

2022 VCE Australian History external assessment report

General comments

The 2022 Australian History examination assessed student achievement in the key knowledge and skills indicated in the *VCE History Study Design 2022–2026: Australian History*. The examination structure was new in 2022, consisting of two sections. Students were asked to respond to two questions in Section A and one question in Section B.

The number of marks available for students was reduced from 80 in previous years to 70 in 2022, and this seems to have been a positive change for students. Most students who managed their time effectively were able to attempt all relevant questions within the two hours of writing time. Given the challenges of studying a new curriculum, students demonstrated a thorough knowledge of Australian History. However, there were a number of students who attempted more than two questions in Section A when only two of the four questions should be attempted. Students are therefore reminded to read all instructions carefully. Furthermore, many questions contained more than one instruction. Some questions required the students to use one or two of the sources provided, and then to identify or analyse impacts on a range of different groups. Such questions require students to pay close attention to each instruction so their responses adequately and concisely address each part of the question.

There were some general areas for improvement noted by assessors. While students were able to demonstrate knowledge they had learned through their study of VCE Australian History, it's also important for them to engage and grapple with the key concept or content of a question, whether that be the policy of assimilation or the impacts of legislation, for example. Students need to apply their knowledge to address these key concepts, rather than writing in general terms.

In Section A, each investigation included questions that asked students to explain change. In order to do so, responses need to be explicit about what actually changed, rather than describing or providing a narrative about 'what happened'. Using the word 'change', or a close synonym, often helped responses identify the specific change under analysis. Establishing the context or attitude that previously existed was also often helpful for identifying what had changed.

The new study design allows for questions that focus on a single area of study, or require students to draw on their knowledge of both areas of study for an investigation, as part e. did for each investigation in Section A. This means that students need to pay careful attention to the allocated time frame of a question. In 2022, however, each essay question asked only about the time frames for Area of Study 2, yet many students drew on knowledge from both areas of study to respond to their chosen question. This was most prominently an issue for responses to Question 4 of Section B, as some responses focused on the experiences of women and Aboriginal servicemen during World War I and World War II, despite the time frame being stipulated as post-1950. Although these experiences can be relevant in order to establish change, such responses were often grounded in this time period, with little analysis of what happened after 1950.

Finally, it is important to note that students are assessed based on their ability to answer a question using knowledge that is relevant and appropriate. Thus students should prioritise knowledge that is relevant to the specific investigation and Area of Study.

Specific information

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 of more or less than 100 per cent.

Section A

Question 1a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	3	18	79	1.8

This question required students to identify two methods for hunting water birds from a painting by Joseph Lycett. Most responses were able to clearly identify the use of spears, as well as bare hands. Other observations included hiding in the reeds and herding water birds towards hunters with spears.

Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	2	6	20	32	23	18	3.2

This question required students to explain the differences in how Aboriginal people and colonists used the environment, using both Source 1 and Source 2 and their own knowledge. Many responses focused heavily on Aboriginal management of land, drawing on Source 1, but the highest-scoring responses were able to effectively integrate Source 2 in their explanation for how colonists used the environment. High-scoring responses noted that European colonists modified and transformed the landscape for their food production by hunting native species, clearing native vegetation and introducing new, hooved animals.

The high-scoring response below provides an excellent analysis of Aboriginal uses of the environment that incorporates relevant quotes and knowledge from the student's own knowledge. Despite including a useful quote and statistic from historian Richard Broome about European land management from own knowledge, this response could have been improved through more effective use of Source 2. Wheelwright comments in Source 2 that 'the duck-shooters of the day, like the diggers, never heeded the morrow', causing waterbirds to become 'scarcer' and that 'not one [duck-shooter] laid up for a rainy day'. These quotes might have allowed the response to acknowledge European ideas of resource extraction or the decline of native plants and animals.

As depicted in source 1 and source 2, European settlers and Indigenous people managed the land in several different ways. Aboriginal people developed a strong custodianship to country in which they were "bound by the Great tradition" and developed fire regimes to manage land (Broome). "Fire stick farming" as coined by archaeologist Rhys Jones dated back to 60,000 BCE and was to 'signal, clear ground and to hunt' as 70% of native plants are fire tolerant (Broome). Moreover, Indigenous people used hydraulic and various other techniques to catch sea life including the development of spears to catch water birds on the Hunter River as shown in source 1. By contrast, settler ideas about land were "bound with personal power and wealth" leading to the introduction of the merino sheep in 1797 that established the basis of the pastoralism industry, with over 260 million sheep present by 1860 (Broome). Moreover, to contrast

Indigenous methods to catch water birds, Europeans became 'duck shooters' using the 'sound of a gun' (source 2). Indigenous and settler management of land different significantly.

Question 1c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	7	22	71	1.7

This question required students to use an excerpt from historians Hutton and Connors to outline a reason for the increased concern about environmental issues in Australia during the 1960s. A high proportion of students were able to do so effectively. Responses typically included reference to the forest industry knocking down native forests, sand mining threatening sensitive coastal areas or the Tasmanian Hydro Electric Commission preparing to dam Lake Pedder. Some responses added to these points by noting an increasing awareness of the importance and sensitivity of natural environments or greater appreciation for the natural beauty of the Australian environment.

