpret a range of sources on Australia's national interests
Applying political concepts	Assess the impact of global interconnectedness on one global issue	Discuss the drivers of conflict and cooperation in the resolution of one contemporary crisis.	Analyse the power of one Indo-Pacific state	Evaluate the effectiveness of Australia's cooperation with three states in the region
Analysing causes and consequences	Analyse the causes and consequences of one global issue	Analyse the causes and consequences of one contemporary crisis	Analyse the causes and consequences of one Indo-Pacific state's use of power and foreign policy instruments	Analyse the causes and consequences of Australia's use of power and foreign policy instruments in the region
Identifying and analysing differing political interests	Analyse how the interests of different global actors may contribute to the causes and consequences of one global issue	Analyse the impact of political actors' interests on the causes, course and consequences of one contemporary crisis	Analyse the different national interests of one Indo-Pacific state	Analyse the impact of Australia's pursuit of its national interests on other regional actors
Identifying and analysing differing political perspectives	Analyse the different perspectives of global political actors on one global issue and the reasons for those different perspectives	Distinguish between different perspectives of global political actors on one contemporary crisis	Analyse different perspectives on one Indo-Pacific state's national interests	Analyse different perspectives on Australia's national interests and actions in the region
Discussing political stability and change	Discuss how responses by global actors and challenges to resolutions have contributed to political stability and/or change	Discuss how global actors' responses and their ability to resolve one contemporary crisis have contributed to creating political stability and/or change	Discuss the extent to which one Indo-Pacific state has contributed to political stability and/or change in the region	Discuss the extent to which Australia has contributed to political stability and/or change in the region
Evaluating political significance	Evaluate the political significance of one global issue	Evaluate the political significance of one contemporary crisis	Evaluate the political significance of one Indo-Pacific state's use of power	Evaluate the political significance of Australia's actions in the region
Constructing reasoned and evidence-informed arguments	Construct an argument to evaluate the ability of global actors to respond effectively to one issue, using evidence from sources	Construct an argument to evaluate the significance and effectiveness of global actors' ability to respond to and resolve one contemporary crisis, using evidence from sources	Construct an argument to evaluate the significance and effectiveness of one Indo-Pacific state's pursuit of its national interests, using evidence from sources	Construct an argument to evaluate the significance and effectiveness of Australia's pursuit of its national interests, using evidence from sources

1. Undertaking political inquiry

- Investigating contemporary issues
 - ‘Contemporary’ is within the decade
- Asking political questions
 - Can be descriptive, analytical, comparative, evaluative and/or predictive.
- Analysing and interpreting sources of information
 - **Quantitative political sources** may be analysed by identifying the implications of the data, considering the limitations and reliability of the data, comparing different collections of data and then using that critical thinking to arrive at supported conclusions.
 - **Qualitative political sources** may be analysed by identifying the type of source, its content, author, socio-historical context, perspectives, and / or its point of view.

1. Undertaking political inquiry

Stages of inquiry process

1. Engage	Stimulate students' curiosity by providing remarkable / noteworthy facts about the issue to be analysed. What do students really want to know about the issue? (Here you could use the study design inquiry questions, an occurrence, opinions or commentary, image(s), video clips, statistics or anything that could stimulate interest or passion.)
2. Formulate questions	Students should create three or four key questions that will help them understand their overarching topic. Teacher guidance is recommended here, but a political inquiry must ask questions about background to the issue, power, conflict, interests, perspectives, causes, responses and impacts.
3. Research	Students gather information from teacher-provided resources and their own investigations. Teachers can provide suggestions for organising the research findings, such as note-taking templates or graphic organisers. In the research stage, students should be encouraged to work collaboratively and pool their findings.
4. Analyse	Here students should use the key concepts outlined in the Characteristics of the study: causes and consequences, competing interests and perspectives, forces encouraging political stability and / or change.
5. Evaluate	Using evidence, students begin to formulate answers to their specific questions, which then provides them with the ability to create statements of opinion (hypotheses or contentions) that must be able to be informed and supported by the evidence. The characteristic of 'evaluating political significance' is particularly relevant here.
6. Communicate	Teachers may determine the format that students must adopt to communicate their findings and conclusions and assess them according to their mastery of content, the level of their inquiry skills, as well as the quality of the communication (i.e. an assessment of the product and the process).

Type of inquiry	Provision of framing question(s)	Research method and provision of case material	Construction of supported contention in response
Hypothesis requiring confirmation e.g. the current global and social media networks enhance Australian democracy	Teacher	Teacher	Student
Structured inquiry	Teacher provides over-arching question and sub-questions	Teacher provides the procedure and some case material Students may add to case material	Student
Guided inquiry	Teacher provides the over-arching question; students formulate more specific research questions	Students work in groups under teacher guidance to decide procedure and suitable case material	Student
Open inquiry	Students determine both over-arching and sub-questions	Students singly or in groups design procedure and locate case material	Student

1. Undertaking political inquiry

Outcomes	Marks allocated	Assessment tasks
<p>Outcome 1</p> <p>Analyse the various sources and forms of power used by a state in the Indo-Pacific region and evaluate the extent to which it is able to achieve its national interests.</p>	50	<p>Each of the following assessment tasks must be completed over Units 3 and 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a political inquiry• analysis and evaluation of sources• extended responses• short-answer questions• an essay.
<p>Outcome 2</p> <p>Analyse different perspectives on Australia's national interests in the Indo-Pacific region and evaluate the degree to which Australia's pursuit of its national interests has resulted in cooperation or conflict with three states in the region.</p>	50	<p>Teachers may choose to select one or more assessment tasks for each outcome. The assessment tasks may be undertaken in any order.</p>
Total marks	100	

