

# ABORIGINAL STUDIES

In 1996 607 students sat for the Higher School Certificate examination in Aboriginal Studies. This was approximately 41 fewer than in 1995.

Students showed good understanding of contemporary issues, though many still relied heavily on contact history as the basis of their answers in Sections II, III and IV. A pleasing increase in specific knowledge about particular regional studies was evident in the answers of candidates who coped better than in previous years with the demands of structured questions.

It is very important that students learn to analyse questions of the extended response type in order to answer all aspects of such questions.

## 2 UNIT

### Section I : Context

#### QUESTION 1

*A poster to accompany this question is attached to this paper.*

*USE THE POSTER AND ITS INFORMATION TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.*

- (a) *What is meant by the term 'dispossession'?*
- (b) *Who is dispossessed?*
- (c) *Identify TWO symbols of invasion on this poster.*
- (d) *What is the significance of the colours that the artist has chosen?*
- (e) *The artist chose to place two people in the poster. What is their significance?*
- (f) *What is the relationship between the images chosen by the artist and their significance to the poster's message?*
- (g) *'So we travel through halfway places in our own land'.  
What is your understanding of this statement and its significance to Aboriginal people?*

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This question was generally well answered, with most students showing sound knowledge of dispossession and the better students making the link to the themes of the course. The interpretations of the poster were many and varied, with some being very imaginative. The depth of understanding shown by a number of students was most impressive and very encouraging.

The majority focussed on the poster, although some still relied on general knowledge without referring to the poster to support their statements.

Students must remember that the marks awarded are an indication of the relative amount of information required in the response. Writing pages of detail in return for 2 marks is a waste of time which could be more effectively used in other sections of the paper.

- (a) This question required a full understanding of the term *dispossession*. Good students were able to reproduce the definition given in the Syllabus or to demonstrate a sound knowledge of the concept of dispossession, including the loss of land, culture and identity. Some limited their answers to general explanations with no reference to the poster.
- (b) This was a very straightforward question which could have been answered simply by stating that Aboriginal people were dispossessed. The better students included Torres Strait Islander people or referred to specific tribes, particularly those mentioned on the map, e.g. Kamilaroi or Birpai.
- (c) This question asked students to *identify* two symbols of invasion on the poster. There were some very impressive answers which demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the topic and a deep understanding of the poster. Too many students wrote lengthy essays which provided excellent information, much of which was not required. The majority, however, identified the settlement, clothes, the map, furniture, buildings, words or the humpy.
- (d) In this question many students limited their answers to the *meaning* of the colours of the Aboriginal flag without linking their responses to the poster, or talked about the colours in general terms without associating them with Aboriginal people. There were, however, many impressive answers which displayed a thorough knowledge of the topic and, in these, students skilfully related the colours to the images shown on the poster. Some of the ideas included:

The use of the Aboriginal colours for two Aboriginal people to link them to each other and the mission.

The colour for the heading is the same as the colour of the faces of the two people, linking them to dispossession.

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The European settlement has no colour since the Aboriginal people and their culture have been removed.

The Rainbow Serpent has no colour because it represents the Aboriginal people who have lost their culture. The use of the brown and white indicates the co-habitation of the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people living together.

Stereotypical interpretations of Aboriginal art were disappointing in this part and indicated that those submitting them had made no effort to analyse the poster, preferring to regurgitate prepared answers on the topic.

