MCEETYA

National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship Years 6 & 10 Report

Ministerial Council on Education,
Employment, Training and Youth Affairs

Main cover image:

Seselja, Loui. “Sea of Hands protest on the lawns of Parliament House. 12 October 1997 “, nla.pic-an13914839-11, ‘National Library of Australia’

Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs

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Employment, Training and Youth Affairs**

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NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Civics and Citizenship Years 6 and 10 Report 2004

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Acknowledgements

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Listed below are those individuals who, representing their school sectors, participated in the Review Committee during the development and implementation of the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment. Their work made a valuable contribution to the success of the project.

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Foreword

The National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty–first Century, agreed to by Australia's education ministers in 1999, include an emphasis on educating students to understand their role in our nation's democracy. The Goals state that students, when they leave school, "should be active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia's system of government and civic life".

When Ministers endorsed the National Goals for Schooling they also set in train the work of measuring and reporting on progress in attaining the Goals. They identified eight areas of schooling for attention, among them civics and citizenship education.

Civics and citizenship education promotes the participation of students in Australia's democracy by equipping them with the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions of active and informed citizenship. It entails knowledge and understanding of Australia's democratic heritage and traditions, its political and legal institutions and the shared values of freedom, tolerance, respect, responsibility and inclusion.

The National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship assessment measures the civic knowledge and understanding and the citizenship participation skills and civic values of Year 6 and Year 10 students in schools across Australia. It reports on student achievement using proficiency levels on a common civics and citizenship assessment scale, and against an agreed standard of proficiency for each of Years 6 and 10. It also reports on achievement according to selected background characteristics of students – sex, parental occupation, language background, school location and Indigenous status.

This report is the second to be published as part of the National Assessment Program (NAP), which includes a cyclical three-yearly program of sample assessments of student outcomes in three critical learning areas. The first was the 2003 National Year 6 Science Report.

The national sample assessments are a product of the collaboration and dedication of people in all States and Territories and all sectors of Australian schooling. Thanks are due to all of the people and organisations involved in developing, trialling and administering the civics and citizenship assessment, and to the principals, teachers and students at government, Catholic and independent schools across Australia who took part in the trial assessment in 2003 and the first full assessment in October 2004.

Particular thanks go to members of the Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce and to its Benchmarking and Educational Measurement Unit (BEMU), the official bodies responsible for developing and administering the assessments on behalf of MCEETYA, and to the national committees of curriculum and other experts who provided advice and constructed test items and tasks.

A separate technical report on the processes underlying the results of the assessment, as well as further more detailed data, will be available to researchers and others on the MCEETYA website. As was the case with the science assessment, while part of the civics and citizenship test instrumentation will be kept confidential for re-use in the next assessment cycle, a range of items will be released for use by schools.

I commend this report to those with an interest in Civics & Citizenship education.

Ken Smith
Chair
Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce
September 2006

Executive Summary

In April 1999, the State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers for Education, meeting as the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) agreed to the Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century, which provides the framework for reporting on student achievement through MCEETYA's annual *National Report on Schooling in Australia*.

Goal 1.4 of the National Goals states that, when students leave school, they should:

> *... be active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia's system of government and civic life.*

Through its task forces, MCEETYA commissioned the construction of two Key Performance Measures (KPMs) for civics and citizenship education - KPM1, which focused on civics knowledge and understanding, and KPM2, which addressed citizenship participation skills and civic values. The Australian Council for Educational Research was contracted to conduct the inaugural triennial National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment of student performance in civics and citizenship.

National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment

The National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment was conducted in October 2004 with 10,712 Year 6 students from 318 schools and 9,536 Year 10 students from 249 schools. At both year levels, a sample of schools was selected with a probability proportional to size and then a sample of up to two classrooms

was selected at random from those schools. The sample design and procedures, the high response rates (more than 90 per cent) and the low levels of exclusions ensured that there was very little bias in the sample.

The assessment was representative of the elements identified in the assessment domain and the assessment units were made up of items linked to a common stimulus. Various item types were used, including dual-choice, multiple-choice, closed and constructed response items. Rotated forms of the test booklets ensured coverage of the domain.

Student Performance on the Civics and Citizenship Scale

The test items for both years were scaled together, using item response theory. This scaling provides a score on a common scale linking Year 6 and Year 10. The scale provides the measure of the achievement of each student and an indication of the difficulty of each item. Student achievement scores were transformed to a standard metric based on the Year 6 sample, with a mean of 400 and a standard deviation of 100. Results are reported either as scores on that scale (typically by the mean with the dispersion for each group of students) or as percentages of students achieving defined proficiency levels on that scale.