Question 1d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	12	16	20	21	17	7	6	2.6

Students were required to explain two changes that occurred as a result of anti-nuclear protests. The highest-scoring responses were structured to explicitly explain two changes by clearly signposting each change and linking to anti-nuclear protests. The highest-scoring responses used both the examples in the source but also discussed other changes, such as the rise of the Nuclear Disarmament Party in 1984 and the successful protests against uranium mining at Jabiluka in 1998. The following is an example of a high-scoring response that was well-signposted and drew on the students' own knowledge and the source provided as evidence.

There were many changes that occurred as a result of the anti-nuclear protests. One change was Australia, along with other countries, taking France to the International Court of Justice in 1973 over their nuclear testing in the Pacific. Anti-nuclear protesters were upset that "bilateral negotiations continued as normal" and when Gough Whitlam was elected, he brought France to the ICJ at the demands of the protesters. Another change was helping to prevent Australia from becoming the "earth's largest uranium producers and exporters" (s4). Increased protests from groups such as Friends of the Earth, who were a "radical ecology group" (FOE press release) became increasingly vocal and active and in anti-nuclear campaigns. Mass rallies in 1976 and 1977 saw "fifty thousand people" protest and Palm Sunday in 1982 saw 100 000 people. The creation of the Nuclear Disarmament Party in 1982 also helped, winning 7.23% of the vote in the 1984 election. Finally, the Chernobyl disaster in 1986 also contributed to Australia reducing its uranium production and exports.

Question 1e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	15	6	10	6	9	14	12	13	9	4	4	4.5

This question required students to evaluate changing perspectives both on conservation and the protection of native habitats across both areas of study. Some students only addressed one of these perspectives or limited their discussion to one area of study. The highest-scoring responses covered both areas of study and distinguished between perspectives on conservation and protection of native habits. Many responses discussed shifts in perspectives from limited awareness of conservation and protection of endangered

habitats during colonisation and the gold rushes, to an increasing appreciation of these through the efforts of groups such as the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria, the creation of national parks and the emerging conservation movement after 1950. Campaigns such as the Little Desert campaign, the introduction of legislation such as the *Wildlife Act 1975* in Victoria, and the Landcare movement, were given federal support by Bob Hawke in 1989. The most sophisticated evaluations recognised that these post-1950 changes in perspective were contested and included critiques of the environmental movement from figures such as Hugh Morgan. Historians such as Geoffrey Blainey, Frank Bongiorno and Libby Robin were often used to support student responses.

The following high-scoring response notes changing attitudes towards conservation in the 19th century and shifts the focus to preservation of native habitats during the 20th century in the second paragraph, followed by an acknowledgment of contrasting perspectives held during that time, challenging the degree to which attitudes had shifted since the period of the gold rushes.

Perspectives on conservation and the protection of endangered habitats changed between 1850 and 2010 to a significant extent. In a post gold rush era, many people had leisure time and could travel Australia. This 'pursuit of wonder' (Horne) was influenced by a growing appreciation of the sublime, influenced by writings of Thoreau and Marsh. They were also influenced by local ideas with the Heidelberg School's changing ideas of the land with the air such as Golden Summer. This encouraged greater conservation, with groups like the Field Naturalists Club in Victoria, formed in 1880. The creation of national parks helped to conserve the environment, such as Royal National Park created in 1879 in Sydney and Tower Hill in 1892 in Victoria. This allowed for endangered habitats to be protected so that they could be enjoyed.

A new form of conservation began to emerge in the 1950s and 1960s, influenced by key writings. Rachel Carson's 1962 "Silent Spring" brought worldwide attention to the danger of toxins and humans overall impact on nature. This helped create the Environmental Protection Agency in America in 1970. This helped encourage the protection of endangered habitats in Australia. Judith Wright also contributed to this, with writing such as "Coral Battle" focusing on the protection of the Great Barrier Reef. She engaged feelings and emotions as she believed that they "swung public opinion" which helped to contribute to the protection of the Great Barrier Reef.

However, perspectives didn't always completely change. The Tower hill National Park was treated poorly, damaging the endangered habitat. The mining industry, which was a 'dynamo' (Blainey) of our economy, believed that "conservation stood in the way of progress" (Lines) shown with attempts at mining in Coronation Hill in 1983 and Jabiluka in 1998.

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	17	39	44	1.3

The question required students to identify two attitudes expressed in an 1850s editorial in *The Argus* about female immigration to Victoria. High-scoring responses identified the writer's attitude that it was a mistake to use funds from the sale of the land to assist the immigration of Irish orphan girls to the colony. Another attitude identified was the writer's clear preference for English and Scottish girls and that if they were Irish, they should be of a higher class rather than working class. To achieve two marks, students needed to clearly identify two attitudes. The following example of a high-scoring response uses quotations directly from Source 5 to effectively identify the two attitudes expressed by the writer.