- (e) Most students were able to identify the two people in the poster as being either male or female. Good students interpreted the two people as representing either all Aboriginal people or the past and the future. They discussed the effects of dispossession such as loss of identity, culture and land, and some even noted the placements of the people on the poster, i.e. the gap between the two which represents the break up of families and communities. The serpent/snake was also recognised as a symbol of Aboriginal culture; as such it passes through the picture of the old Aboriginal person but not that of the young child (representing the stolen generation which has lost its culture). It was also noted that the separation of people from their land and culture is shown by their being placed in boxes.
- (f) In general, responses to this question were of a high standard. Students were required to understand both images and their significance to the poster's message, viz 'dispossession'. The better students provided inspiring answers with meaningful interpretations of the poster. In answering candidates needed to recognise the linkages between the images and their positioning on the poster. Some of the responses included:
- the snake relating to the Dreaming and the creation of rivers or breaking up of the land;
- the natural environment behind the old person and the European environment behind the young child, the picture of European settlement being superimposed on the map with Aboriginal names as a symbol of invasion.
- (g) This was a challenging question and the responses were vastly different in their interpretations. Some were linked to the rest of the quotation on the poster whilst others linked their comments to the images on the poster. The better students interpreted *halfway places* from either a cultural or a spiritual perspective, mentioning links to land and ancestors (cyclical time), i.e. Mother Earth. Others concentrated on the phrase *own*

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*land* and focussed their answers on the physical movement of people from place to place, and the concept of not belonging anywhere, having been placed on missions such as the one on the poster. Students were required to demonstrate both an understanding of the statement and an ability to identify its significance in relation to the poster, but many failed to fulfil either one or both of these requirements, submitting, instead, emotive statements about dispossession and/or Aboriginal children=s being separated from their parents.

### Above average responses

In these answers students showed a clear understanding of the question. Their knowledge of the course content was evident in their ability to analyse, interpret and describe the elements of the poster. They were able to provide factual yet sophisticated responses based on both their knowledge and the stimulus material.

### Average responses

In this category most candidates showed a satisfactory grasp of the concepts and themes involved. Many answers, however, were superficial or incomplete, with students failing to provide responses that were commensurate with the marks allocated to the specific part of the question.

### Below average responses

Many candidates in this category failed to attempt all parts of the question. It is important for students to read and dissect the whole question and then to plan their answers before starting to write. Their responses generally had little substance, comprising limited references to the stimulus material and showing little understanding or knowledge of *dispossession*.

## **Section II : Aspects - Regional Studies**

With reference to Regional Studies, it is important that students make a concerted attempt to refer to their designated region throughout their answer and not simply mention it in passing. The majority of students showed good levels of preparation for the examination. Responses were generally detailed, showing that students had a good understanding of the content and issues within the Regional Studies Section of the Syllabus. It was pleasing to see that the majority referred to specific examples rather than making vague generalisations.

It would appear that a number of students did not correctly analyse or interpret the question, as a result, parts of it were left unanswered. It is important that students read all parts of the

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question carefully. In part (a) of the questions it was necessary only to list information. Too much time was wasted by students who gave lengthy explanations which were unnecessary.

Responses were set out clearly and unlabelled answers were rare. The labelling of responses helped determine marks for those whose answers were unclear or lacked relevancy.

### QUESTION 2 : Cultural Expression

- (a) *List FOUR ways in which Aboriginal people contribute to Aboriginal cultural expression.*
- (b) *Describe TWO examples of Aboriginal cultural expression. How has each survived European influence?*
- (c) *Explain how the media (including Aboriginal media) have played a role in shaping both positive and negative images of Aboriginal people. In your answer, name and refer to a specific region.*

#### Above average responses

Students in this range understood the question well and were able to demonstrate a sound understanding of the topic.

- (a) Answers here were very good.
- (b) In responses within this range, candidates described two examples of cultural expression in traditional Aboriginal society and then noted the change that had taken place as a result of European influence. The best answers named specific examples and addressed the issue of how each has survived European influence, for example, by adapting to modern technology such as video, photography, etc.
- (c) In this part students were able to link each point that was made to an example in a specific region. They defined the region and identified the media as being print or electronic, as well as the cultural media of art, dance, music, etc. A balance was given between positive and negative images and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal media. Using specific examples they showed clearly how attitudes and opinions within any society could be shaped or changed through the media.

#### Average responses

These responses were often expressed in general terms and did not focus on specific examples.

