

**Victorian Certificate of Education  
2015**

SUPERVISOR TO ATTACH PROCESSING LABEL HERE

STUDENT NUMBER           Letter

**AUSTRALIAN POLITICS**  
**Written examination**

**Thursday 5 November 2015**

**Reading time: 11.45 am to 12.00 noon (15 minutes)**

**Writing time: 12.00 noon to 2.00 pm (2 hours)**

**QUESTION AND ANSWER BOOK**

**Structure of book**

<i>Section</i>	<i>Number of questions</i>	<i>Number of questions to be answered</i>	<i>Number of marks</i>
A	4	4	60
B	4	1	20
			Total 80

- Students are permitted to bring into the examination room: pens, pencils, highlighters, erasers, sharpeners and rulers.
- Students are NOT permitted to bring into the examination room: blank sheets of paper and/or correction fluid/tape.
- No calculator is allowed in this examination.

**Materials supplied**

- Question and answer book of 24 pages.
- Additional space is available at the end of the book if you need extra paper to complete an answer.

**Instructions**

- Write your **student number** in the space provided above on this page.
- All written responses must be in English.

**Students are NOT permitted to bring mobile phones and/or any other unauthorised electronic devices into the examination room.**

**SECTION A****Instructions for Section A**

Answer **all** questions in the spaces provided.

**Australian democracy****Question 1** (15 marks)

Select the most appropriate answer (**A.–D.**) for **parts a.** and **b.**, and write your answers in the boxes.

- a.** Which one of the following statements is the most accurate? 1 mark
- A.** The rule of law is not considered to be an important democratic principle.
  - B.** Direct democracy is the most common form of government in the world today.
  - C.** In a genuine democracy, the power of the government is subject to a range of constraints.
  - D.** A republican form of government is more democratic than a constitutional monarchy.

- b.** Which one of the following is **not** a feature of Australian democratic government in 2015? 1 mark
- A.** There is public funding of election campaign expenses.
  - B.** The voting procedures used in federal elections are described in the Australian Constitution.
  - C.** The Senate can vote to defeat Bills passed by the House of Representatives.
  - D.** Laws made by the executive government can be declared unconstitutional by the High Court.

c. Outline two ways in which the operation of the Commonwealth Parliament may not always fulfil the principles and values of democracy. 4 marks

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d. Outline two ways in which the Australian political system seeks to ensure the political and legal equality of Australian citizens. 4 marks

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## Australian democracy in perspective

### Question 2 (15 marks)

‘There is a lot of dissatisfaction expressed about the Commonwealth Parliament because it does not have a great deal of power, it is completely dominated by the executive government and it is less significant in the whole political process than it should be. Both the House of Representatives and the Senate lack real power.’

- a. What is meant by the term ‘bicameral system’? 2 marks

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- b. What are two key ways in which the Commonwealth Parliament differs in operation from the legislative branch of another political system you have studied this year? 4 marks

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- c. Explain **one** way in which the legislative branch of a political system you have studied this year (other than Australia) holds the executive branch accountable.

3 marks

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- d. Evaluate the statement on page 5 in light of the operation of the Commonwealth Parliament in recent years.

6 marks

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## Domestic policy

### Question 3 (15 marks)

In December 2014, Prime Minister Tony Abbott made some significant changes to his cabinet. Mr Abbott shifted Scott Morrison from his position as Minister for Immigration and Border Protection and appointed him Minister for Social Services. Australian Greens Senator Christine Milne said, ‘Putting Scott Morrison in charge of social services will send shivers down the spines of people across the country’. Key Senate independent Nick Xenophon questioned whether the government had a mandate for major reform of the Australian welfare and social security system.

- a. In relation to Australian politics, what is meant by the term ‘mandate’? 2 marks

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- b. Outline two key differences between the roles of Mr Morrison and Senator Milne in the formulation of domestic policy. 4 marks

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c. Outline two key constraints on the successful implementation of domestic policy. 4 marks

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- d.** Discuss the significance of the electoral mandate in the formulation of Australian domestic policy.

5 marks

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## Foreign policy

### Question 4 (15 marks)

[The United States–Australia alliance] is an alliance based on trust. An alliance that is both dependable and dynamic. We’re true friends who share common values, whose interests overwhelmingly align ... our Alliance remains vital for both our nations – how together our nations continue to create a brighter, more secure, free and prosperous future for our people and for our region.

Source: Julie Bishop, Minister for Foreign Affairs, ‘US–Australia: The Alliance in an Emerging Asia’ (speech), Washington, DC, 22 January 2014

- a. What is meant by the term ‘national security’? 3 marks

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- b. In her speech, Ms Bishop refers to Australian and the United States’ interests that ‘overwhelmingly align’.

Outline two such interests in relation to Australian foreign policy. 4 marks

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- c. Outline one possible advantage and one possible disadvantage of Australia's alliance with the United States.

4 marks

Advantage \_\_\_\_\_

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Disadvantage \_\_\_\_\_

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**d.** Outline two key elements of Australia's foreign policy response to the threat of global terrorism.

4 marks

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**SECTION B****Instructions for Section B**

Answer **one** of the following four questions in the space provided.

**Question 1** (20 marks)

‘Accountability is a key characteristic of an effective democracy.’

Discuss the meaning and importance of accountability in democratic government. Evaluate the key ways in which the Australian political system holds the government accountable.

**OR**

**Question 2** (20 marks)

‘The Australian prime minister is too powerful.’

To what extent do you agree with this statement? Discuss with reference to the power of a head of government of **one** other political system you have studied this year.

**OR**

**Question 3** (20 marks)

‘Interest groups are free to lobby the government and seek to influence the formulation and implementation of public policy. However, in practice, some interest groups will have much greater influence than others.’

Discuss this statement in relation to **one or more** contemporary Australian domestic policy issues you have studied this year.

**OR**

**Question 4** (20 marks)

‘Domestic factors are more important than external factors in the formulation and implementation of Australian foreign policy.’

To what extent do you agree with this statement?







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