

2021 VCE Australian History external assessment report

General comments

The 2021 VCE Units 3 and 4 Australian History examination was based on the *VCE History Study Design* (2016–2021) which was accredited until 2021.

The examination consisted of four sections corresponding with the four areas of study, and students were required to answer each section. Each section was worth 20 marks.

Student responses to the analysis and explanation of the sources provided in Sections A and C were generally very good and they demonstrated familiarity with the demands of the questions. These were the highest scoring sections of the exam. High-scoring responses to the four 10-mark questions (one in Section A, one in Section C and two in Section D) were well written, direct and focused, while also offering some of the complexity of the historical material available. A wide range of evidence was provided to effectively support the various arguments. In these responses there was also a clear sequence of ideas. Over 82% of students attempted Question 2 in Section B. High-scoring essays displayed similar qualities demonstrated in Sections A and C, as well as the use of a range of evidence and an ability to sustain a discussion within the parameters of the question. They displayed an awareness of the need to use precise or qualified language. Pleasingly, there was little evidence of reliance on prepared essays. Most students answered only one of the options in Section C and at least attempted all appropriate questions, suggesting a clear familiarity with the sections of the examination and the demands of each section. A large majority of the responses in Section D responded to two of the questions provided within the allocated time period, indicating that students used their time effectively.

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.

Section A

Question 1a.

Mark	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	1	2	11	21	65	3.5

The question referred to an extract from *The Argus* published in 1851 and asked students to describe how changes resulting from the gold rushes would likely benefit farmers.

High-scoring responses acknowledged that ‘thousands who will arrive in the colonies’ would ensure an increased demand of provisions leading to higher profits in agriculture – ‘a rich harvest is coming around for them’. Students needed to refer to the huge increase in population as a result of the gold rush and the subsequent increase in demand that would benefit farmers. Direct quotation and paraphrasing were acceptable in responding to the source. In this four-mark question, students were not required to refer to any other information or sources.

Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	1	4	14	25	28	19	9	3.7

Students were asked to use Source 2 and their own knowledge to explain the consequences of the gold rushes for Victoria up to 1860.

High-scoring responses referred to the painting, *Canvas Town, between Prince’s Bridge and South Melbourne in 1850s*, to indicate the initial impact on accommodation and resources in Melbourne and the development of ‘canvas town’ to accommodate gold seekers. They referred to a range of consequences of the discovery of gold for Victoria up to 1860, such as the huge increase in population and increased wealth contributing to new civic buildings being erected (e.g. Parliament House, Treasury, Melbourne University, State Library). Many students referred to a change in migration and immigrants who came from the United States and Europe with their political ideas, which led to the political consequences of the Eureka Stockade and the introduction of manhood suffrage for men over 21, secret ballot and land reform. Other students referred to the increase in Chinese migration and the problems that this posed, the effects on Aboriginal Australians and the environment. Lower performing responses only referred to Source 2, did not consider the timeframe (up to 1860) and considered ‘consequences’ in a negative aspect.

The following high-scoring response has an introduction that clearly establishes an understanding of the question followed by reference to two consequences discussed in depth and supported by evidence.

There were both demographic and political consequences of the gold rushes for Victoria up to 1860.

Large demographic changes occurred due to the gold rushes. A large population increase of 77,000 in 1851 to 540,000 in 1860 dramatically increased the size of the colony as the painting ‘Canvas Town’ in the 1850’s, which depicts the temporary dwellings needed to adjust to the large population rush. The canvas tents make up a large portion of the painting as the town view in the foreground shows a crowded and chaotic nature but also development. 1/10 people came from different parts of the UK according to Richard Broome as a more diverse educated generation found a ‘fraternal spirit’ as an egalitarian nature was found on the goldfields due to the harsh conditions of being a digger.

There were also many political consequences of the goldrushes. Geoffrey Serle illustrates how ‘gold accelerated existing trends’ as digger protests such as the Eureka rebellion in 1854 in retaliation to the poor treatment and unfair mining licences led to ‘vibrant democratic forces’ (Broome). These then influenced political ideas, as the Ballarat Reform League, created in 1853 and desired a ‘full and fair representation, manhood suffrage, no property qualifications’ and the desire for a secret ballot and unlocking of the land was created from a ‘mere collection of fortune hunters’. Ultimately, while Geoffrey

Serle says these changes were exaggerated, 'the achievements made in seven years are striking' as political and demographic consequences largely changed Victoria up to 1860.