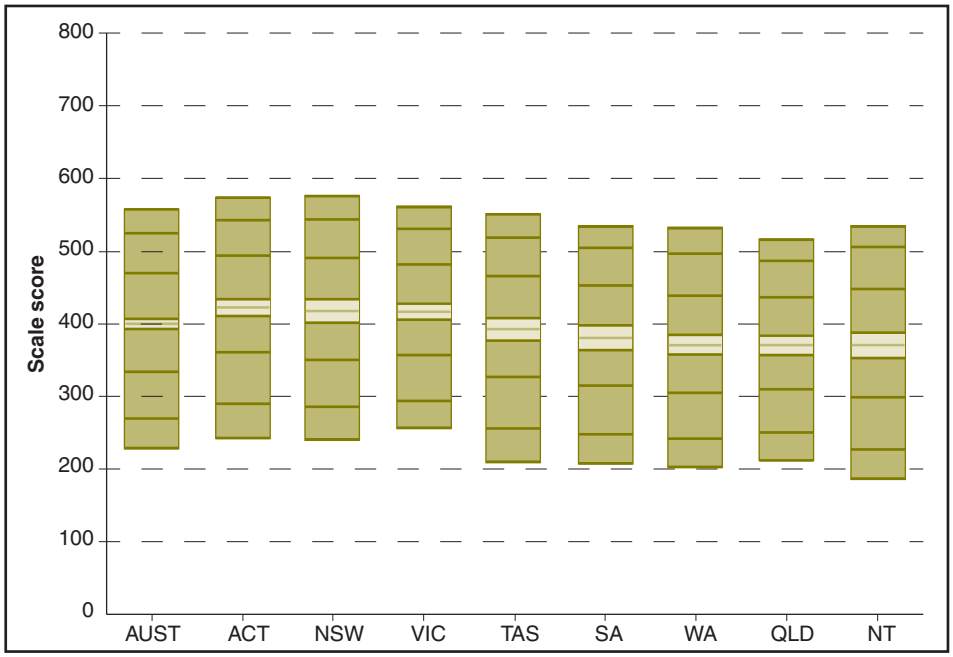
Figures ES 1 and ES 2 show the distribution of student performance by year level and by State and Territory. Data displayed below the figures show, for each State and Territory, the corresponding mean scores, with the associated 95 per cent confidence intervals, and the percentage of students achieving the proficient standard for that year level. In each figure, the sequence of presentation is by descending means with the Australian performance, followed by the States and Territories.

A comparison of Figures ES 1 and ES 2 shows that the mean difference of performance between Year 6 and Year 10 students was almost 100 scale points (the same as the standard deviation for Year 6). This difference is also reflected in the fact that 50 per cent of Year 6 students, compared with 80 per cent of Year 10 students, attained Proficiency Level 2.

Year 6 performance by State and Territory

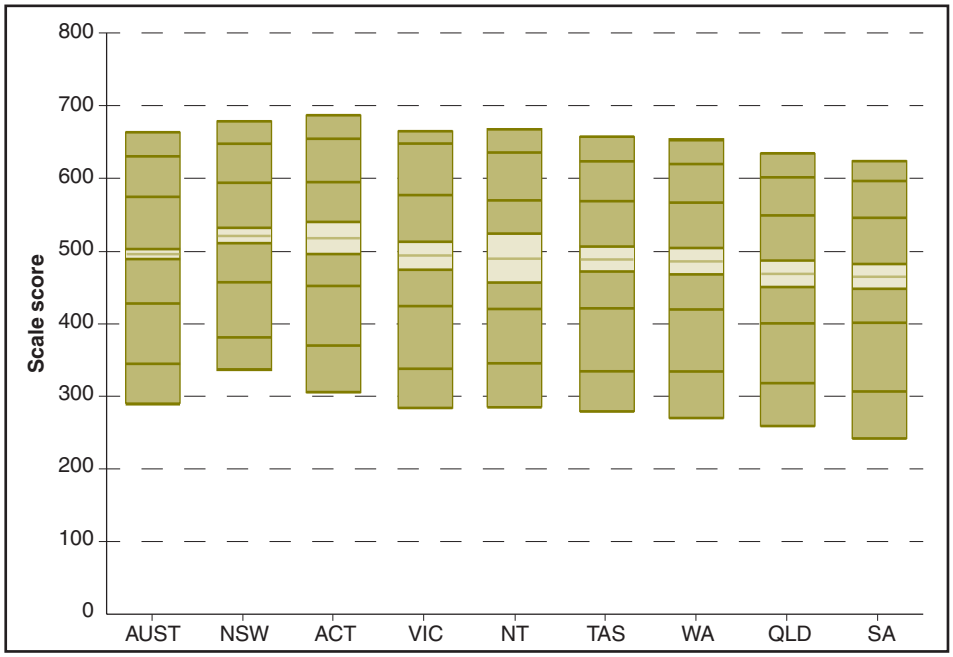
Figure ES 1 shows the distribution of Year 6 student performance by State and Territory, the Year 6 mean scores with the associated 95 per cent confidence intervals and the percentage of students achieving the Year 6 Proficient Standard (with the associated confidence intervals).

Figure ES 1: Distribution of Year 6 Student Performance by State and Territory



	Aust	ACT	NSW	VIC	TAS	SA	WA	QLD	NT
Mean	400	423	418	417	393	381	371	371	371
95% CI	(7)	(11)	(15)	(11)	(15)	(17)	(13)	(13)	(17)
% ≥Lv 2	50	61	57	58	48	43	39	37	41
95% CI	(3)	(5)	(7)	(5)	(7)	(7)	(6)	(6)	(7)

Figure ES 2: Distribution of Year 10 Student Performance by State and Territory



	Aust	NSW	ACT	VIC	NT	TAS	WA	QLD	SA
Mean	496	521	518	494	490	489	486	469	465
95% CI	(7)	(11)	(21)	(19)	(33)	(17)	(17)	(18)	(16)
% ≥Lv 3	39	48	48	40	36	37	36	30	29
95% CI	(3)	(5)	(8)	(7)	(15)	(5)	(6)	(6)	(5)

It can be seen from Figure ES 1 that the range of Year 6 State and Territory means is approximately 50 scale points, centred around the Australian mean score of 400 scale points. The distributions of Year 6 performance across the States and Territories are largely overlapping. This is evidenced also by the finding that the statistically significant differences in mean performance across the States and Territories are between the ACT (which has the highest mean score) and Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory (which have the lowest mean scores), between Victoria and Queensland and Western Australia, and between New South Wales and Queensland.