In part (b) most students in this range saw the word *describe* and went off on a tangent, failing to interpret the question accurately. They could give two examples and say that they had survived, but were unable to express clearly *how* they had survived European influence, so that their answers could not be given more than half marks.

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In part (c) the students provided a generalised response to the whole of the question or did not address all parts. Such responses mentioned *the media* in general terms, with the majority failing to mention Aboriginal media specifically. These responses equated positive images with Aboriginal media and negative images with non-Aboriginal media and, often, did not provide a balance between the two.

### Below average responses

Responses within this range generally missed the point of the question.

Part (b) was not well answered and the poorer responses did not address the whole question. The word *survive* seemed to confuse many students, a number of whom sometimes reverted to contact history, explaining how cultural aspects were *lost* rather than how they *survived*.

Part (c) produced very few outstanding scripts. Here answers were generalised, based on the words *media* and *images* and then producing unrelated excerpts of various current affairs programs and print media which focussed mainly upon crime, alcohol abuse ("drunks") and sporting personalities and flags, without mentioning any cultural expression/media link. Many failed to give a balanced view (relying too often on negative images) and were unable to express *how* the media had shaped images of Aboriginal people.

### **QUESTION 3 : Economic Systems**

(a) List *FOUR* economic practices that Aboriginal communities used to manage their environment before invasion.

(b) Describe *TWO* ways in which Aboriginal people have gained economic independence through Aboriginal enterprises.

(c) Explain the impact of invasion on economic practices in an Aboriginal community. In your answer, name and refer to a specific region.

This question was attempted by very few candidates.

- (a) On the whole this part was very well answered, with the majority of students receiving full marks because they showed a good understanding of economic practices used by Aboriginal communities to manage their environment before invasion.
- (b) This part was poorly answered since most students were unable to give two examples, many giving only one vague, general answer.
- (c) If part (a) were well answered, then a good response was submitted for part (c). The key was an understanding of *economic practices*; these were often well described, while the impact of invasion was generally well covered.

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There were a few poor scripts and those that were tended to give only an historical account. The naming and particularly the linking or referring to the region was what really separated the answers.

### QUESTION 4 : Education

- (a) *List FOUR educational programs that have improved access to education for Aboriginal people.*
- (b) *Describe TWO ways traditional Aboriginal learning techniques differ from European learning techniques.*
- (c) *Explain why it is important to involve the local Aboriginal community in the education of students about Aboriginal history and culture. In your answer, name and refer to a specific region.*

#### Above average responses

Students in this range were well informed and possessed a solid understanding of all parts of the question. Their responses were detailed and clearly structured, demonstrating the candidates' knowledge.

- (a) In this part there was some confusion over educational programs, although students at this level were able to differentiate and list programs, **not** organisations.
- (b) Here excellent responses provided a sound explanation of two traditional Aboriginal learning techniques and clearly demonstrated how they differed from European techniques.
- (c) The best responses in this part answered all aspects of the question, giving a good balance between history and culture. They gave specific regional examples and an integrated account of how the named community was involved in historical and cultural aspects of education; the education of all students, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, was also assessed.

#### Average responses

On the whole, these responses were very generalised in both focus and content, providing examples that were not specific.

- (b) Here responses fell into the trap of describing two traditional Aboriginal learning techniques and two European learning techniques. They failed to address the most crucial part of the question which was to explain *how* they differed. Almost all candidates within this range and below assumed that European education occurs only in the classroom and involves little other than reading and writing.

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- (c) Here the average student provided a fairly clear explanation but failed to deal with all parts of the question. Many students within this range talked about the importance of education for Aboriginal students but did not mention the importance of their own history and culture. These responses failed to give specific examples of a regional nature or to link the examples that they had provided to the importance of the involvement. Most responses focussed on cultural aspects, ignoring the importance of historical aspects.

### Below average responses

The majority of students in this range completely misunderstood the question and their responses were brief and lacked relevant information.