Question 1c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	3	1	4	10	12	14	18	17	13	6	2	5.6

The question specifically asked students to refer to Source 3 (a journal entry by Thomas Walker as he travelled through the Port Phillip District) and their own knowledge to evaluate the extent to which Aboriginal beliefs and land-management practices contributed to land 'improvement' opportunities for British settlers after 1834.

Higher scoring responses used Source 3 and other primary sources to highlight the initial impressions of colonists as they described the benefits of Port Phillip for farming. These responses referred in depth to Aboriginal beliefs about their connection to the land and their land-management practices that contributed to the creation of the rich grasslands that provided the perfect environment for pastoral occupation noted by Walker. Importantly, they attempted to evaluate whether these practices contributed to land 'improvement' opportunities for British settlers. Higher scoring responses argued that while Aboriginal beliefs and land-management practices contributed to land 'improvement' opportunities, the colonists, underpinned by their values of achieving wealth and political status, adopted their own techniques and practices in agriculture, which degraded the land and led to conflict with Aboriginal peoples who were deprived of access to their sacred land.

The following extract from a high-scoring response establishes a clear line of argument in the introduction followed by an analysis of the question.

Aboriginal beliefs and land management practices did largely contribute to 'land improvement'. Bill Gammage argues that it was 'ecological philosophy enforced by religious sanction' as The Dreaming and strong attachment to the land meant that they had a 'duty to perform rituals to perpetuate and increase the supply of living things'. (Ronald Berndt) Land management practices such as firestick farming that 'was the core of Aboriginal technology' (Geoffrey Blainey) and burning off, as well as yam cultivation and aquaculture practices left a 'mosaic landscape' (Broome) that regenerated, reduced the fuel load and created an abundant food supply for the indigenous people. This can be seen in Thomas Walker's 'Journal Entry' from 1838 in which he calls it 'quite like a gentlemen's park in England'. Thomas calls it the 'prettiest piece of country I have seen since leaving the Murrumbidgee' however, does not acknowledge the alteration of the land that is due to indigenous care. The 'considerable portion of good land' is already being seen through a perspective lens as the 'very little fencing' illustrates a European understanding of land as Aboriginal land 'improvements' while completely shaping the land was not recognised by Europeans.

British settlers views of the land was seen through a prospective lens to create economic prosperity no matter the cost to the land. Major Mitchell called it 'Australia Felix' as 'the hearts of many men were quickened by stories of untapped wealth '(Broome) to be made through livestock, pastoralist and agricultural activities as the British view of land improvement was that 'if the people cultivate or graze the land they have a claim on it.' (Robert Van Stieglitz 1841) ...

Ultimately, Aboriginal beliefs and land management created land 'improvement' opportunities for British settlers but they did not acknowledge or recognize indigenous 'land improvements'.

Section B – Essay

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Average
%	2	2	2	3	4	3	5	4	6	4	5	6	9	8	10	7	7	5	4	1	2	11.0

Section B required students to write an essay responding to either Question 2 or Question 3. Students were generally able to address the criteria of constructing a historical argument and demonstrated historical

knowledge that was relevant to the question. Most essay responses were well structured, incorporating a clear contention in the introduction and making use of topic sentences and paragraphing to frame their argument. The best topic sentences provided assertions in relation to their overall argument, rather than providing information about the period.

A key distinguishing factor between essays was the students' use of primary sources and historical interpretations as evidence. Students of Australian history must incorporate evidence when constructing a historical argument. The best responses used appropriately referenced quotes from the period and from historians as evidence, along with relevant figures and statistics. Appropriate attribution of evidence also helped establish the perspective that was being represented, whether it was a politician or a media commentator from the period, or a historian since then. Some students used quotes that were incorrectly attributed or not relevant to the specific argument that was being made at the time. High-scoring essays also used evidence and knowledge from across the broader time period as prescribed by the study design (1890–1920) where relevant to the question.

Question 2

Question 2 asked students to evaluate the extent to which Federation created a society that primarily benefited white males. Over 82% of students chose to respond to this question. High-level responses challenged the premise either by noting benefits that were available to women or the occasional example of racial inclusivity, or by arguing that a society that benefited white males was not created by Federation but that these conditions existed well before the act of federation, and were simply maintained afterwards. In this way, students were able to demonstrate knowledge relating to the 1890s, while others also examined the impact of World War 1 (WW1) on Australian society and the continued celebration of the white male through the Anzac identity.

The following is an example of an effective introduction that set out a typical line of argument in response to this question.