With regard to those students achieving the Proficient Standard of Level 2, the percentage of students from the ACT, New South Wales and Victoria achieving the standard was greater than the national average. Because of differences in the distribution of scores, a pattern that is evident in the means may not necessarily be identical to a pattern in the percentage of students at or above the proficient standard.

Year 10 performance by State and Territory

Figure ES 2 shows the distribution of Year 10 student performance by State and Territory and the Year 10 mean scores with the associated 95 per cent confidence intervals and the percentage of students achieving the Year 10 Proficient Standard for that year level.

It can be seen from Figure ES 2 that the range of Year 10 State and Territory performance means is approximately 56 scale points centred around the Australian mean score of 496 scale points. The distributions of Year 10 performance across the States and Territories overlap a little more than those of the Year 6 data. This is evidenced also by the finding that the only statistically significant differences in mean performance across the States and Territories are between NSW (which has the highest mean score) and Queensland and South Australia (which have the lowest mean scores).

With regard to those Year 10 students achieving the Proficient Standard of Level 3, the percentage of students from New South Wales and the ACT, achieving the standard was greater than the national average.

Proficiency Levels and Standards on the Civics and Citizenship Scale

Although the Civics and Citizenship Scale was a continuum, scores were grouped into five proficiency levels ranging from '1' (containing the least difficult items) to '5' (containing the most difficult items). After the assessment data had been analysed, civics and citizenship education experts from government, Catholic and non-government schools in all States and Territories came together to set a proficient standard for each of Year 6 and Year 10. The proficient standard was a level of performance that would be expected for a student at that year level. Students needed to demonstrate more than minimal or elementary skills to be regarded as having reached a proficient standard. A proficient standard is not the same as a minimum benchmark standard because the latter refers to the basic level needed to function at that year level whereas the former refers to what is expected of a student at that year level. The Proficient Standard for Year 6 was set at Proficiency Level 2 (see Figure ES1) and for Year 10 at Proficiency Level 3 (see Figure ES2).

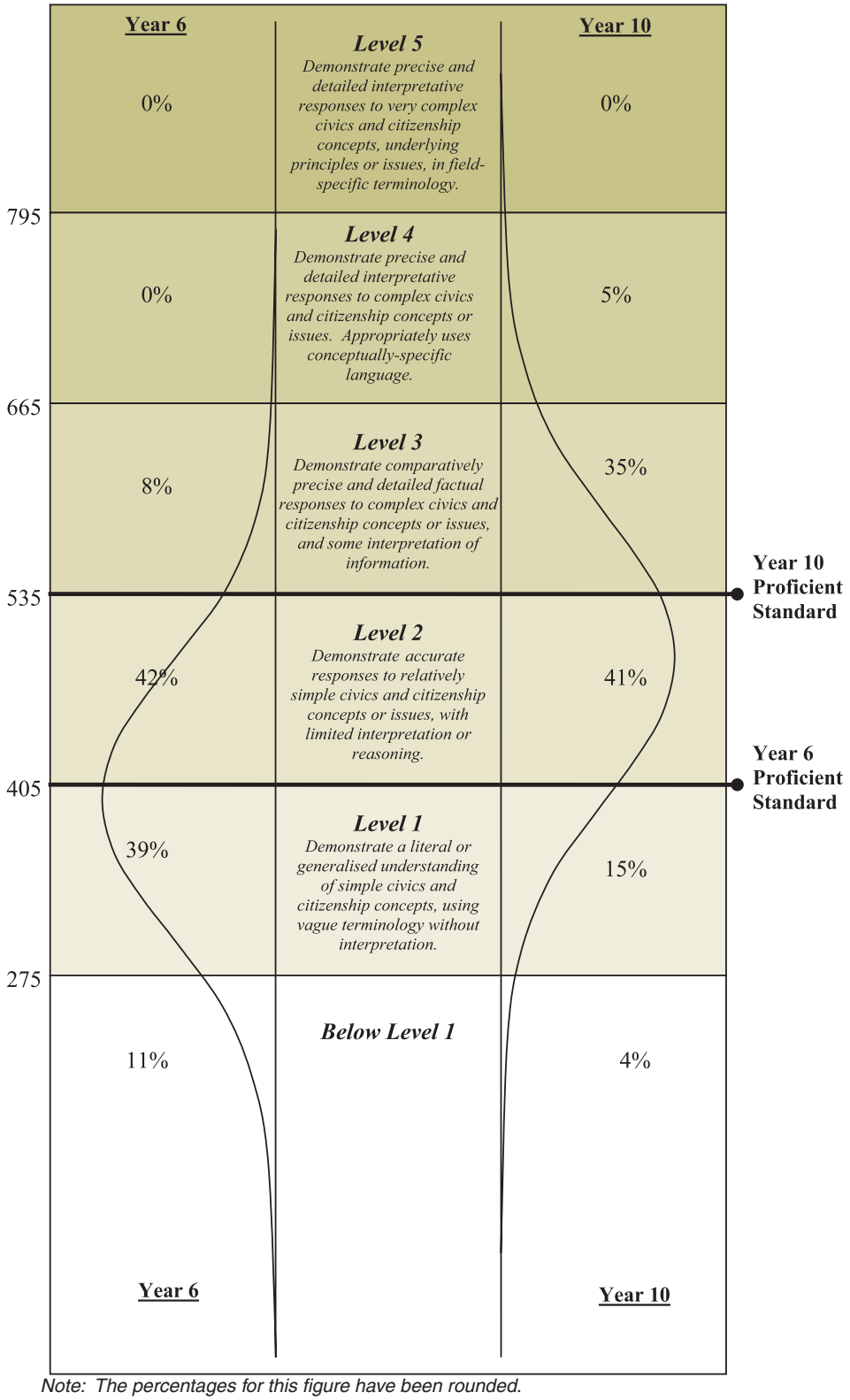
Characteristics of Proficiency Level 2

Students who achieved at Proficiency Level 2 were able to demonstrate accurate responses to relatively simple civics and citizenship concepts or issues, with limited interpretation or reasoning. They could, for example, identify more than one basic feature of democracy or democratic process, have basic understandings of citizens' taxation and/or civic responsibilities, and recognise tensions between democratic rights and private actions.