"Source 5 expresses the desire for "eligible, well-brought-up girls" to emigrate to the colonies, rather than directing funds to "coarse useless creatures" from Ireland. The desire was for "rosy cheeked girls from England...Bonnie Scotland who would make good servants today and virtuous intelligent wives tomorrow."

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	2	9	23	42	18	6	2.8

Students were asked to use Source 5, Source 6 and their own knowledge to explain the experiences of women and their contributions to society in the colonial period before Federation. High-scoring responses fulfilled the demands of the question using Source 5 and Source 6, and referred to other primary sources to explain the experiences of women and their contributions to colonial society. Many students referred to the contribution of Catherine Spence, Caroline Chisholm or the role of the suffragists. Mid-range responses often referred to Source 5 and Source 6 but did not include their own knowledge. Students are encouraged to read questions carefully to ensure that they respond effectively to all parts of the question to achieve full marks. The following is an excerpt from a high-scoring response that uses the sources and other knowledge effectively.

‘Women through pre-federated Australia were predominantly subjugated to the traditional gender roles of a house maintenance servant. Just as the Argus (source 5) postulates, the “physique of future colonists”, was a necessary indicator of the capacity for females service to the colonies. Indeed, epitomising the role of females through this period, Emily Skinner in Source 6 illustrates, despite being “sick and weak” she conformed to the social expectation, continuing to “do the necessary washing.” Thus, as females were brought to the gold fields as their male counterparts looked for “prosperous freedom” (Reverend Polhampton), females such as Skinner was on the verge of ‘fainting away from weakness’ Yet, females through 1867 as males gained suffrage, began to develop a voice in society, as Catherine Spence initiated pacifist groups, preaching for the “promotion of females to have a say”.

Question 2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	10	12	27	21	18	9	4	2.7

Students were asked to use Source 7 and their own knowledge to explain two changes to ideas about the land rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples between 1869 and 1992. Most students identified the 1869 Victorian act that gave non-Indigenous people the power to dislocate Indigenous people from their traditional lands and force them to live on reserves and missions. In identifying a second change to ideas regarding the change in land rights for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, students referred to a range of actions from the 1960s that challenged the loss of their land and actively began to demand land rights. Many students referred to the success of the Wave Hill Walk Off, the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in 1972 or the Mabo decision and Paul Keating’s Redfern address in 1992. Mid-range responses referred to Source 7 and may have made reference to one other change, but there was a lack of depth in identifying the change in the idea of land rights. Responses that did not score well simply concentrated on Source 7 and did not explain another change.

While most responses noted that the *Aboriginal Protection Act 1869* created the change of displacing Aboriginal people from their land and culture and then explained a second change based on their own knowledge, the following example of a high-scoring response takes a comparatively novel approach, by using attitudes conveyed in Source 7 as a basis from which two changes were made to ideas about land rights between 1869 and 1992. This was quite an effective approach in clearly demonstrating the change in ideas that had occurred.

The Select Committee report of 1859 suggested that Aboriginal people needed to be “Christianised and Civilised” and prompted the creation of Acts, such as the Aboriginal Protection Act 1869. This act gave “unelected volunteers” substantial formal powers over Aboriginal people through the creation of “residential reserves and missions” (Source 7). An example of slight change and leniency in this thinking,

was the experience of Corranderk Reserve Aboriginal elder Barack, who was heard in Parliament in Victoria and was successful in the re-implementation of manager John Green at the reserve. This instance highlights a shift in respect for Aboriginal land rights and their people capable to manage and make contribution to their own land, no longer a “weak and helpless people” (the Age). Another change occurred in 1992, with Paul Keating’s symbolic Redfern speech. One of the first attempts at apology and reconciliation, Keating on behalf of the Australian people apologised for the removal of sacred Aboriginal land and children, promising changes for the future.

Question 2d.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	11	23	66	1.6

This question asked students to outline one perspective on immigration held by the Australian Government after World War II from Source 8. Most students accurately identified that the Australian Government initially sought immigrants from the United Kingdom and that the photo of the large, white British family would have suited the government’s vision after World War II. Other students added that when the numbers of British immigrants proved to be insufficient, the government sought immigrants from Northern and Southern Europe.

Question 2e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	14	5	8	10	17	15	14	10	4	2	1	4.1

This question required students to evaluate the extent to which ideas about assimilation of migrants changed between 1900 and 2008. Higher-scoring responses began with a topic sentence outlining a contention that responded to the question. This was followed by a demonstration and awareness of the persistence of the policy of assimilation, the emergence of multiculturalism and evidence of hostility to multiculturalism. Mid-range responses did not address the idea of assimilation and described more broadly immigration policies across the time period with a focus on the emergence of multiculturalism and the hostility it created from some Australians. The following high-scoring response evaluates the policy of assimilation and the changes between 1900 and 2008, noting that there was little assimilation required of the earliest migrants who came almost entirely from the United Kingdom. The response then states that Baltic migrants were most preferred following WWII due to their perceived ability to assimilate into white Australian society. This response also acknowledges the contradiction between Whitlam’s attitudes towards multiculturalism and actions toward Vietnamese refugees.

