2022 VCE Extended Investigation Critical Thinking Test report

General comments

The 2022 Critical Thinking Test gave students a greater allowance of time than in previous years. Adding a designated reading time of 15 minutes and allowing a working time of 75 minutes ensured that students could spend sufficient time engaging in the type of critical thinking required. Students appeared to benefit from the specified reading time to consider and prepare their approach to the questions.

On the whole, student responses demonstrated an awareness of what was required to score at a reasonable level within the test. Students responded well to the different aspects of critical thinking spread through the 10 questions.

Students offered a range of answers and took different approaches in their responses to questions 3–10. The quality of reasoning or explanation that they offered, whether explicit or implicit, was judged on their individual merits. It is important to stress that there is no one prescribed way to demonstrate effective critical thinking, and students are rewarded for finding suitable and appropriate ways to evaluate the issues under discussion. It is the quality of thinking, explanation and justification that is the focus of the test, rather than the quality of the writing or accuracy of keyboard skills.

Responses that explained and justified a viewpoint or a perspective held by the student on an issue scored more highly than those that offered generalised comments with little specific reference to the actual issues presented. Students are reminded of the need to employ words directly associated with research, such as ‘subjective’, ‘objective’, ‘valid’, ‘reliable’ and ‘variables’, as precisely as possible. Merely incorporating them within an answer is no guarantee that they are being used accurately. Similarly, students should avoid commenting on rhetorical effectiveness and persuasive language use, rather than the quality of argumentation. A number of answers in 2022 relied on phrases such as ‘this is the most convincing argument because it appeals to people’s fears and a lot of people would be persuaded by that’. Students should examine the argument and consider how logical and comprehensive it is.

A debatable issue will always allow at least two possible sides for argument. Students should practise analysing, critiquing and evaluating different points of view about issues and arguments in preparation for the test and throughout their study of Extended Investigation.

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 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 resulting in a total more or less than 100 per cent.

Question 1

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Average |
| % | 1 | 4 | 24 | 71 | 2.7 |

This drag-and-drop item required students to see how statements relate to each other in terms of a proposition, and how they can be best aligned in opposition to statements provided in the table. Students were asked to consider the pros and cons of de-extinction with specific reference to the Tasmanian tiger and then drag the three statements into one of five empty cells in the table. As there are two cells that remain blank it is important that students work out firstly whether each statement fits on the pro or con side of the argument and then decide which statement from the other side of the argument it most closely opposes.

The vast majority of students in 2022 completed this question successfully. The blue shaded boxes in the following table indicate where the statements needed to be placed for marks to be awarded.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| For | Against |
| Humans are responsible for the extinction of the Tasmanian tiger and we should try to undo the damage. | We should not attempt to interfere with natural processes such as extinction. |
| Unexpected scientific advances can come from this type of experimentation. | Governments should be directing taxpayers’ money to research with more benefit to the community. |
| Tasmania’s tourism sector would benefit. |  |
| Australian scientists would gain some much-needed international recognition. |  |
| Reintroduced into the wild, Tasmanian tigers could help control pests such as foxes. | There are no environmental benefits to bringing back the Tasmanian tiger. |

Most students recognised that in the first row, the issue under consideration was whether or not to interfere with natural processes. Equally successful in terms of student identification was the opposition in the fifth row, which considered any potential benefits associated with the theoretical re-introduction of the Tasmanian tiger into the wild. Students found the opposition in the second row more elusive. This row was concerned with the issue of weighing up the value of scientific advancement in terms of public benefit. A number of students saw the concept of science being the key issue and thus incorrectly placed this phrase in row four where Australian scientists were explicitly mentioned. When evaluating each statement, students should identify the main idea that either supports or opposes the proposition, and then try to locate a matching argument in the table; essentially one that deals with the same idea. Using this strategy, students should also be able to correctly identify the cells that should be left blank.