Characteristics of Proficiency Level 3

Students who achieved at Proficiency Level 3 were able to demonstrate comparatively precise and detailed factual responses to complex civics and citizenship concepts or issues, and some interpretation of information. They could, for example, identify the historical event remembered on Anzac Day, clearly understand the mechanisms and importance of secret ballot, and understand the general effect of sanctions in international agreements.

Figure ES 3: Distribution of Years 6 and 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Scale



Note: The percentages for this figure have been rounded.

Distribution of Years 6 and 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Scale

The location of a student at a particular proficiency level meant that he or she was able to demonstrate the understandings and skills associated with that level and possessed the understandings and skills of lower proficiency levels. Figure ES 3 shows the distribution of Years 6 and 10 student proficiency on the Civics and Citizenship Scale. The cut points for the Years 6 and 10 Proficient Standards are marked and named on the right hand side of the figure.

Figure ES 3 shows that half of Year 6 students achieved the Year 6 Proficient Standard of Level 2 (or higher levels) and 40 per cent of Year 10 students achieved the Year 10 Proficient Standard of Level 3 (or higher levels). Figure ES 3 also reveals considerable overlap in proficiency between the Year 6 and Year 10 populations: for example, 35 per cent of the latter achieved at the same level as the top 8 per cent of Year 6 students.

Performance of Students by Background

Performance by year level and sex

Table ES 1 shows the percentage of Year 6 and 10 students attaining each proficiency level by sex. At both Year 6 and Year 10 a higher percentage of females than males attained higher proficiency levels. In Year 6, 53 per cent of females, compared to 47 per cent of males, attained Proficiency Level 2 or higher. In Year 10, the corresponding percentages were 85 per cent and 76 per cent. Also in Year 10, 44 per cent of females, compared with 35 per cent of males, attained Proficiency Level 3 or higher.

Table ES 1: Percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 Students Attaining Each Proficiency Level, by Sex

Proficiency level	Year 6 (%)*			Year 10 (%)*		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
5				0	0	0
4 or above	0	0	0	4	6	5
3 or above	7	10	8	35	44	39
2 or above	47	53	50	76	85	80
1 or above	87	91	89	94	97	96

** These data are reported to one decimal place and with standard errors in Chapter 5 of the full report.*

Performance by parental occupation group

Table ES2 shows the mean performance scores for Year 6 and Year 10 students by parental occupation group. It shows that the Year 6 and 10 mean scores increase across the parental occupation groups in a manner congruent with the underlying socioeconomic differences between these groups.

The differences between mean scores across adjacent groups at each year level range between 19 and 40 score points and are greatest between *Other managers and associate professionals* and *Tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff* at each year level. All differences between adjacent groups were statistically significant at each year level.

The difference between mean scores for children of unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff and senior managers and professionals is just less than 80 score points for both Year 6 and Year 10.

Table ES 2: Mean Scores for Year 6 and Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Scale, by Parental Occupation Group

Occupational group	Year 6	Year 10
Senior managers and professionals	447	541
Other managers and associate professionals	425	522
Tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff	392	482
Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff	368	463

** The standard errors associated with these means range between 7.8 and 10. These means and standard errors are reported to one decimal place in Table 5.12 in the full report.*

Performance by language background and school geographic location

At both year levels, the mean scores of students who spoke languages other than English at home is slightly lower than students who spoke only English at home but the difference was not statistically significant.

The mean performance of Year 6 students in metropolitan schools is approximately 25 scale points higher than the mean performance of Year 6 students in provincial schools. This difference was statistically significant. The mean performance of Year 6 students in remote schools was similar to that of students in provincial schools but, due to the relatively large standard error associated with the mean performance of students in remote schools, the difference in mean performance between Year 6 students in remote and metropolitan schools is not statistically significant. The mean performance of Year 10 students in remote schools was approximately 40 score points lower than that of students in provincial and metropolitan schools, but as for Year 6 students, these differences were not statistically significant. The mean performance of Year 10 students in metropolitan schools is similar to the mean performance of Year 10 students in provincial schools.

Performance by Indigenous status

At both Years 6 and 10, Indigenous students did not perform as well as non-Indigenous students on the Civics and Citizenship Scale. At each year level, the non-Indigenous mean performance is approximately 70 scale points above the mean performance of Indigenous students. These differences were statistically significant at both year levels.

Other factors associated with student achievement in civics and citizenship

Participation in citizenship activities outside school (such as reading a newspaper and listening to radio news and to a lesser extent watching television news) had varied but mainly small positive effects on student performance for both Year 6 and Year 10 students. However, talking about politics and social issues with family had a moderate effect on student performance among Year 10 students (but only a small effect for Year 6 students). Other things being equal, Year 10 students who talked more frequently about political and social issues with their families performed better than their peers (as did Year 6 students who read more frequently about current events in the newspapers).

Concluding Comments

Student achievement at both year levels was below that expected by the experts who participated in the proficiency standards setting exercise, by the State and Territory officers who participated in the marker training and by the experts who marked the open-ended responses.