The idea about the assimilation of migrants changed to a minimal extent between 1900 and 2008. The very formation of Australia in 1901, saw creation of Acts designed to inhibit foreign migration, such as the Immigration Restriction Act, 1901. A decision of “plain hypocrisy” (Broome) ensured only certain types of migrants were permitted through mechanisms such as the Dictation Test. Being Australia being “fundamentally British” (Commonwealth Year Book), British migration was still encouraged and preferred. Post WW2, Arthur Calwell had the challenge to “end an era of unprecedented European migration” (W.D. Forsyth) and slowly ease White Australia into a different form of immigration and consequent assimilation. Landing permits given to 1000 Holocaust survivors in 1946 revealed a highly racist society as these people were depicted as “rats” and Calwell the “pied piper”. The competition for best quality displaced person” (Tavan) occurred in 1947, and in an attempt to “fill this country” Calwell selected the displaced people who could assimilate most effectively into Australian society, the “Beautiful Balts”. Calwell cleverly made use of his experience as Information Minister to launch a “media propaganda campaign” (Tavan) to ease Australians into a different type of migration. Despite the rapid increase of European migration, Calwell highlighted his distaste of Asians through threat of war with Japan in 20 years (Calwell) and the

deportation of Nancy Prasad (1965). Immigrant Chang criticises Calwell as “You welcome wartime refugees but deport Asians”. Gough Whitlam in his term created the Racial Discrimination Act 1975, aiming to end a culture of assimilation, and transition to multiculturalism. Yet when faced with 96,000 Vietnamese refugees after the Vietnam War, only took 1000, as they “may become a thorn in the side of labor” (Menadue). The admission of 40,000 Vietnamese refugees under Malcolm Fraser paired with the Racial Discrimination Act, 1975 helped to “change the face of Australia”. (Tavan) These “great migration success stories” (Tavan) eased white Australia into Multicultural Australia in the late 2000’s. Thus, to a minimal extent assimilation was favoured for integration, yet only came after decades of racism and pushback.

Question 3a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	2	6	92	1.9

This question asked students to identify two responses by Aboriginal people to the challenge of colonisation in the Portland District from Source 9, an extract from a letter by Magistrate James Blair. A high proportion of students were able to effectively identify a range of Aboriginal responses that included harassment, direct violence towards people such as the murdering of shepherds, or the economic violence of stealing their sheep.

Question 3b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	5	9	22	30	25	9	5.4

This question required students to explain the impacts of frontier battles and conflicts on both Aboriginal people and pastoralists using Source 10 (an extract from historian Henry Reynolds) and then identify a contribution to a political change. While most students were able to explain the impacts of frontier battles and conflicts on Aboriginal people effectively, describing the dispossession and population collapse, some responses neglected to identify the impacts of the violence on the pastoralists as well, which similarly could have included the physical toll inflicted by Aboriginal violent resistance, or the economic damage and risk that frontier violence posed for the pastoralists. The final instruction in the question, about contributing to political change, proved the most challenging for students. Contributions to political change resulting from frontier battles and conflicts that were identified by students included the European system of law and governance replacing traditional Aboriginal systems, the confirmation of economic and political power of the pastoralists, or specific laws that were introduced to attend to the issues faced by Aboriginal people as a result of colonialism.

The following response provides a strong explanation of impacts on Aboriginal people and pastoralists and made effective use of Source 10. However, this response sought to evaluate whether political change occurred as a result, concluding that there was minimal political change resulting from frontier battles, rather than identifying a contribution that the frontier battles made to political change in Australia.

Frontier battles had a significant impact on pastoralists and Aboriginal people and minimal impact on political change. As described in source 10, the frontier was a place of unrestricted violence where pioneers and Aborigines were left to “fight out” for the control of the land. There were minimal attempts at restriction as “no government could have effectively policed the frontier” (s10), though there was the occasional punishment as seen in the Myall Creek Massacre 1838 where the pastoralists were hanged for the murder of 28 Aborigines. The impact of the frontier wars for Aboriginal people was devastating as it saw them become displaced from their land and murdered in the process. However, this sparked resistance from many which was “widespread and persistent” (Reynolds) which negatively impacted the

pastoralist invaders. A clear instance of this is in the 1840s Eumeralla Wars where the Gundijtmara people massacred over 3000 sheep across the conflict which was worth over \$1million in today's money. Their use of violence and aggression from both sides fueled reciprocal violence and made the frontier a place of fear with minimal political change caused as a reaction, with much of the violence being either "officially sanctioned" (s10) or ignored by colonial authorities.

This response could have been improved with a statement that linked the violence to political change; for example 'As a consequence of frontier conflict, pastoralists took control of the land and European systems of laws prevailed, and large landowners became a powerful political force as the colonies pushed for self-government between 1823 and 1860'.