- (a) This part was generally answered poorly, with students referring to organisations and methods of improving skills but not programs.
- (b) Little variety was shown in the responses to this part in which students were unable to describe TWO techniques clearly. These responses tended to be very superficial and failed to provide a good comparison.
- (c) Responses here lacked regional knowledge, since students failed to refer to a specific region and give appropriate examples. Thus, they generalised about visiting guest speakers and failed to highlight *why* it is important that they should be involved.

### **QUESTION 5 : Law and Politics**

- (a) *List FOUR ways in which Aboriginal communities use traditional customs.*
- (b) *Describe TWO ways in which Aboriginal people have established their own political and legal structures.*
- (c) *To what extent have Aboriginal people achieved legal and political equality? In your answer, name and refer to a specific region.*

### General

Only a small number of candidates attempted this question which a number failed to address. It was badly answered on the whole, since many students obviously did not understand basic concepts.

Students had obviously noted the advice to use mind-maps, lists, diagrams and short answers. Evidence of stereo-typing, however, was still present. A close analysis of the question was required showing that the full implications were understood. Too often long, detailed answers were written on questions which had not been asked.

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Students are again reminded to note the mark allocation, particularly in (b) where often very detailed answers were given for only 6 marks. This may have disadvantaged some later in regard to time..

- (a) Candidates tended to ignore the use of the present tense, and often appeared to have only a vague idea of the meaning of *custom*.
- (b) The question could have been answered from either a contemporary or a traditional viewpoint. There were some very good answers on the Aboriginal Legal Service, but a number of students could not go beyond that. *Have established their own political and legal structures* were key words.
- (c) As with (b), students had difficulty with the terms *legal and political*, often interpreting them to mean *social* or *economic*.

### Above average responses

These answers reflected a sophisticated understanding of law and politics. Here candidates were able to write within the time frame and had a detailed knowledge of organisations. They possessed a sense of development of events over time, with reference to a specific region and discussed the extent to which legal and political equality had been achieved.

### Average responses

These answers were based on some knowledge but tended to be written in generalised terms. Whilst having a detailed knowledge of their region, students would dismiss the *words to what extent* in a few sentences, without making the question the basis for their answers.

### Below average responses

In these answers candidates showed little knowledge and little understanding. They did not address the question and, sometimes, their responses consisted of a lot of irrelevant material.

## **QUESTION 6 : Land Rights**

- (a) List *FOUR* events in the Land Rights struggle.
- (b) Describe *TWO* ways in which Aboriginal people relate to the land.
- (c) Discuss the long-term benefits that 'Land Rights' claims provide to Aboriginal communities. In your answer, name and refer to a specific region.

A large number of candidates answered this question, the majority showing a sound knowledge of their local region, and the main issues and events.

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- (a) Responses varied. Many responses were vague and unspecific so that it was difficult to decide to which events they were referring, e.g. Mabo, Terra Nullius. Although a number of students had a clear idea of events, many seemed to have no overview of Land Rights as part of this country's history.
- (b) Generally students answered this well and were able to state and describe well two ways in which Aboriginal people relate to the land.
- (c) This question was, on the whole, well answered, with many students showing a detailed knowledge of their region.

### Above average responses

- (a) These answers listed four events in the Land Rights struggle and gave the correct dates.
- (b) Here they gave two distinct ways in which Aboriginal people relate to the land, describing them well.
- (c) In this section students discussed the long-term benefits of Land Rights claims provided to Aboriginal communities in a specific region. More thoughtful students questioned the use of the word *benefits*.

### Average responses

In these candidates named two or three events, usually with the correct dates. Although most could name two ways in which Aboriginal people related to the land, others could really describe only one, or named two ways, with a repetitive description which failed to differentiate between the two named ways.

### Below average responses

Here candidates named only one or two events, or referred briefly to such an obscure event that a mark could not be given. In these responses ways of relating to land were only named or inadequately described. Students in this category failed to name or refer to their region. Unfortunately, a number of those who gave a superb account of Land Rights in their region did not address the question asked.