The concepts and understandings with which students appeared to have the greatest difficulty were of two types:

- concepts such as 'the common good' or strategies that refer to how individuals can influence systems for the benefit of society; and
- so-called 'iconic knowledge' of key information about national events and nationally-representative symbols.

It seems that more targeted teaching is required if students are to learn about these things.

Despite the concerns about the relatively low levels of achievement, one of the most encouraging aspects was the fact that some students were able to achieve at higher levels than had been expected. Eight per cent of Year 6 students were able to perform at Level 3 and 5 per cent of Year 10 students at Level 4. It is not possible to know whether this performance was a result of particular teaching or life experiences, but the specificity of knowledge and complexity of response required (as demonstrated by the item response descriptors) suggests that well-taught students can indeed achieve well beyond the expected proficiency in civics and citizenship.

The data collected in the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment in Civics are taken to be the base from which future measurement of growth in student achievement in this area will be constructed. Subsequent National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessments may show an improvement in student performance if students receive more consistent instruction in civics and citizenship and if teachers receive quality professional development to assist them to maximise the value of curriculum support programs such as *Discovering Democracy*. This assessment program and the implementation of, for example, the National Statements of Learning at the level of school-based curriculum may also lead to positive changes in civics and citizenship curriculum delivery and student performance.

Chapter 1
Introduction to the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment, 2004

Background

In April 1999, the State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers of Education, meeting as the tenth Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), agreed to the new *National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century*. The document became known as the 'Adelaide Declaration'. The National Goals provide the framework for reporting on student achievement and for public accountability by schools and school systems through the MCEETYA publication, the *Annual National Report on Schooling in Australia*.

The National Goals for Schooling specify that, in terms of curriculum, students should, on leaving school, have:

> *... attained high standards of knowledge, skills and understanding through a comprehensive and balanced curriculum in the compulsory years of schooling encompassing the agreed eight key learning areas: the arts; English; health and physical education; languages other than English; mathematics; science; studies of society and environment; technology and the interrelationships between them.*

In addressing the area of civics and citizenship, the Adelaide Declaration referred specifically to the intention that students:

> *... be active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia's system of government and civic life.*
>
> (Goal 1.4)

Moreover, in reference to the characteristics that students, as citizens, should possess, the document asserted that they should:

> *... have the capacity to exercise judgement and responsibility in matters of morality, ethics and social justice, and the capacity to make sense of their world, to think about how things got to be the way they are, to make rational and informed decisions about their lives and to accept responsibility for their own actions.*
>
> (Goal 1.3)

In 1999, the Education Ministers established the National Education Performance Monitoring Taskforce (NEPMT) to develop key performance measures to monitor and report on progress towards the achievement of the Goals on a nationally-comparable basis. They noted the need to develop indicators of performance for civics and citizenship.

At the MCEETYA meeting in July 2001, the Ministers decided to restructure the existing Taskforces, including the NEPMT, and to work on the national agenda through seven new Taskforces. All outstanding work of the NEPMT was transferred to the new Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce (PMRT).

As a first step, the NEPMT commissioned a project in 2001 to investigate and develop key performance measures in civics and citizenship. The outcome of this process was a report to the NEPMT entitled *Key Performance Measures in Civics and Citizenship Education* (Print & Hughes, 2001).

Twelve recommendations were proposed in the report. After consultation, these were revised by a NEPMT sub-group and the following six recommendations were endorsed by the PMRT:

- That there be two Key Performance Measures (KPMs) for civics and citizenship, the first to focus on civics knowledge and understanding and the second on citizenship participation skills and civic values.
- That the KPMs be applied to both primary and secondary schooling and be set at Year 6 and Year 10 respectively.
- That national student assessments be designed for Year 6 and Year 10 derived from the KPMs.
- That a trial assessment be conducted in 2003 as a preliminary to a national sample survey assessment.
- That the assessment survey consist of three parts: (1), an assessment of

civics knowledge and understanding (KPM1); (2), an assessment of skills and values for active citizenship participation (KPM2); and (3), an indication of opportunities for and examples of citizenship participation by students, together with relevant contextual information.

- That the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment of student knowledge, understanding, values and citizenship participation skills occur first in 2004. Subsequent testing will occur in 2007 and thereafter every three years.

In October 2002, the PMRT commissioned a project to develop and trial assessment instruments for nationally-comparable measurement and reporting in the government, independent and Catholic sectors.

A further tender was let in February 2003 for the conduct of the assessment in October 2004.

The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) was the successful tenderer in both cases.

The PMRT set the policy objectives, commissioned the Benchmarking and Educational Measurement Unit (BEMU) to manage the assessment and established a Review Committee to facilitate discussion among the jurisdictions and school sectors.

The Review Committee's members were nominated by the jurisdictions, school sectors and interest groups. They played a significant role in the development of the assessment domain, bringing to it their knowledge of civics curriculum documentation in the various States and Territories.

After the trial, the Committee reviewed and provided feedback on the assessment items. Some of its members took part in a marker training exercise in November 2004 and some participated as experts in the standard setting exercise in March 2005.

Curriculum Context in States and Territories

The context for the assessment of civics and citizenship was strikingly different from that prevailing for other national assessments.