Question 3c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	4	7	19	24	17	16	14	3.5

This question required students to explain one political and one economic change in the rights of women between 1894 and 1998, using Source 11, which was a letter to the editor of the *Northern Argus* in 1894. The source provided a useful starting point for an analysis of change, as it criticised the idea of women's suffrage and expressed the attitude that the place of women 'is at home'. This is noteworthy, as what distinguished high-scoring responses was the ability to identify what had actually changed, as opposed to simply describing what happened or providing information about the past. High-scoring responses were able to identify what context or attitude existed previously and then explain in what way that changed within the assigned time period. There was a broad range of political changes that students referred to, but most commonly used were the achievement of the franchise for white women in South Australia in 1894 or federally in 1902. Similarly, there was a broad range of changes to economic rights, including reference to the *Maternity Allowance Act 1912*. As this question did not require an evaluation across time, it was acceptable for both changes identified to have taken place within a limited time frame. More commonly, however, responses referred to judicial decision and legislation passed in the second half of the 20th century that enshrined equal pay for equal work, provided single mothers' benefits or made it illegal to discriminate against or harass based on gender or marital status.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response that established the existing attitudes or conditions faced by women and identified in what ways these attitudes or conditions changed, providing reasons for the change by referencing the work of the suffrage leagues or protests of the women's liberation movement:

The fundamental change to the political status of women was their enfranchisement in 1902. While the dominant discourse in the nineteenth century dictated that women should not 'meddle with political matters' (source 11), the suffragists pushed for increased political agency, establishing suffrage leagues through the colonies. As a result of their campaigning, women would be enfranchised nationally with the 1902 Commonwealth Franchise Act. Additionally, in the post-war era, women were no longer saddled by the constraints of the 'home' with increased entrance into tertiary education, along with the demands and protests of the burgeoning women's liberation movement, women entered the workforce in increasing numbers. Of the 900,000 jobs created between 1983 – 93, 2 out of every 3 went to women, reflecting a newfound economic independence.

Question 3d.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	7	18	75	1.7

Students were asked to outline one perspective held by the protesters after the dismissal of the Whitlam Government in 1975. There were two posters among the crowd that provided a basis for students' responses.

Most students outlined the protesters' concern that a democratically elected Prime Minister had been dismissed by the Governor General and the challenge this posed for Australia's democracy, while others described the anger at Malcolm Fraser for his role in participating in the removal of Gough Whitlam.

Question 3e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	11	6	7	7	9	12	15	13	13	5	1	4.8

This question required students to evaluate the extent to which protest was successful in challenging the exercise of power and governance in the period from 1850 to 1998. This was a very broad question. The highest-scoring responses provided an organised response, often focusing on different groups such as the workers' movement, campaigns for women's rights, Aboriginal campaigns for civil or land rights, or campaigns for equality for LGBTQIA+ people. Strikes such as the Maritime, Miners' and Shearers' strikes of the 1890s were often evaluated as an example of unsuccessful protests (in the short term), while marches such as the Reclaim the Night marches and gay Mardi Gras were often also described. Aboriginal protests such as the Yirrkala bark petition, Freedom Rides or the Wave Hill walk-off were also used as examples of protests with varying degrees of success. Many students also described the Eureka Stockade in 1854 and the political changes that occurred in Victoria following the rebellion, such as universal manhood suffrage, vote by secret ballot and, later, payment of members. The highest-scoring responses also provided a breadth of knowledge across different groups and across time.

The following is an example of a contention being established in the first two sentences:

During the period spanning 1850 to 1998, protest was successful in challenging Australian power dynamics, especially in the labour and political climates. However, this success would be largely limited to white males, as females and Indigenous Australians were often confined in their ability to achieve change.

This response subsequently analysed the Eureka Stockade and strikes of the 1890s and the subsequent growth of the Labor Party, before comparing this to the limited gains achieved by the women's liberation movement and campaigns for Aboriginal civil and land rights.

Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	1	10	90	1.9

Students were required to identify two roles available for women throughout World War I in Source 13. The majority of students correctly identified that women could work within the Red Cross as VADs either in a full- or part-time capacity carrying out a range of domestic or nursing duties in hospitals or continue their main role as wives and mothers.

Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	5	9	28	28	18	13	2.9

Students were asked to use Source 14, Prime Minister John Curtin's words to the nation in a newspaper announcement in February 1942, and their own knowledge to explain the responses required of people on the home front during the war against Japan between 1942 and 1945. There were many responses that demonstrated ability in using the source provided and supplementing that evidence with own knowledge.

High-scoring responses provided the explanation required by the question, while mid-range responses often resorted to a summary of the source with little reference to the ‘own knowledge’ requirement.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response that uses the source and other knowledge to achieve full marks.

With the Pacific War raging, as the omnipotent power of Japanese forces incessantly demanded large contribution of allied nations men and capital, Prime Minister John Curtin recognised the “enemy thunders at our gates” as he expressed the threat in that “there is no time: the danger is too great”. With this need for greater production on the homefront as the Bulletin recognised, “the enemy is no longer on the doormat of Australia, it (Japan) is reaching for the door-knocker”, the Australian government introduced the 1942 Manpower Directorate which “impacted the individual liberties and freedom of man”. This Act saw compulsory industrial work, which along with the pervasive ration of short supply goods led to the highly restricted lives on the Australian homefront. Similarly, women under the 1942 Women Employment Board, saw them step into the ammunition industry and more directly work to support the desperation of the Pacific War.