Question 2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Average |
| % | 2 | 7 | 20 | 10 | 60 | 3.2 |

This question shows a diagram representing a line of reasoning about reducing income inequality. Students were given definitions of four terms and were asked to drag four of six statements (A to F) into the appropriate space for each of those terms. Two of the statements did not appropriately fit any of the spaces. One mark was awarded for each correct response:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Elaboration | Financial disadvantage limits opportunities for the next generation, leading to a cycle of poverty. |
| Evidence | The lowest-paid 20 per cent of wage earners receive only 6 per cent of all household income. |
| Opposing argument | Wages should depend on skill levels and the quality of a person’s contribution. |
| Counter argument | All work has value and lower-paid workers need to sustain themselves and support their families. |

Students were able to identify the different elements contained within this line of reasoning. The difference between an elaboration and a counterargument or evidence is often the most difficult distinction to be made because these elements are always in favour of the proposition and argument. However, most students correctly realised that the notion of a perpetuating cycle of poverty was a meaningful elaboration on the central topic of wage inequality, and most also recognised that the notion of all work having intrinsic value regardless of the wages attached to it was a strong counter argument. The element of evidence was consistently identified with students seeing that the statistics linking 20 per cent of wage earners with 6 per cent of household income were supporting evidence to the central argument.

Of the two statements supplied that did not fit into the line of reasoning, one raised a gender issue that, while true, was not the focus of the proposition, while the other highlighted a historical fact that was not relevant to either the proposition or the argument. One useful strategy to consider when approaching Question 2 could be to identify which of the statements presented have no place within the argument surrounding the proposition and then identify which parts of the line of reason the remaining four statements best fit.

Question 3

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Average |
| % | 7 | 29 | 40 | 25 | 1.8 |

In 2022, this question was deliberately moved to follow Question 2 because they use common terminology. Students were asked to provide an opposing argument to both the proposition and argument that parents should be able to monitor the online behaviour of their children until the child reached the age of 16 because, in doing so, this would promote responsible online behaviour. Responses also needed to explain, explicitly or in the course of presenting their argument, how the opposing argument is effective in addressing both the proposition and the argument, rather than commenting on its use of persuasive devices.

A number of responses merely contradicted the proposition or the argument without considering both aspects. Some responses simply offered a contradiction without developing this in any meaningful way. However, many students were able to produce answers that successfully addressed both the proposition and the argument and, in doing so, offered a sound and precisely expressed argument of their own.

A wide variety of arguments and explanations were offered and all were assessed in regard to how well the student was able to address both the original proposition and argument with clarity and precision. Students were also assessed on the quality of reasoning they used in explaining how their opposing argument was effective.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response, in which the student was able to address both the proposition and argument explicitly while implicitly demonstrating an explanation for the effectiveness of this argument.

Parents and guardians should not have read-only access to their child's online presence up to the age of 16 as this could be an invasion of privacy for the child. The relationship between a guardian and a child should be built on a foundation of trust, the read-only access can create feelings of mistrust and perpetuate misleading and negative perspectives between the younger child and adult. Whilst some may argue that this would help to promote responsible online behaviour, there is no guarantee that the guardian will read their child's online presence. Even if the guardian may be watching their every online move, children may also find other outlets to access online services without the parent's knowledge. Instead of promoting privacy invasive policies, there should be more education on cyber safety throughout schools and the household, as this would holistically promote more responsible online behaviour.

Criteria for assessing arguments

In general terms, the marks for Questions 4, 5, 9 and 10 are allocated on the understanding of an issue, the comprehensiveness of the response and the validity of the reasoning and argument presented.

In assessing arguments there is a premium on explaining why a judgment is made, but it is acknowledged that such explanations can be difficult, particularly under test conditions. The added time introduced for 2022 allowed students the opportunity to complete the majority of answers. Nonetheless, there were still occasions when the reasoning and explanations of students were implicit rather than fully formed, but such implied reasoning may still be rewarded.

Question 4

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Average |
| % | 2 | 6 | 19 | 30 | 25 | 15 | 3 | 3.3 |

Students were presented with a for/against table for the proposition that shopping bags and takeaway containers made of single-use plastics should be banned in Australia. Individual statements on each side of the table were labelled and students were asked to explain which of these statements was most convincing and why, in terms of its ideas and reasoning, not in its rhetorical appeal to others or in its use of persuasive language.