The Federation of Australia in 1901 created a nation that primarily benefited the white individuals of society, particularly the males. Underpinning many of the visions at the time, such as a 'Working Man's Paradise' and a 'social laboratory', the perceived superiority of males who were white is reflected in various legislative and judicial acts. However, white females did obtain some rights during this period that allowed for a step to be taken in the direction of female autonomy, and the vision of a 'White Australia' was, arguably, the most dominant vision that united white males and females together against foreign races.

This student went on to describe the benefits introduced for working class men, such as the basic wage that was introduced by the Harvester Judgement, alongside some limited benefits for white women that came through legislation such as the Commonwealth Franchise Act (1902) and the Maternity Allowance Act (1912). The essay concluded by explaining how Australian society prioritised race, by describing the processes of racial exclusion enshrined in the Immigration Restriction Act (1901) and Pacific Islands Labourers Act (1901).

Question 3

Question 3 asked students to evaluate the extent to which the political and sectarian outcomes of the conscription debates challenged the visions that underpinned the new nation. Most essays responding to this topic were able to describe the conscription debates along with the consequences of this debate. Mid-level responses connected the consequences of the conscription debates on the visions that underpinned the nation, while the best answers focused on the consequences of the political and sectarian outcomes of these debates and their impacts on the visions underpinning the nation. Responses that scored highly demonstrated accurate and precise knowledge of these factors – alongside the broader impacts of the conscription debates or of WW1 on the visions that underpinned Australian society – and addressed the question as it appeared in the exam.

There was evidence of some prepared responses to this question about the broader impacts of WW1 on the visions or the impacts of conscription on Australian society, which did not address the role played by political and sectarian outcomes of the conscription debates as causes of these impacts.

The following excerpt from an essay directly addressed the political and sectarian outcomes of the conscription debates, analysing how these factors undermined the unity on which the nation was underpinned.

The hotly contested topic of conscription would result in a divisive society that left the “country divided along fault lines for at least a generation (Adam-Smith). On a political level, the debate around conscription culminated in the separation of PM Hughes from the ALP in order to form the Nationalist Party due to the failure to pass referendums on conscription in both 1916 and 1917. As a result, the ALP was left in a state of disarray and lost its subsequent grip on power, with PM Hughes continuing to rule until the end of the war. Moreover, on a sectarian level, the debates surrounding conscription pitted Catholics against Protestants that continued after the war. Prominent Catholic leader, Archbishop Daniel Mannix, encapsulated the distaste of many Catholics, partly due to their Irish descent and their hate towards the English after the Easter Rising Massacre in 1916, as he labelled conscription as “a hateful thing” that would force young men to fight in a cause they didn’t necessarily believe in. Supporting Mannix’s view was the Women’s Peace Army, under prominent figures such as Vida Goldstein that did not believe in the necessity of conscription of war. Yet “accentuating the division” (Macintyre) and contradicting Mannix’s view was the more prevalent Protestant population, of mainly Anglo-Saxon descent, that supported the commitment to Britain due to their belief that Australia was a significant part of the “great British family of nations” (Hughes). The outcome of the sectarian divide were brawls and a refusal to employ between each religious party. Thus, the united vision underpinning Australia was disrupted due to the hotly contested topic of conscription.

Section C

Part a.

Mark	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	1	1	9	26	63	3.5

Part b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	2	2	10	19	29	22	15	4.0

Part c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	6	3	7	9	10	11	14	16	12	6	5	5.4

Question 4a.

Students generally responded well to this question. Students were required to refer to Sources 4 and 5 and outline why the Australian economy was affected by the world economic crisis of 1929. The majority of students referred to *The Argus* newspaper report describing the Wall Street Crash of 1929 and then outlined Macintyre's analysis of the reasons why this economic crisis affected Australia so severely. High-performing responses referred to both sources as required by the question.

Question 4b.

Students were required to make a judgement regarding whether Lowenstein's description was typical of the experience of most Australians during the Great Depression. Higher scoring responses presented an introductory sentence arguing that the description was not typical of the experience of most Australians. These responses referred to Source 6, citing specific examples of hardship suffered by some Australians, but also argued that many unemployed were more resourceful than those outlined by Lowenstein's quote, growing vegetables, doing handyman jobs and selling door to door. They supplemented their argument that Lowenstein's description was not typical by referring to those who maintained employment and were able to invest in shares in a falling stock market, and to buy heavily discounted goods and real estate. Many students referred to Cottle's study of the wealthy in Sydney to give their response greater depth.