## **QUESTION 7 : Health and Medicine**

- (a) *List FOUR reasons for the high Aboriginal mortality rate.*
- (b) *Describe TWO ways in which invasion changed the dietary patterns of Aboriginal people.*

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- (c) *Describe contemporary health-education programs and practices that have been introduced by Aboriginal communities. In your answer, name and refer to a specific region.*

This was a popular question which students handled well, as they showed how communities and schools can work closely together.

- (a) This question was well answered, though merely listing four diseases was not sufficient.
- (b) This also was well answered, with most students describing clearly the dramatic change in dietary patterns that were brought by invasion.
- (c) Here problems arose in interpreting the question. While the majority of students had a detailed knowledge of health-education programs and practices in their region, they did not note the key words *health-education and practices* and so limited their answers.

### Above average responses

These clearly listed four reasons for the high Aboriginal mortality rate. They showed how and why the pre-invasion diet was healthy, how the diet which was introduced changed the dietary patterns of Aborigines, and discussed health-education programs and practices, naming and detailing references to a specific region.

### Average responses

These answers could give two or three reasons, some of which were vague or repetitive. Generally, in such answers candidates wrote, often at length, of only one way in which diet was changed.

- (c) Here many students did not limit themselves to health-education programs and practices, or implied, rather than described, a health-education practice.

### Below average responses

In these responses candidates could list only one or two reasons for the high Aboriginal mortality rate.

- (b) In this part the changes were either briefly stated or an irrelevant answer was given.
- (c) Students in this category wrote vague and generalised answers to this part without referring specifically to health-education programs and practices that have been introduced to a region.

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### Section III : Aspects - Comparative Studies

#### QUESTION 8

*'Land' and 'Identity' are central themes to this course. Compare the experiences of the Indigenous people in ONE of your Australian regional studies with your international regional study in relation to how they deal with issues of Land and Identity.*

This was the most popular of the two questions in this section.

Some candidates were confused and wrote about two Aboriginal communities rather than the indigenous people in *one* Aboriginal community and in an international community. Moreover, the question tended to elicit responses which relied on *contact history*. The contemporary focus was missing in a number of responses or, if it were attempted, the answer became generic even though two communities were identified; that is, the narrative did not refer specifically to the communities named.

It was pleasing to see the increase in the number of Aboriginal and overseas communities studied, the most popular being the Maoris of New Zealand. This was handled on various levels; from those in which candidates identified a particular region or community, along with its history and political/economic/social/cultural characteristics, to those that dealt with the question in a very stereotyped manner.

In above average responses candidates discussed both Land and Identity and related themes to specific regional or community studies. They outlined the experiences of each region or community both in relation to the themes and by way of specific examples. These responses were contemporaneous in nature, were clearly expressed, and made direct comparisons between regions or communities.

In average responses candidates discussed both Land and Identity, relating themes to specific or general regional or community studies, e.g. the Eora of Redfern and the Maoris of New Zealand. There was, however, an imbalance between comparisons, with discussions of overseas regions lacking the same detail and specific examples as the Australian study. Here candidates discussed Land and Identity without relating each to the ways in which they deal with issues of Land and Identity. These responses were mostly *contact history*, ignoring the contemporary setting, or dealing with the contemporary setting in very general terms.

In below average responses candidates discussed Land and Identity only superficially. They focussed on historical experiences and, as a result, such responses lacked a contemporary treatment. Each region or community was referred to generically, e.g. *the Aboriginals* and *the American Indians*. Comparative elements and specific community examples were lacking in these responses, which tended to suffer from brevity.

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### QUESTION 9

With reference to both your Australian regional study and your international study, answer parts (a), (b) and (c).

- (a) List *FOUR* social or political issues which are common to your Indigenous communities.
- (b) Explain how the *TWO* communities you have studied addressed one of these issues.
- (c) Discuss how political or social changes moved the Indigenous communities studied towards equality.