Students were able to take a range of different approaches in developing responses and a successful response could have been made with reference to any one of the arguments provided in the pro/con table.

Student responses were assessed on the clarity of their understanding of the issue, the range and substance of the ideas that they used in explanation or support of their response and the quality and coherence of reasoning used in explaining the strengths of an argument.

Responses that scored highly displayed a clear understanding of the issue and drew on a range of substantial ideas and coherent reasoning in their explanations to produce a comprehensive evaluative response, as in the following example:

The most convincing argument is argument E. Argument E addresses both economical and environmental issues regarding the ban on single-use bags and containers. This argument also implicitly addresses the political issue surrounding the production of single-use bags and containers as something more underground. The mention of facilitating Australian jobs can be inferred to result in the closing of the production of plastics. Plastics are a difficult product to manufacture and heavily contributes to the consumption of necessary resources. By closing the production of such plastics, primary resources can be sustained for further generations and can be used in other helpful means. Additionally, eco-friendly products tend to use more renewable resources such as bamboo as an alternative introduced in Japan. As such, this promotes more cost-effective products and additionally can lead astray workers from the plastic production factories. By briefly addressing eco-friendly products, this promotes environmental support from the argument. Australia and a number of contributing countries are beginning to use eco-friendly products as the overall goal of arguments for the proposal is to promote more sustainability for humans. Additionally, this argument excels in addressing a similar opposing argument from argument J. Argument J addresses the wasteful society and considers the environmental issue to surround a more social issue. Eco-friendly products are recognised to biodegrade easily and have minimal harm to the environment and the ecosystems within. Argument E in a way suggests that society does not need to change its or recognises that society cannot change its habits and instead can efficiently reject the opposing argument as the wastefulness is ineffective to harming the environment.

Another successful approach employed by some students was to consider their chosen argument by explicitly comparing it with a number of others presented, such as in this example:

**Arguments E, F, and I** focus on the financial consequences and opportunities wealthy business owners and entrepreneurs, which are weak arguments as they concern only a small portion of the amount of people being affected by this change. The majority of people will not be affected financially, rather just through a small change in their routine. Hence these arguments are for high income individuals that will not be affected severely by this change. **Arguments A, B, G and H** focus on the environmental impacts of plastic bags, which is closer to the main issue at hand of pollution, however they do not affect the average Australian.

**The fundamentally strongest argument is D**, as it outlines the role laws must play in order to avoid an environmental disaster. It is correct in saying that if reducing the environmental footprint of a business was left completely to the owner, without any incentives or laws to enforce it, it will always come second to profits. The same also applies to consumers, who value a good deal and convenience over being environmentally friendly. This argument implies that without similar laws around the world, there would be no progress towards the Net 0 by 2050 goal that has been set worldwide, which is essential to the continuation of millions of species around the world, including our own as well as reducing the pollution that has made thousands of species of marine life extinct. If governments do not continue making laws like this, the climate on Earth will be far too deteriorated to fix when we finally manage to reduce our carbon emissions and get our plastic production under control.

Neither approach is inherently better than the other. Arguments provided in the table could be referred to directly, but this is not a requirement.

Question 5

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Average |
| % | 3 | 3 | 13 | 26 | 26 | 20 | 9 | 3.7 |

In this question, students were asked to consider arguments for and against the proposition that public transport should be made free for all users within Victoria. Having considered these arguments, they were then asked to offer their own position on the issue. Some students chose to incorporate some of the ideas presented to them in their own arguments; an approach that is perfectly acceptable, although students are encouraged to do more than simply list a number of pre-stated arguments in creating their own. They may refer to these arguments but must incorporate them into their own reasoning so that, when their own position on the issue emerges, it is stated plausibly and coherently. Students are at liberty to go beyond the ideas presented in the question and use examples from their own experience, provided that these are reasonable and appropriate to the argument presented.

In the following example of a high-scoring response, the student is able to incorporate a range of substantial ideas – some from the table presented and some from their own experience – to produce a response that shows a precise understanding of the issue with convincing and coherent reasoning in the way in which it draws its individual ideas together to explain and support the position.