Question 4c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	6	18	76	1.7

Students were asked to outline one idea from Source 15 about regional security that influenced Australia’s involvement in post–World War II conflicts. The majority of students successfully identified that the main idea in the Liberal Party 1966 election poster was the Domino Theory and fear of communist aggression gradually encroaching south towards Australia, and the perception that the Liberal Party would ‘draw the line against Communist aggression’.

Question 4d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	4	8	17	29	22	13	7	3.2

Question 4d. asked students to use Source 16 and their own knowledge to explain the change in perspective about Australian involvement in the Vietnam War. Many students approached the response chronologically; other students effectively analysed Source 16 and then reflected on how this attitude/perspective about involvement changed. However, many responses focused more on attitudes towards conscription rather than participation in the conflict more broadly.

The following is an example of a mid-range response that fulfilled the demands of the question and responded chronologically, despite the erroneous use of the songs ‘I was only 19’ and ‘Khe Sanh’, which were both released following the conclusion of the Vietnam War:

Initially, Australia’s involvement in Vietnam was widely supported. To ensure our alliance with the US, under ANZUS (1951) and SEATO (1954), Australia committed itself to combat Eisenhower’s “domino Theory”.

This was an important sentence, as it helps to establish the degree to which perspectives about Australian involvement in the conflict has shifted.

However, the “TV War” as it became known, resulted in a change of public opinion. “It was the novelty of seeing the war, that lead many to oppose it”. (Paul Ham) Organisations against conscription such as the SOS and the National Service Act of 1951 saw a “different form of protest” (Caulfield) of “mothers of sonswho feel that the conscription of under-age boys for overseas service is morally wrong” (Source

16). *The influence of the SOS, Moratorium movements and media, and prominent songs of the time: “I was only 19” and “Khe Sahn” helped to turn public opinion against a war “which has been described as a bottomless pit of violence and horror.” (Source 16) What was initially a fight to “give the reds a thrashing” (Menzies) and protect Australia from a “doctrine void of spiritual content” (Menzies) turned to a humanitarian crisis for all Australians and Vietnamese.*

Question 4e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	8	5	9	11	16	15	14	11	7	4	1	4.6

This question asked students to evaluate the extent to which compulsory service caused tension in Australian society between 1914 and 1975. Higher-scoring responses began with a topic sentence outlining a contention that responded to the question and referred in depth to a range of primary and secondary sources in fulfilling the requirements of the question. More importantly, they attempted to evaluate the extent to which compulsory service caused tension in Australian society. Many students referred to World War I and specifically Billy Hughes and the 1916 and 1917 referendums. The most effective evaluations were those that grappled effectively with the ‘tension’ caused by the referendums. They referred to the political, sectarian and social divisions between groups and referred to the 1916 results (49% for, 51% against) and the 1917 result (46% for, 54% against) to demonstrate the effect on society and politics that resulted in Billy Hughes’s decision to split from the Labor Party and form a new political party. Some students contrasted this tension regarding compulsory service in World War I to the situation in World War II, when tensions were not as apparent. Conscription was largely accepted by Australian society when Curtin, in response to the looming threat of Japan, passed the *Defence (Citizens Military Forces) Act 1943*, which extended the boundaries where the CMF could be sent to include the South-Western Pacific Zone. Particularly sophisticated answers distinguished between attitudes towards compulsory military training domestically as opposed to conscripted soldiers being sent abroad.

Most students also referred to the tensions created by compulsory service during the Vietnam War, acknowledging that when the *National Service Act 1964* was introduced there was little opposition. However, as the war continued opposition grew and groups were formed in protest. Higher-scoring responses referred to the YCAC, the Save our Sons (SOS), and the impacts of the Moratoriums that demonstrated unity and tension against conscription. Responses that did not score well did not refer to or evaluate a wide range of evidence in their analysis of the extent to which compulsory service caused tension between 1914 and 1975, concentrating only on one major war.

Section B

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Average
%	5	1	3	5	4	5	6	5	8	6	5	8	4	6	7	6	5	4	4	2	2	10.0

The assessment criteria and expected qualities for Section B were published on the VCAA website in June 2022. High-scoring responses were distinguished by their use of precise and detailed knowledge, which was relevant to both the specific question and the appropriate study design and focused on the designated time frame. These responses also engaged with the key terms of the question and provided a balanced and evaluative response to the prompt. Furthermore, the highest-scoring responses used, and appropriately attributed, a diverse range of relevant evidence, which could include, but is not limited to, quoting or paraphrasing historians or primary sources from the past, citing legislation, providing examples or referencing statistical data.

In general, essays were well-structured, with students establishing a clear contention in their introduction and using topic sentences to make assertions about the past, rather than providing information.