At the time of the assessment, civics and citizenship was not a key learning area in any Australian jurisdiction. The delivery of instruction in civics and citizenship was fragmented and marked by a lack of formality. The definitions associated with certain key concepts were not generally agreed across the jurisdictions, nor was their appearance in formal curriculum documents universal. The year levels at which some treatment of these concepts and knowledge was to be undertaken, how much time was to be spent on the teaching of civics and citizenship and within which key learning areas have been matters for debate during recent developments. These issues had a significant influence on what students were

taught and could learn at school. The earlier history of the teaching in civics and citizenship in Australia has been documented in major reports and in the academic literature. (Civics Expert Group, 1994)

Discovering Democracy

One of the driving forces in civics and citizenship education in Australia in the last decade has been the *Discovering Democracy* program. Between 1997 and 2004, this Australian Government initiative provided $32m for curriculum resource development in schools, teacher professional development and national activities. The program was a response to an identified need for the nationally coherent teaching of civics and citizenship education to young people. It aimed to help students understand the history and operation of Australia's system of government and institutions, and the principles that support Australian democracy. It provided the impetus for widespread reform and thinking about the role of civics and citizenship education in the school curriculum. Funding was administered by the States and Territories and generally provided for the appointment of project officers to implement the program at the local level.

The Discovering Democracy program had two phases, the first (1997-2000) being the development of the curriculum resources and the second (2000-2003) the professional development of teachers and support in the use of its resources. An evaluation of both phases was conducted by Erebus Consulting (2003).

IEA Civic Education Study

In 1999, Australia participated in the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement's Civic Education Study. In a report, Citizenship and Democracy: Australian Students' Knowledge and Beliefs—The IEA Civic Education Study of Australian Fourteen Year Olds, Mellor, Kennedy and Greenwood suggested that student achievement be:

> *…seen in a context where formal programs of civic education are relatively recent, and informal rather than formal activities have characterised much civic education. In this context most of the students surveyed in 1999 would have gained most of their understandings and values largely from family, peers, informal school activities, the media and their everyday activities in the community.*
>
> (Mellor, Kennedy & Greenwood, 2002, P. 125)

The IEA study indicated that the civic knowledge of Australian Year 9 students was 'average' and that they had less interest in participating in civic society than did their international peers. The study asked questions about how to address important civics outcomes—which was also a focus of the Adelaide Declaration:

> *An issue for the future is how best to sustain an intelligent citizenry. Put another way: how should future citizens be prepared and what do we expect them to know and be able to do?*
>
> (Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald & Schulz, 2001, P. 125)

The IEA study also collected information from (mainly humanities) teachers on their attitudes to, and sense of competence in, teaching in the area. Most thought the area was of great importance, but many were, at the same time, not comfortable with teaching in it. Many cited a lack of formal instruction in the civic knowledge required and a lack of formal training in the pedagogies most suitable for the area. Reference was also made by teachers to the importance of the location of civics and citizenship in the whole school curriculum, and the need for systemic and school-level leadership in this process.

The Erebus Consulting evaluation suggests that the context for the 2004 National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment was, for students in many schools, not greatly different from that experienced by students in the earlier studies.

A realistic interpretation of the student results described in this report requires recognition of the variety and informality of instruction in civics and citizenship. The undeveloped state of the area also had a significant impact on the work that had be undertaken and achieved in this project.

Stages in the Project

There were two formal stages to the project: the trial (Phase 1) and assessment and reporting (Phase 2). Phase 1 required ACER to develop an assessment domain and assessment materials and conduct the trial assessment exercise and related activities.

Developing the assessment domain

Because of the informal nature of much of the curriculum offered in schools, development of the assessment domain was a longer and more complex process than would usually be required for a national assessment.

The Review Committee was presented with a draft assessment domain at its first meeting, early in 2003. The draft was then revised by the Committee and ACER, passing through numerous iterations over the next 18 months. These iterations were submitted to the jurisdictions and to the PMRT for comment. Further refinements to the domain were made after the trial and the penultimate version was submitted late in 2003 to several nominated area experts at the request by the Review Committee. The definitive version was accepted by PMRT in February 2004.

The assessment domain

The assessment domain comprised the domain descriptors for the two Key Performance Measures (KPMs) and a professional elaboration. A detailed analysis of the domain is provided in Chapter 4, where the Civics and Citizenship Scale is described. The domain is also exemplified with a selection of items from the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment, an examination of the content and difficulty of the items and the establishment of links between the items and the domain.

Item development

Revision of the domain was accompanied by the development of the assessment items. The coverage of the whole item set of the domain was monitored closely.

Conducting the trial

In September 2003, a representative random sample of 142 schools from all three school sectors in Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland participated in the trial. The response rate was over 90 per cent.

Draft and revised versions of the items were shared with the Review Committee and the PMRT before and after trialling. The trial data were analysed and shared with the Review Committee. A draft performance scale was prepared and draft performance standards were developed and examined closely in a day-long meeting of experts and some Review Committee members.

Administration, data analysis and reporting

The administration of the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment comprised a number of stages.

The first involved informing schools that they had been selected to participate. Liaison officers in each of the States and Territories facilitated contact with schools. Information about classes in Year 6 and Year 10 was collected in the initial dealings with schools.

The second stage-—class selection-—is described in detail in Chapter 3 and the Technical Report. Comprehensive manuals were sent to the designated school contacts, with notification of the classes selected to participate. Schools were then required to send back the names or student identification numbers of the students in those classes to enable the efficient and accurate processing of the assessment booklets and the subsequent school reports.

The third stage -—the administration of the assessment in the schools-— took place during the last fortnight of October 2004. Each school received a package of assessment materials that included test booklets with students' names pre-printed on them and the Assessment Administration Manual, which provided a script to be followed during the assessment. Five per cent of schools were visited

by Quality Monitors, who observed the conduct of the assessment in order to ensure that it was being administered consistently across schools. Follow-up test sessions were held when less than 85 per cent of students presented for the first testing session.