I believe that public transport should be free for all users, as it will benefit the economy in the long-term. Having free public transport would mean that the gap between low-income and high-income people would decrease, and financially disadvantaged people, which can also extend to people living in rural areas, would have better access to services that are not available to them locally, whether they are life-saving (i.e. medical attention, access to police/fire brigades), or simply provide a better quality of life through increased convenience. Having more people coming into the city would mean that they have greater access to job opportunities and are able to better contribute their skills and values to the community.

Having free public transport would encourage more people to use trains, trams or buses, rather than their cars to go places. In today's world, countries and governments are seeking alternatives to decrease their carbon footprints or combat the global warming crisis, and studies have shown that cars are a leading cause of the increased greenhouse gases in the air. As a result, governments in Melbourne have decreased the amount of car parking available in the CBD, to encourage people to find alternative methods of transport when getting to the city. Public transport is a great alternative, and having more people using public transport would result in a decreased number of cars on roads, leading to less congestion and aid in slowing down the growth of global warming.

Public transport also brings significant economical benefits to governments, particularly for the tourism sector. Having free public transport would mean that tourists have greater access to sight-seeing destinations, and would encourage them to travel to multiple areas, urban or rural. Many countries around the world, such as Luxemburg, have free public transport, and it has shown to not only benefit the economy, but the quality of life for the people who use it.

Criteria for assessing research-related responses

Questions 6–8 are opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge of the qualities of good research questions, and also demonstrate detailed knowledge of the considerations used in a critique of such questions.

Responses to Question 6 were assessed on the quality of the question that the students proposed, the plausibility of their proposed data collection methods and the connection between them.

Responses to Questions 7 and 8 were assessed in terms of how well students critically evaluated their selected question with particular reference to practicality and the broader issue of manageability.

Question 6

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | Average |
| % | 2 | 9 | 26 | 27 | 20 | 13 | 3 | 3.1 |

Students were asked to devise a research question appropriate to one of the issues dealt with in Questions 1–4 and indicate how good data might be collected to address it.

The range of responses covered questions that were considered very impractical to impractical, through to manageable to easily managed. Students were encouraged to consider the clarity and focus of their question as well as the potential significance of it, evaluate who potential stakeholders may be and thoughtfully link the wording of their proposed question to methods that would be appropriate for that question. They were also encouraged to consider the way in which data could be collected ethically and the likelihood of an answer being obtained from their research.

Responses that scored highly were clear, substantial and focused. They envisaged manageable and productive questions and suitable methods for answering them. However, a number of students struggled to go beyond offering formulaic responses with regard to the appropriateness of their chosen methods. For example, the justification for the use of a survey because it offers ‘a time-efficient way of collecting data’ or that it ‘can be easily distributed by the use of Google forms’ is limited without also considering why such attributes would be appropriate for the question being proposed.

It is possible for a student to score highly with a clearly or precisely phrased question that could be answered well, but if the student does not envisage a realistic way of answering the question, they will not be able to score well overall. On the other hand, a simple and obvious question could score highly when an appropriate way of answering it is envisaged.

Some questions and answers offered by students were devised within the scope of the Extended Investigation (with a limited timeframe) while others were conceived as more hypothetical within a broader academic setting. Either approach is acceptable, but it may be helpful for students to identify the situation for which their research question is best suited as this would also help in further clarifying why their choice of methods is appropriate.

In the following two examples of high-scoring responses, students have been able to devise a question and propose methods for answering it that are appropriate and liable to lead to their question being answered. In each of these examples, the links between the suggested question and the methods proposed are clear to see. As should be evident, there is a huge variety of ways in which students could have successfully approached Question 6.

Example 1:

Research Question: What environmental impacts would the revival of the Tasmanian Tiger have upon Tasmanian wildlife during 2022?