The following response addressed the demands of the question concisely, well supported by evidence.

Lowenstein's description is certainly typical of the experiences felt by the unemployed during the crisis, however, not typical of most Australians. Although unemployment reached a peak of 30% in 1932 and forced some individuals to resort to 'all sorts of tricks and expediences to survive' and 'fathers forced to desert the family' and 'go on the track' according to Lowenstein, other historians such as Geoffrey Spencely argued that this was a period 'heralded not by misery but by prosperity and material progress'. Around 70% of Australians who remained unemployed were not 'forced into such things like 'petty crime' as Lowenstein notes, but rather they remained relatively unaffected or, as Drew Cottle contends, 'the rich continued to remain rich'. However, Lowenstein's interpretation does refer to 'studying the horses' as a form of escapism, which many individuals did undertake whether it be through horse-racing, the cinema or football', which Janet McCalman describes as a 'saviour'.

Question 4c.

This question required students to evaluate the extent to which the Great Depression threatened the cohesion of Australian society. Students were required to refer to their own knowledge and evidence. The majority of students presented an introductory sentence outlining their argument. High-scoring responses fulfilled the demands of the question by initially referring to evidence of unity and cooperation such as the charity provided by churches and community organisations providing food and accommodation, or councils of less affected suburbs that collected and distributed food, clothing and toys to suburbs in need. In analysing the threat to cohesion during this period, many students referred to the rise of right-wing groups, the New Guard, particularly in Sydney in opposition to Jack Lang and his policies, and the development of left-wing groups who opposed the government plan for handling the Depression. Other students suggested that the cohesion of society was affected negatively by the view of some Australians who expressed the belief that unemployment was the fault of the unemployed, who were accused of being lazy and not trying hard enough to find a job.

The topic sentence of the first body paragraph of this high-scoring response argues that:

Social unity was a key aspect of the Depression experience, underpinned by charity, community and government support ...

The second body paragraph:

Thousands of Australians were thrown out of their homes and onto the streets (McIntyre) and into slums as pictured in Frederick McCubbin's Dudley Flats painting. Family breakups also demonstrated failing social cohesion with many men 'jumping the rattler' (Mirams) and 'feeling emasculated by the loss of income ... Further to such division was the notion that historian Drew Cottle emphasizes that 'for the rich there was no Depression' and 'philanthropy was seen as a hobby'. Violence resulted from division, and Frank O'Brien's 1934 murder of his wife and children before his own suicide, demonstrates the desperation people faced. Social cohesion was severely challenged by the experiences of the Great Depression

Political division was another prominent threat to unity within Australian society. The turmoil of the worldwide economic depression proved a catalyst for a split in the ALP as 'Joe Lyons, a committed Labor man of 22 yrs' (Marchant) left to form the UAP ...

The student then refers to the rise of extremist groups of the right and left and concludes:

Ultimately whilst social unity was prevalent, the destructive forces of division in a political and social sense did dangerously threaten cohesion of Australian society

Question 5a.

Question 5a. required students to use Source 7 to outline the aims of the Curtin government's economic response during World War II (WWII). Source 7 listed four aspects of Curtin's policy of austerity and the desired outcomes of these policies. High-scoring responses picked up on the term 'aims' and identified not only the mechanism of the policies but the intended outcomes as revealed by the source.

Question 5b.

This question required students to use Sources 8 and 9 and their own knowledge to explain three challenges faced by the government in managing the home population during WWII. Students used the sources provided to identify the challenges of rationing and industrial action, and most were able to build on these points. Additional challenges included extending the resentment of rationing to the emergence of a black market; frustrations that emerged in response to restrictions imposed upon the population, such as the Manpower Directorate; maintaining wartime production; and maintaining morale and social cohesion.

Lower scoring answers did not move beyond the sources provided, typically demonstrating comprehension of the sources but not adding to them with the student's own knowledge and evidence. The best responses provided additional knowledge and evidence, demonstrating a broad understanding of the subject.

The following high-scoring response effectively integrated and analysed evidence from the sources provided along with their own knowledge, and clearly identified the three challenges being described.