This was a question that asked for three distinct components; a clear distinction between sections (b) and (c) was missing, however. Further, some candidates still do not correctly interpret the verb *list*. The majority provided paragraph descriptions and, in one case, a response for part (a) was three pages long.

Section (b) required comparative analysis, whilst Section (c) did not.

This question, which was not as popular as the previous question, was attempted in a more systematic and detailed manner than Question 8. Candidates handled parts (a) and (b) fairly well, while part (c) contained internal paradoxes and some confusion for the candidates, since it required more content recall and conceptual understanding because of the unstructured nature of the question.

#### Above average responses

- (a) Here candidates were able to list four social or political issues and to discuss two communities in detail.
- (b) In this part candidates gave a balanced account of one issue, using detailed and specific information.
- (c) In their answers to this section candidates showed an understanding of the concept of *equality* and, by using specific community/regional examples, showed change and development over a period of time. These responses treated the two communities equally.

#### Average responses

In average responses candidates listed three or four social or political issues, nevertheless they showed an imbalance between the social or political issues affecting both indigenous communities. Lacking detailed and specific examples from one or both communities, many responses failed to make an effective comparison. Usually they were contact history in orientation and content, and did not discuss the *movement* towards *equality*.

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### Below average responses

In below average responses candidates failed to list four social or political changes. Their responses were narratives that did not discuss the two communities equally, nor give detailed or specific community examples. They were short and showed little understanding regarding the relationship between *experiences* and *equality*. Communities or regions were referred to in a stereotyped or inaccurate manner

### Range of communities used in responses

#### **Aboriginal**

Wiradjuri (Cowra region);	Eora (Redfern, NSW);
Dharug;	Ngarrindjeri (SA);
Worimi (Mid-North Coast, NSW);	Awabakal (Hunter region);
Wreck Bay (NSW);	Kamilaroi (Gamilaroi) (NSW);
Jawayn (WA);	Dhahghti (Kempsey, NSW);
Birpai (NSW);	Bundjalung (NSW);
Bourke (NSW);	Groote Eylandt (Qld);
Tharawal (NSW);	Cherbourg (WA);
Toomelah;	Minjangbal (Tweed NSW);
Hermansburg;	Gandagurra;
Cadigal (La Perouse);	Ngamba;
Murdi Paaki (Bourke, NSW);	Lardu (Mornington Island);
Gummerooogunga (Vic);	Torres Strait;
Murray Island (TSI);	Anangu;
Wanaruah (Maitland, NSW);	Yuin (Montague Island);
Kimberley;	Ngiyampaa (Cobar).

#### **Overseas**

Maoris;	The Lardil (NZ);
Maoris of Auckland;	Inuit of Canada;
Dakota Sioux;	Tulalip (North America);
Great Plains Indians;	Whakan Tokea (NZ);
Ngapui (NZ);	Inuit - Whale Cove, Rankin (Canada);
Rarotonga (Cook Islands);	Mount Hagen (PNG);
Port Moresby (PNG);	Navajo (Northern USA);
Waikato Tainui (North Island, NZ);	Dugum Dani (West Irian);
Sioux;	Winea Atiawa;
American Indians;	Fiji;

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Matariki;  
Cherokee;  
Ngati Nav (NZ);  
Marobe (PNG);  
Oglala (Black Hills, USA).

Dene (Northern Canada);  
Cree (Hudson Bay, Canada);  
Igloodik (Northern Canada/Greenland);  
Mohawk (USA);

### Most popular

Australia:	Kamilaroi (Gamilaroi);	Wiradjuri
Overseas:	Maoris;	Sioux

## Section IV : Synthesis

The questions asked were about contemporary issues and were truly reflective of the Syllabus.

Although essay structure and planning were good, on the whole responses were disappointing since many candidates were unable to synthesise information. Many did not appear to understand the meaning of the instruction *discuss*. They generally failed to base their answers on authentic information and, consequently, their responses were too personal or generalised.