Question 1

Question 1 required students to evaluate whether Australians, since 1950, have firmly believed that the benefits of the mining industry to Australia far outweigh the environmental impacts. Fewer than five per cent of students attempted a response to this essay question. High-scoring responses challenged the prompt while acknowledging support for mining and its importance to the Australian economy, drawing on Geoffrey Blainey and primary-source perspectives such as Hugh Morgan as a forceful advocate for mining's benefits, as well government support across the period. By contrast, many responses described the growing environmental movement, and protests against mining from Aboriginal groups, such as the Yirrkala Bark Petition (1963) and the subsequent Gove land rights case; later examples such as Jabiluka were often mentioned. The contentious nature of uranium mining, including failed protests to stop the Ranger Mine and Olympic Dam, as well as successful ones, such as Bob Hawke's intervention to stop Coronation Hill in 1991 and the Jabiluka protests, were frequently used. More recent debates over coal mining and climate change were also mentioned, including the Howard government's failure to ratify the Kyoto Protocol and the Australian Coal Council's successful 'Cut Emissions, Not Jobs' campaign against the Rudd government's proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme. However, many students also described the gold rushes of the 1850s as a period when the benefits of mining outweighed the environmental impact, although this example was well outside the prescribed time frame.

Below is an example of a mid-range response that develops a coherent and conventional line of argument in the introduction, followed by a paragraph that provides some limited explanation and evidence of opposition to mining in Australia.

From 1950, Australians began to believe that the benefits of the mining industry do not outweigh the environmental impacts. Much of Australia's economic wealth was built off mining, historian Geoffrey Blainey notes "no other country in the world has been so quickly transformed by metals". But after 1950, social, political and cultural ideas about mining began to shift, instead identifying the environmental damage caused by mining often outweighs the benefits.

Since 1950, Australia has undergone a social shift that favours environmental conservation over the benefits of mining. Instead of viewing mining as an act that must occur, it is instead criticized for its environmental harm. Campaigns to stop large mines from being built have become more popular, reflecting this shift. The Jabiluka campaign of 1998 is one such example which gained national attention, in turn, informing other Australians of the negatives of mining. Another example is the Coronation Hill protest. Both of these campaigns reflect the social shift favouring environmental conservation over the benefits of mining.

Question 2

Students were required to analyse the degree to which Australian society was repeatedly divided by competing perspectives on the intake of refugees from the 1970s until 2008. Many students argued that while Australians may have supported the initial group of refugees, this attitude began to waver after 1976 as Vietnamese refugees were accepted into Australia. Attitudes hardened towards those who arrived by boat and those authorised refugees who were officially selected by government officials. Students referred to Bob Hawke's offer of asylum to Chinese students at the time of the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre, boat refugees from Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq from 1999, and the Tampa crisis of 2001. Reference to the Blainey controversy in 1984 and the decisions of the Howard government in their treatment of refugees seeking asylum and Pauline Hanson's maiden speech in 1996 were referred to in their analysis. High-scoring responses began with an introduction that clearly asserted their argument or contention, as demonstrated in the following example.

Historically, Australia has held widely competing beliefs regarding the intake of refugees between 1970's to 2008. The humanitarian crisis of the Vietnam war helped to soften Australian attitudes to multiculturalism and refugees, yet left Australia vulnerable to mass migration prompted by illegal immigration. Thus, to a certain extent, Australia has been repeatedly divided by immigration debates regarding the intake of refugees and the overall benefit to be made for Australian society.

This introduction established a relevant line of argument, and the topic sentences that followed presented other elements of the argument supported by a range of appropriate evidence in analysing the degree of division caused by the competing perspectives on the intake of refugees. High-scoring responses were characterised by reference to accurate detail and a recognition of the complexity of the competing perspectives. Most students structured their essays effectively; however responses that did not score well did not refer to a varied and accurate range of primary and secondary evidence to give their responses depth.

Question 3

Students were asked to evaluate whether Australia created, through legislation, a more equal and fairer society between 1957 and 1998. There were different ways in which this question could be approached. One approach was to evaluate change versus continuity achieved by legislation in terms of equality and fairness in Australian society. Many students were able to challenge the premise and identify inequalities that persisted, particularly for women, Aboriginal people and LGBTQIA+ people by the end of the specified time period. For this approach, it was important that students were able to analyse the impacts of legislation and evaluate the extent to which they created a more equal and fairer society, rather than simply listing relevant laws.

An alternative approach to this response was to compare and evaluate the differing causes of progress in terms of fairness and equality, and some students argued that change was achieved more so through protest and grassroots campaigns rather than by legislation, or by legislation alone.

The following is an example of a common line of argument in the introduction.

From 1957 to 1998, legislation was enacted that reflected Australia's aspirations as a social laboratory. As a result of key legislative reforms, women, Indigenous Australians and LGBTQIA+ people benefited. Nonetheless, the extent to which equality was achieved as a result of legislation remained limited.