Source 9 highlights the challenge of balancing the needs of the workforce alongside the need to support the war effort as expected by the government. This is evident as ‘300 miners... ceased work today as a protest against butter rationing’, thus retaliating against government prioritisation of resources for the war effort. Another challenge faced by the government managing the home population was ensuring the people took the threat of war seriously. This is reflected in source 8 with the looming presence of the Japanese soldier over the nation, as the slogan orders Australians to ‘stop lockouts, stop strikes’. Darian-Smith highlights how this was an issue for the government as the threat of war was initially “psychologically and physically remote”, hence a reluctance for Australians to comply with stringent measures. Finally, the Australian government faced the challenge of maintaining economic production, as indicated in the caption of source 8 ‘war production must be increased’. This was particularly relevant during the Curtin government’s ‘all in’ approach, directing 400,000 Australians into essential war industries in 1942 under the Manpower Directorate in an attempt to ensure the work of the population prioritised the crisis of WW2. Hence, the government was challenged with ensuring Australians complied with a “complete revision of the whole Australian economic, domestic and industrial life” (Curtin, December 1941).

Question 5c.

This question required students to evaluate the degree to which the crisis of WWII threatened the cohesion of Australian society, which, in turn, required a balanced response that considered both examples of cohesion and division. The question also required students to use evidence to support their response, which most were able to do, although some students continued to draw evidence from the sources provided, which were intended for Questions 5a. and 5b.

Students were commonly able to describe key threats to social cohesion, often including the changing role of women, the presence of American troops or treatment of enemy aliens as threats to cohesion. The best responses also noted areas of cohesion, particularly during the crisis years, such as the decline in industrial action or the contribution made by women or by Aboriginal Australians to the war effort. High-scoring responses were able to balance the demonstration of breadth and depth of knowledge. Many responses were able to raise three points (assertions) relating to the cohesion of Australian society within the time constraints. To establish the unity of Australians in meeting the common threat, some students focused on the experience and contribution of major groups such as women, Aboriginal people or the working classes. Other students used the different time periods, or phases, of WWII to organise their evaluation, and made comparisons across time.

Lower-scoring answers tended to simply support the assertion that WWII threatened the cohesion of Australian society and provided reasons for and evidence of this assertion.

The following excerpts reveal a well-balanced and well-sequenced evaluative response to the question.

World War Two threatened the cohesion of society to a moderate degree, however the actions of Curtin in encouraging cohesiveness showed there was potential for unity.

The reaction of Australian society to those of enemy origin largely fractured unity. At the beginning of the war, Germans were seen as the ultimate enemy, having been Nazi aggression that was blamed for the beginning of WW2. They became victims of large hatred with some labelling them “the German bastards, may they rot in hell until the maggots have picked their bones clear of putrid flesh” (Henry Lamond, milk vendor)...

Additionally, the changing roles of women threatened cohesion, as a “wave of female labour” saw women move into “jobs which they would never be able to do normally” (Dorothy Hewett). Though voluntarism was still the most typical response of women, the explosion of women into male dominated industries from 1000 – 145000 (1939 – 1945) angered men...

Yet the actions of Curtin whose “radio rhetoric evoked an image of a strong, fatherly and reassuring leader” (Caryn Coatney) helped to create cohesion. His successful introduction of limited overseas conscription is evidence of this having been a topic so bitterly divisive in World War 1...

Thus, while the war certainly threatened the cohesion of society to a moderate degree, Curtin's actions ensured that society was not entirely divided by the war.

Section D

First option Questions 6–10

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	3	0	0	0	0	0	70	17	7	3	1	6.2

Second option Questions 6–10

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	11	0	0	0	0	0	6	38	14	30	1.0	7.0

Question 6

This question required students to evaluate the extent to which the moratorium movement contributed to Australia's withdrawal from the Vietnam War. In responding to this question, most students were able to describe the moratorium movement and identify its impacts more broadly, for example in helping to shift public attitudes. Other factors, such as the role played by the media representations of the conflict, and specific events such as the Tet Offensive or My Lai massacre, were also analysed. The best answers focused on the government's initial decision to begin withdrawal in 1970 and noted the influence of United States leadership on this decision, with the initial announcement to withdraw a battalion occurring before the first moratorium marches. High-level answers also noted the role played by the election of the ALP government and Whitlam's decision to withdraw the remaining troops and abolish conscription.

The following is an example of a typical line of argument made by many high-scoring responses.

Australia's involvement and ultimate withdrawal from Vietnam was challenged by numerous demands for change. Whilst the Moratorium movement formed part of the push for change, it was the influence of US policy which more strongly contributed.

This student described the anti-war protest movement, using examples, alongside other factors such as the My Lai massacre and Tet Offensive, before concluding with the role played by US policy.