The final stage-—marking and data processing—involved the preparation and delivery of school reports, based on summary data. Data analysis in preparation for this report was undertaken during the first half of 2005.

Structure of this Report

Chapter 2 describes the development and substance of the assessment instrument and parts of the student background survey and the administration of the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment. It describes the personal characteristics of Year 6 and Year 10 student population, using data collected by the student background survey.

Chapters 3 and 4 provide a more detailed analysis of the assessment domain, including a description of the achievement scale and examples of many of the items used to construct it.

Chapter 5 explores the findings, including the relationship between the personal student background variables, introduced in Chapter 2 and the achievement data described in Chapters 3 and 4.

Chapter 6 provides data and findings on student participation in civics and citizenship activities at and outside school. It reports data collected from the student background survey and discusses some relationships between student views on these activities and achievement in civics and citizenship.

Chapter 7 discusses some implications of the findings.

A separate Technical Report provides more detailed information about the developmental and analytical procedures that provide the basis for this report.

Chapter 2
Sample, Student Characteristics, Instruments and Administration

This chapter describes the sample, the personal characteristics of the participating students, the development of the instruments and their substance, and the administration and achieved participation rates of the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment.

Sample

The National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment was administered at Year 6 and Year 10.

At each year level, the survey adopted the form of a two-stage cluster sample design, similar to that used by international assessments such as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

The first stage involved selecting a sample of schools with a probability proportional to size and stratified according to State or Territory and school sector. The probability of selection was proportional to the number of Year 6 students enrolled for one sample and to the number of Year 10 students enrolled in the other from all non-excluded schools in Australia that had students in Year 6 or Year 10[1].

[1] Two samples of replacement schools were also drawn to enable the sample size and representativeness to be maintained if initially-sampled schools declined to participate. However, in some cases (such as secondary schools in the Northern Territory) there were not enough schools available for the replacement samples to be drawn. The replacement schools were selected to be as similar as possible (in size, jurisdiction and sector) as the schools for which they were replacements.

Schools excluded from the target population included non-mainstream schools (such as schools for students with intellectual disabilities), schools with fewer than five students at the target year levels and very remote schools. These exclusions accounted for 1.8 per cent of the Year 6 student population and 0.8 per cent of the Year 10 student population.

The second stage comprised the drawing of a sample of two classrooms (where available) from the target year level in sampled schools. A sample was drawn separately for each year level (see *Technical Report*). Where only one or two classes were available at the target level, those classes were selected automatically. Where more than two classes existed, classes were sampled with equal probability of selection[2].

Within the sampled classrooms, individual students were eligible to be exempted from the assessment on the basis of the following:

- **Functional disability:** the student had a moderate to severe permanent physical disability such that he or she could not perform in an assessment situation.
- **Intellectual disability:** the student had a mental or emotional disability and cognitive delay such that he or she could not perform in the assessment situation.
- **Limited assessment language proficiency:** the student was unable to read or speak the language of the assessment and would be unable to overcome the language barrier in the assessment situation. Typically, a student who had received less than one year of instruction in the language of the assessment would be excluded.

The number of student-level exclusions at Year 6 was 159 and at Year 10 was 65. The final student population exclusion rate was 3.1 per cent at Year 6 and 1.4 per cent at Year 10. More information about the sample is provided in the Technical Report.

Participation Rates

Of the eligible sampled students, 90 per cent of Year 6 students and 82 per cent of Year 10 students completed the assessment. Table 2.1 shows the design sample and final participation rates.

[2] In some schools, smaller classes were combined to make a pseudo-class group before sampling. For example, two multi-level classes with 13 and 15 Year 6 students respectively might be combined into a single pseudo class of 28 students. This was to maximise the number of students selected per school (the sample design was based on 50 students per school). Pseudo-classes were treated like other classes and had equal probability of selection during sampling.

Table 2.1: Design Samples and Final Participation Rates, by State and Territory

State/ Territory	Year 6			Year 10		
	Design school sample	Number and %[1] of schools in final sample	Number of students in final sample	Design school sample	Number and %[1] of schools in final sample	Number of students in final sample
NSW	45	44 (100%)	1650	40	39 (97%)	1576
VIC	45	45 (100%)	1494	38	37 (97%)	1367
QLD	41	41 (100%)	1641	35	35 (100%)	1438
SA	46	45 (100%)	1280	35	35 (100%)	1271
WA	45	42 (98%)	1495	35	35 (100%)	1487
TAS	45	44 (95%)	1208	30	28 (97%)	1010
NT	28	27 (96%)	761	21	17 (81%)	486
ACT	30	30 (100%)	1183	26	23 (88%)	901
AUST	325	318 (99%)	10712	260	249 (96%)	9536

[1] Percentage of eligible (non-excluded) schools in the final sample. Participating replacement schools are included.

While the sample was designed to be a random selection of the student population, certain design effects and structural differences must be kept in mind when interpreting the results of the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment. One important feature of the sample was that it was grade-based. Because of differences in the school starting age, the length of time students had spent in formal schooling before the Assessment varied among the States and Territories.

Participating Students' Personal Characteristics

The following data was collected from Year 6 and Year 10 student responses to the student background survey. They provide a profile of the students participating in the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment. The data presented in the following tables and figures are weighted to allow inferences to be made about the Year 6 and Year 10 student populations and all data reported in this report is weighted unless otherwise stated. Any differences in total numbers of students between tables are due to missing data for those variables.