It is a source of concern that, after two years of Aboriginal Studies, too many candidates are still relying on stereotypes and clichés in presenting their opinions. Some were verging on being patronising and racist in expressing overstatements about *all* Aboriginal people and *all* white people.

### QUESTION 10

*'Reconciliation is difficult because it is about changing attitudes, and that is never an easy process. We are all attached to our attitudes, even when they do us little good.'*  
*Lois O'Donoghue, The Weekend Australian, August 1994*

*Discuss the issues that need to be addressed in Australian society so that the process of reconciliation can occur.*

In this section the majority of students answered this question..

#### Above average responses

Candidates in this range showed a mature understanding of the quotation and responded to it by focussing in their analysis on *changing attitudes*. Moreover, the majority broadened their analysis

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of the issues rather than merely stating the eight key issues as presented by the Council for Reconciliation. The key discriminator in the question was the number of candidates who included a *discussion* of means whereby reconciliation could be achieved, viz,

- through government policies/legislation, especially by means of a detailed discussion of the significance of Land Rights;
- the importance of education in all areas of Australian society - schools, government, business, media, etc, to redress the ignorance and misconceptions that are prevalent in all levels of society;
- by addressing disadvantage, especially in the areas of health, housing and employment issues;
- the role of the media in enhancing the positive perception of the Aboriginal community, i.e. culture, economic development, historical perspective.

Here candidates were clearly able to express the fact that the process of reconciliation is extremely complex and demanding and needs a multi-dimensional approach if it is to be achieved.

Essays were clearly structured, coherent and logical. They presented a sound conclusion that reflected both sensitivity and perception.

### Average responses

Candidates' responses in this range identified the issues but did not directly link them to the process of reconciliation. The points made in these responses largely tended to be generalised and were too personal. In some cases one issue tended to dominate or points were repeated, while there was an implicit rather than a direct reference to Australian society as a whole. Contact history was presented in detail but was not clearly linked to the process of reconciliation. Although very basic solutions were presented, long term solutions were not investigated.

### Below average responses

These answers showed no real understanding of the nature of the process of reconciliation. They provided a list of personalised comments that showed very little relevance to the question and possessed neither coherent expression nor a point of view.

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### QUESTION 11

*To what extent are the recommendations of the 'Deaths in Custody' Royal Commission essential to the maintenance of Aboriginal culture and society?*

This was the least popular question in this section.

#### Above average responses

Those candidates who addressed the question identified specific recommendations and linked their importance to the maintenance of Aboriginal culture and society, basing their arguments on specific examples and evaluating the extent to which their specific recommendations had been achieved.

#### Average responses

Most candidates fell into this range. They presented examples of 'Deaths in Custody' and then made generalised statements about how they were linked to culture and society, but included very little specific information about the actual recommendations.

#### Below average responses

In these responses candidates almost entirely ignored the question or misinterpreted it. The majority explained how Aboriginal people are jailed and then made emotive statements or generalisations about the police.

### QUESTION 12

*'The popular Press of Australia makes a joke of us by presenting silly and out-of-date drawings and jokes of Jacky or Binghi, which have educated city-dwellers and young Australians to look upon us as subhuman.'*

*PATTEN AND FERGUSON, n.d., 40*

*This quote was written in about 1940.*

*Discuss the way media representations of Aboriginal people have changed public attitudes to Aboriginal identity, culture and heritage.*

#### Above average responses

Responses in this range presented a historical perspective that reflected an understanding of identity, culture and heritage. They also presented more than one representation and included examples from a variety of media, as well as a discussion of how these representations changed public attitudes; they then drew conclusions about the change process.

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### Average responses

These answers tended to be couched in general terms and concentrated on one media form. Here candidates implicitly, rather than directly, linked information to identity, culture and heritage, and poorly explained the media representations or examples referred to. Candidates also tended to focus on one period of history, namely the contemporary, largely ignoring the concept of change.

### Below average responses

These answers were personal generalisations that ignored the question, told the story of a documentary that had been viewed, and made no attempt to link the various aspects of the question.