Ultimately, however, the decision to withdraw from Vietnam was influenced most directly by US policy. Nixon's move to "Vietnamising the search for peace" and gradual withdrawal, allowed Australia to similarly withdraw and respond to public pressure... By 1972, and as a result of the long opposed ALP's "landslide" (Mirams) victory, all combat troops were withdrawn.

Question 7

This question required students to evaluate the extent to which legislation was effective in achieving land rights for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Low-scoring responses to this question often had trouble distinguishing between the role played by the courts and that of parliament in passing legislation, while others struggled to identify precise examples of legislation.

There were different lines of argument taken by higher scoring responses to this question. Some students compared the gains made by legislation to progress achieved by other means, such as popular protests or use of the courts. Other students focused on different examples of legislation, evaluating their relative effectiveness, such as the argument taken by the following student.

Certain pieces of legislation, namely the Aboriginal Land Rights Act and the Native Title Act of 1993 were effective in achieving land rights, however others, namely the Native Title Amendment Act 1998, actually undid some of the progress in the area of land rights.

The first two paragraphs evaluated the progress achieved by the Land Rights Act and Native Title Act, before a third paragraph provided the counter-argument by evaluating how the Native Title Amendment Act made the achievement of land rights more difficult:

However, the Native Title Amendment Act of 1998 actually ‘restricted the rights that Indigenous people could exercise through native title (Historian Grout). This act was influenced by the Wik decision, and passed by PM Howard, who believed that the pendulum had swung too far in one direction and must be brought back to the middle. While this act stated that ‘native title can coexist with leasehold land’ (Cotter and Webb), it also stated that ‘in any conflict of interest the non-native title rights prevail (historian Grout). Thus, this piece of legislation was ‘explicitly designed to protect the interests of pastoralists and miners’ (Grout). The Yorta Yorta people’s claim for land is evidence of how this act made it more difficult for Indigenous people to claim Native Title, as the High Court decided that the ‘tide of history’ (Grout) had extinguished native title rights.

Question 8

This question required students to evaluate the extent to which feminist writings were influential in advancing the debate about equality for women. Most students acknowledged in their introduction that feminist writings were influential in advancing the debate about equality for women. However, higher scoring responses also recognised that other influences were also significant. Students referred to the writers such as Germaine Greer and *The Female Eunuch*; Betty Frieden, who wrote the *Feminine Mystique*; or Anne Summers’ *Damned Whores and God’s Police*. Importantly, they also referenced the development of the Women’s Electoral Lobby in educating women in demanding equality; the protests and other challenges that led to debates in parliament about equal pay, study and work opportunities; the access to cheap and safe contraception; and Susan Ryan’s role in the passing of the *Sex Discrimination Act 1985*.

Question 9

This question required students to evaluate the extent to which the Migration Act 1966 was influential in changing Australian attitudes to immigration. Most students attempted this question thoughtfully. High-scoring responses outlined the important aspects of the Migration Act that effectively dismantled the White Australia Policy by changing the reasons for immigrants to be accepted into Australia. They argued that this Act had bipartisan support in accepting new immigrants not on racial grounds, but on their ability to contribute to Australia, their education, qualifications and their willingness to integrate into Australian society. Stronger responses also pointed out that there were groups who argued against the Migration Act in 1966 and wanted to maintain the ‘white anglo protestant’ (WAP) nature of Australian society to maintain cultural and economic harmony. In their evaluation, students referred to a range of evidence such as the effects of the policy of multiculturalism that was adopted by the Labor government in 1973 and the huge increase in post Vietnam War immigration that led to debates regarding the number of immigrants and their impact on employment and social cohesion. Lower scoring responses did not discuss the significance of the Migration Act and the bulk of their argument revolved around Pauline Hanson and her contribution to debates about the increase in Asian migration.

Question 10

This question required students to evaluate the extent to which the promotion of a social wage allowed for change to be achieved in Australian workplace relations in the 1980s. Although a very limited number of students responded to this question, answers were often based on knowledge from earlier Areas of Study, such as referencing the Harvester Judgement from 1907. Very little analysis or evidence was provided that gave depth to their argument. Reference to the actions of the Hawke government in 1983 in introducing a Price and Incomes Accord between the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the government would have strengthened their response. Unions agreed to restrict wage demands and the government pledged to

minimise inflation and to act on the social wage which included spending on education and welfare. Students could also have referred to the increases in pay in 1983 and 1984, improvements in family payments and childcare, the introduction of Medicare and the increase in supplements for low-income families.