In order to respond to the research question written above, data could easily be collected via a Systematic Literature Review supported by a Conceptual Framework as well an Observation. To begin, researchers could gather several articles and papers that have recorded the overall behavioral patterns of the Tasmanian Tiger prior to its extinction, as well as papers or journals which focus on the environment and wildlife of Tasmania in 2022. These papers would then provide the necessary fundamentals needed to establish a conceptual framework which would then be applied to the amassed literature, allowing the key concepts that relate directly the research question to be identified and further studied. Once this has been conducted, researchers would proceed to observe the interactions between wildlife and their environment in person, recording any interactions or connections that have been recorded in prior studies. The researcher should be cautious as no to disturb the environment or risk the data becoming skewed and inaccurate. From all the information gathered, the researcher should therefore be able to come to an educated conclusion surrounding the environmental impacts that would be caused by the revival of the Tasmanian Tiger on Tasmanian wildlife during 2022.

Example 2:

A good research question to address issue C would be What is the environmental and economic effect of banning single use items in a secondary school canteen?".

This question may be addressed through an intervention and post intervention analysis and surveys to gather significant and reliable quantitative and qualitative data. The intervention and independent variable will consist of banning single use items such as plastic bags and containers within a school canteen throughout a period of the year. A control will consist of when these single use items are not banned. During the intervention, the researcher can measure the economic cost to students and the canteen when single use plastics are banned and compare this data to the control where single use plastics are not banned. They can also measure how much rubbish was created when single use plastics were banned compared to when they are not banned. This will provide the researcher with significant quantitative data to draw conclusions to address the research question. This quantitative data will minimise participant and researcher bias allowing more objective and accurate results.

After the intervention has been completed surveys and interviews may be conducted to gather qualitative data. The researcher may ask questions such as "How did you feel about banning the use of single use plastic items?" or "What were some impacts that banning single use items had on you?". From these questions the researcher may gather furthermore in-depth data that was not possible from the previous quantitative data set. This allows the researcher to form a more comprehensive result.

By limiting the scope of the experiment to a single secondary school canteen, the feasibility of the research question is greatly increased as the intervention may be conducted throughout a year and the independent variables may be implemented at different times of the year allowing the researcher to answer this research question within a feasible amount of time. The data will also be more consistent as all variables except for the independent variable remain constant. This is why "What is the environmental and economic effect of banning single use items in a secondary school canteen" is a good research question to address issue C.

Questions 7 and 8

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks – Question 7 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Average |
| % | 5 | 33 | 43 | 19 | 1.8 |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks – Question 8 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Average |
| % | 3 | 24 | 43 | 30 | 2 |

These two questions involved analysis and assessment of five research questions in terms of how manageable they would be in practice. Questions 7 and 8 assess what students have learnt about the key considerations in determining manageability, such as the clarity and focus of the question, availability of appropriate research methods, and the likelihood of obtaining an answer through research, as well as ethical issues and practical issues such as time and resources. In this analysis and assessment they are able to use insights obtained from their own Extended Investigation research and transfer their own experience to critically assessing other research questions. Marks were awarded to students who could see the limitations or strengths within the option that they selected.

Responses that scored highly focused on what would be involved in answering a particular question and whether that would make it more or less manageable in practice. Again, students are encouraged to avoid formulaic and generalised observations that have little or no relevance to the question that they are discussing and instead focus on the specific issues likely to be relevant to the question under discussion. In presenting their views, students are not required to compare their selected question with others, although they may choose to do this.

There is no ‘correct’ choice from the five research questions under consideration. Students are not assessed on their choices but on the reasoning demonstrated in making them. It is envisaged that a high-scoring response could be developed for any of the options provided, depending on the clarity and quality of the analysis provided, and the range of considerations taken into account.

Manageability could be effectively evaluated within a context such as the scope of the Extended Investigation study, with limited resources, or it could be assessed in the broader context of a professionally conducted research project with suitable resources.

In the following two examples of high-scoring responses, each student clearly explains the issues inherent within their chosen question and elaborates upon them, pointing out the ways in which the question could be tackled or highlighting severe limitations due to inherent practical difficulties.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response to Question 7, in which a question was evaluated in terms of how it would be the most manageable.