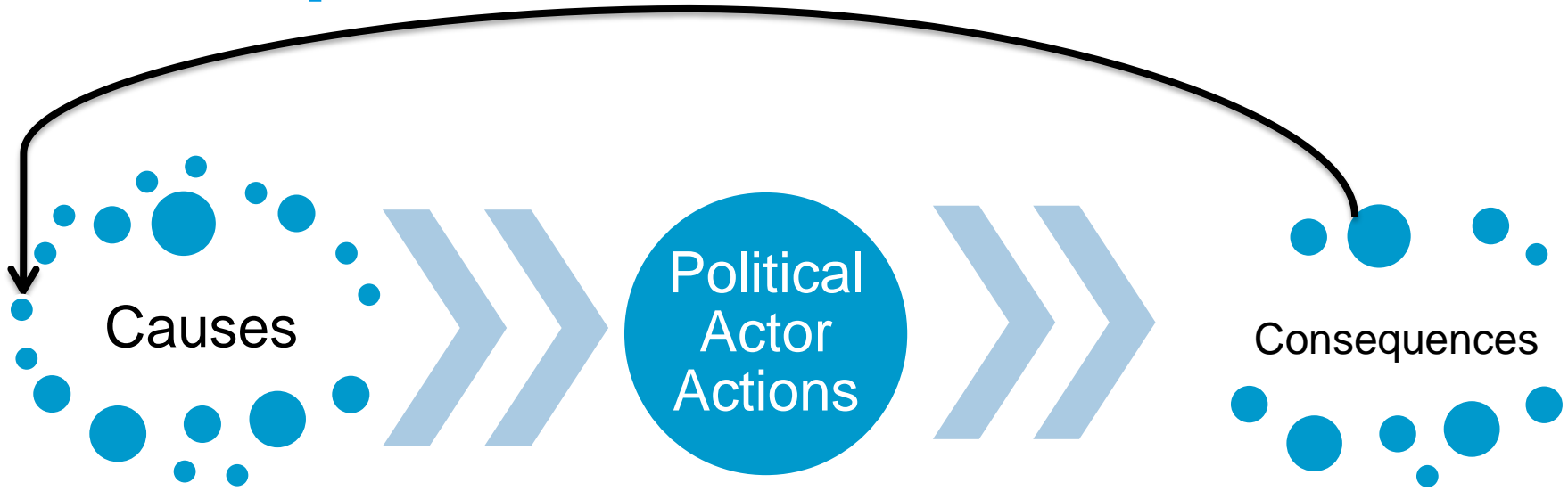
2. Applying political concepts

- Political actor
- Power
- Legitimacy
- Authority
- Conflict and cooperation
- Political ideology
- Systems and theories of government
- Governance
- Australian democracy
- Democratic principles
- Political interests

- National interest
- Nation
- State
- Sovereignty
- Global interconnectedness

A list of these concepts can be found on the [Planning](#) page in Supplementary Materials on the VCAA website.

3. Analysing causes and consequences



4. Identifying and analysing different political interests

- Students should discuss **competing interests** of political actors towards contemporary issues
- Political interests can be publicly stated as well as concealed and changeable.
- Students need **reliable evidence** to support that a political actor has a particular political interest.
- Potential political interests
 - States and national interests
 - Transnational corporations and economic interests
 - Politicians and the public's interests

5. Identifying and analysing differing political perspectives

- Political perspectives inform political interests
- Political perspectives can be developed from:
 - Ideologies
 - Ideas
 - Values
 - Beliefs
- Certain conditions can influence political perspectives, such as:
 - Social
 - Political
 - Historical
 - Cultural
 - Environmental/Spatial

6. Discussing political stability and change

- Politics is often found in the tension between political stability and change.
- Students develop their ability to think politically by recognising that these tensions exist, analysing those forces favouring stability and those forces encouraging change
- Political stability
 - Status quo
 - ≠ Conservative
- Political change
 - Disruption
 - ≠ Progressive

7. Evaluating political significance

Synthesises all characteristics of thinking politically

- To establish relevant criteria, students should ask questions about the event, issue or actor, such as:
 - Who has power in this situation? Who does not?
 - What is the scale of the issue itself – geographically and temporally? How many people are affected?
 - Which political actors are involved and are they working towards change or stability?
 - How common or uncommon is the event, action or issue? What are the immediate and ongoing consequences?
 - How important is the event or issue to various groups or political actors and for what reasons?
 - What are the reasons that the event, issue or actor may not be considered significant?

8. Constructing reasoned and evidence-informed arguments

Developing well-supported, evidence-informed arguments about political issues and crises is the culmination of political thinking and inquiry.

It is a creative and synthesising process grounded in and constrained by data and evidence.

Students' arguments should be based on the questions asked and the capacity to apply concepts and use knowledge and evidence to inform their argument.

Constructing an argument is a critical intellectual skill through which students may demonstrate an understanding of the political dynamics and dimensions of contemporary conflicts, events, issues and crises.

- Reasoned argument
 - Clarity of argument and perspective
 - Must acknowledge various arguments, including those that disagree with argument
- Evidence
 - Facts (including those that may not support argument)
 - (diverse) expert opinions

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