The next two paragraphs provide detailed and relevant knowledge, but could have distinguished more clearly between judicial rulings and legislation to fully engage with the specific essay question. Nevertheless, this response makes a persuasive argument that is relevant throughout, and combines accurate and detailed knowledge of the topic with a wide range of relevant examples and quotes from historians and from the period as evidence.

The women's liberation movement achieved landmark legislative changes. In the realm of reproductive rights, women gained increased bodily agency with the 1969 Menhennitt ruling. While abortion remained officially illegal, this untested ruling permitted the performance of an abortion, if it was deemed necessary for the health of the mother. Consequently, abortion related complications reduced significantly throughout the 1970s as women were granted access to safe procedures. Additionally, the 1984 Sex Discrimination Act was pivotal in promoting equality in the workplace. It was promoted by ACT Senator Susan Ryan as a means of bringing women out of the 'employment ghetto'. The Act provided a means for women to seek redress when faced with discrimination at work, emphasizing their equal status as workers in society. Nonetheless, the legislation was limited by its focus on conciliation. It could not, for example, force an employer to reinstate a woman in her job. In spite of these limitations, this legislation, along with other reforms to the legal rights of women at work (such as the lifting of the marriage bar in public service in 1966) legitimized the employment of women. Thus, social and economic legislation enshrined gender equality in twentieth century Australia.

Indigenous Australians also benefited from legislation promoting inclusion and a recognition of their distinct rights as the original occupants of the land. The Racial Discrimination Act (1975) made it illegal to discriminate against people on the grounds of race in areas such as employment and the distribution of goods and services. This reflected an increase intolerance of bigotry and prejudice. Additionally, native title legislation was fundamental in recognizing Indigenous rights to the land. Following Mabo's successful claim to Mer Island, handed down in the 1992 Mabo Judgement, vacant crown land was made available to Indigenous Australians, so long as they could provide a continuing connection with the land. Described by Paul Keating as a 'practical building block of change', there was nonetheless an attempt to 'wind back' their gains under the Howard Government (Broome). The Native Title Amendment Act (1998) made it a much more complex process for Indigenous Australians to claim native title, a conservative reaction against Indigenous rights. Thus, while Indigenous people gained from legislation, full quality was not reached by 1998.

Question 4

Students were asked to analyse the extent to which Australia's armed forces after 1950 became more accommodating of people of different races, genders and sexualities. Higher-scoring responses fulfilled the demands of the question while addressing the key words 'accommodating' of 'different races, genders and sexualities'. The introductory paragraphs usually created a contention that although the defence force did become more accommodating towards people of different races, genders and sexualities, it was not an immediate reaction, occurring from 1950 to the 1990s.

The following extract from a high-scoring response establishes a clear contention that is followed by a thoughtful and analytical paragraph examining the gradual accommodation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into Australia's armed forces.

After 1950, Australian armed forces did become more accommodating of Indigenous people, women and LGBTQIA+ people. However, this change did not occur immediately.

Indigenous people had faced a history of rejection. Official Australian armed forces policy deeming them "neither necessary or desirable", only allowing them to enlist in World War I and II as voluntary enlistment began to fall. Despite this many indigenous people were attracted to the armed forces, Historian Michael Adcock asserting that they "contributed more to the war effort than any other Australian community." Their contribution to these wars beginning to change the perspectives of their fellow servicemen as Australia entered the 1950's. In the 1950-52 Korean War Indigenous serviceman Reg Saunders served as a Captain, accredited with "great bravery" by those who served with him. However, on the homefront Saunders who had served as an officer in WWII was denied Soldier Settlement, the ADF unwilling to accommodate for him. The 1960's saw great change for Indigenous Australians with the right to vote in 1962 and the 1967 Aboriginal referendum. This referendum enabled the 1975 Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act which would force the Australian Armed forces to stop racial discrimination and change their official behaviour to become more accommodating of Indigenous people. This can be seen through the Pilbara Security Regiment established in the 1980's that utilised "Indigenous knowledge of the land" in North Queensland. In 1992, saw the removal of the final discriminatory policy from the Australian Defence Act that prevented Indigenous people from National Service. This marked the change in attitude of Australia's Armed Forces towards those of other races, from exclusion to the official recognition by PM Paul Keating through back pay and medals of honour.

This paragraph was followed by reference to the gradual accommodation of LGBTQIA+ people in the armed forces.

In 1950, those of differing sexualities or "homosexuals" were banned from the Australian Armed Forces and had been in line with British military codes since the Boer War. Historian Geoff Peel asserts that those of differing sexualities "faced great violence" from their peers. This exclusion continued into the

1970's where investigations were conducted of those suspected of "homosexuality and had their homes surveilled".

The response goes on to demonstrate an understanding of the gradual change in the Armed Forces policy of acceptance of LGBTQIA+ people, followed by an in-depth analysis of the acceptance of women within the Armed Forces. Importantly, this response uses evidence and knowledge from across the broad time frame, 1950–1992, outlined in the study design. Responses that did not score well referred to only one example of accommodation that relied on broad knowledge of the topic or period in general, rather than reference to a range of sources as evidence to give depth to their response.