Research question A is the most manageable in practice as surveys and interviews with the owners of small restaurant businesses in a specific local government area can be conducted to find whether the growth of online delivery services has affected them. A timeline can be conducted for both the small restaurant businesses and the online delivery service with the income of the small restaurant businesses being plotted on a graph and the increase in online delivery service popularity and whether the small restaurant businesses income has declined as a result of the online delivery services at a certain point on the graph.

This question would be the most manageable since surveys and interviews are simple, easy and cheap to conduct, as opposed to any scientific experiment that may be conducted which involves ethical considerations and significantly more money to be conducted. Also, the data collected for research A would not involve and intrusion of privacy and the small restaurant businesses and the data can be analysed to perhaps create a solution for the decline in customers dining at small restaurant businesses to compete with the online delivery services.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response to Question 8, in which a question was evaluated in terms of how it would be the least manageable.

The least manageable question would be C.

In relation to question C, the researcher has not clearly outlined their population, only hypothesising a link between income and generosity. In order to research this link between income and generosity, the researcher has not taken into consideration the multitude of variables in play, such as individual beliefs, consisting of culture, philosophy, religion, and overall access to data. Obtaining data relating to personal income could result in ethical issues, hindering the quality of the study. Additionally, generosity is an abstract concept, and a quantitative form of measurement has not been established, which makes it extremely difficult for the researcher to establish a link between the two variables.

Questions 9 and 10

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks – Question 9 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Average |
| % | 5 | 26 | 45 | 24 | 1.9 |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks – Question 10 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Average |
| % | 6 | 38 | 40 | 16 | 1.7 |

In these two questions, students were asked to present a strong argument, with justification, for introducing a tax on sugar-sweetened drinks, and also present a strong argument against. When considering both sides of an issue it is essential for students to demonstrate an understanding of the issue as a whole and to draw on a range of ideas in support of these arguments. They should recognise how their arguments will be strengthened by the careful use of elaboration and evidence, as well as by the use of coherent reasoning. They should also be aware that a clear understanding of an issue does not imply deep real-world factual knowledge about it: good responses are possible without detailed accurate information and errors of factual detail in an otherwise plausible response were not penalised. However, asserting the strengths or weaknesses of arguments in terms of their rhetorical appeal was not rewarded.

In both of the examples below, not only does each student identify a clear position and justify the reasons for that position, but both students also end their responses by explaining why they believe they have presented a strong argument in a concise and precise way. While this part of the question can often be implicit, in these instances the students’ self-evaluation consolidates and clarifies their position on the issue.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response to Question 9.

There should be a tax on sugar-sweetened soft drinks, as because sugar-sweetened soft drinks are so accessible and cheap, many people resort to them as a viable option with a meal. The sugar also contributes to the attraction and addictedness soft drinks have, and because they are so cheap many people have nothing to restrict them from consuming so much, therefore harming their health. If taxes were to be applied to soft drinks, people would be less likely to purchase them, in order to remain under their budget and would then be consuming less sugar, which would eventually improve their long-term mood, as they would break their habit and would become less addicted, improving their health, and also their mood, as it would prevent the frequency sugar-highs and then crashes afterwards, which contributes to the addiction. Also if people drink less soft drinks, breaking the habit would lead to more people voluntarily choosing healthier drinks such as water, as the more exposed they are to only healthy drinks the more likely they are to form new habits and willingly strive to improve their health. It is a strong argument for the proposition, as all humans have habits are able to be disrupted or even decreased, if initiative is taken and people are encouraged to lead a healthier lifestyle and the intention is to improve society's health.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response to Question 10.

There should not be a tax on sugar-sweetened soft drinks as it has no guarantee of affecting the health of Australians and would instead just result in excess money going into the Australian government's pocket. Making soft-drinks more expensive may very well not have a large effect on how many people buy it. Sugar is known to be addictive, and if people have already been drinking sugary soft drink for a long time, an increase in price will not stop them from craving and buying it. Even if the tax did deter people from buying soft-drink, other cheap and sugary foods would still be bought, like ice-cream and lollies.

This argument is strong because it is logically reasoned, drawing on the evidence that sugar is highly addictive and other cheap foods have high sugar content, to disprove the potential benefits of the proposal.