Age

MCEETYA protocols mean reporting is against year levels rather than age. Nevertheless age differences can account for some of the observed differences in performance, and system differences in the distribution of ages in a given year level may contribute to observed differences between States and Territories. In the achieved sample of participating students, 58 per cent of the Year 10 students stated they were 15 years old in October 2004 and another 37 per cent said they were 16 years old (Table 2.2). At Year 6, 55 per cent of students were 11 years old and 41 per cent were 12 years old.

Table 2.2: Age - Percentages of Students Nationally, by State and Territory and by Year Level

Age in years	AUST %	NSW %	VIC %	QLD %	SA %	WA %	TAS %	NT %	ACT %
Year 6									
10 and below	**4**	0	0	10	1	14	0	2	0
11	**55**	49	35	81	57	82	22	63	45
12	**41**	51	63	9	42	4	78	35	54
13 and above	**1**	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
	219 779	72 924	54 743	44 852	15 126	21 369	5 296	1 545	3 924
Year 10									
14 and below	**4**	1	1	10	1	14	1	6	1
15	**58**	51	42	78	65	79	27	67	46
16	**37**	46	55	11	33	6	71	26	53
17 and above	**1**	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
	164 178	55 326	35 362	31 065	12 691	18 766	4 962	1 449	4 537

There was some variation in age across the jurisdictions. Compared with the Australian average, there were greater numbers of younger students in Queensland and Western Australia (and, to a lesser extent, in the Northern Territory). By way of contrast, there were larger percentages of older students in Tasmania and Victoria (and, to a lesser extent, in the Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales).

Student Background Variables in the Student Background Survey

This section reports on the personal characteristics of the achieved population of Year 6 and Year 10 students, using the data collected by means of the student background survey. The background variables were age (see above), gender, Indigenous status, language background (country of birth and main language other than English spoken at home), socioeconomic background (parental education and parental occupation) and geographic location.

In addition to questions on the above personal characteristics, the student background survey asked students about the opportunities they had of participating in certain specified civics-related activities, both at and outside school. Reporting on these questions, the data collected and the relationships with cognitive achievement data are reported in Chapter 6.

The structure of these variables had been agreed to by the Education Ministers as part of the National Assessment Program (which includes the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment), established to monitor progress toward the achievement of the National Goals of Schooling. The Survey is provided as Appendix 2. The relationships between these personal characteristics data reported in this chapter and the cognitive achievement data are more fully explored in Chapter 5.

Gender

There were almost equal numbers of males and females in the sample, with females comprising 51 per cent of Year 6 students and 52 per cent of Year 10 students (see Table 2.3). According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in 2004 males made up 51 per cent of the population at both year levels.

From Table 2.3 it can be seen that there was a slight over representation of females in Year 6 in the Northern Territory (54 per cent), in Year 10 in Victoria (54 per cent) and the Australian Capital Territory (55 per cent).

Table 2.3: Gender – Percentages of Students Nationally, by State and Territory and by Year Level

Gender	AUST %	NSW %	VIC %	QLD %	SA %	WA %	TAS %	NT %	ACT %
Year 6									
Male	**49**	48	52	48	51	51	52	46	50
Female	**51**	52	48	52	49	49	48	54	50
	226 497	75 181	56 220	45 980	15 652	22 369	5 453	1 621	4 021
Year 10									
Male	**48**	47	46	51	52	50	51	47	45
Female	**52**	53	54	49	48	50	49	53	55
	164 913	55 526	35 482	31 292	12 765	18 841	4 995	1 459	4 553

Geographic location

For the purposes of this report, 'geographic location' refers to whether a student lived (Year 10 students) or attended school (Year 6 students) in a metropolitan, provincial or remote zone (Jones, 2000).

- **Metropolitan zones** included all State and Territory capital cities except Darwin and major urban areas with populations above 100,000 (such as Geelong, Wollongong and the Gold Coast).
- **Provincial zones** took in provincial cities (including Darwin) and provincial areas below 5.92 on the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA). (ABS, 2002)
- **Remote zones** were areas of low accessibility (above 5.92 on the ARIA), such as Katherine and Coober Pedy.

Table 2.4: Geographic Location - Percentages of Students Nationally, by State and Territory and by Year Level

Geographical Location	AUST %	NSW %	VIC %	QLD %	SA %	WA %	TAS %	NT %	ACT %
Year 6									
Metropolitan	**69**	72	71	70	62	64	36	0	99
Provincial	**30**	28	29	29	37	30	60	80	1
Remote	**1**	0	0	1	1	7	4	20	0
	226 668	75 231	56 268	45 999	15 652	22 392	5 468	1 623	4 035
Year 10									
Metropolitan	**71**	68	71	77	68	78	48	0	98
Provincial	**27**	32	29	20	32	14	51	74	2
Remote	**2**	0	0	3	0	8	1	26	0
	163 039	54 812	35 342	30 698	12 669	18 640	4 954	1 413	4 511

Note: The percentages for this figure have been rounded.

Around 70 per cent of the students in the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment attended school (Year 6 students) or lived (Year 10 students) in metropolitan areas (see Table 2.4). Almost 30 per cent lived and/or attended school in provincial areas, while only 1 to 2 per cent lived in remote areas.

As might be expected, there were some variations among the States and Territories in the distribution of students across metropolitan, provincial and remote areas. On the basis of the weighted data, almost all students in the Australian Capital Territory lived in metropolitan areas, compared with 40 per cent of Year 6 students and 48 per cent of Year 10 students in Tasmania and none in the Northern Territory, as Darwin was classified as a provincial city.

The Northern Territory had the greatest number of students in remote areas (20 per cent at Year 6 and 26 per cent at Year 10), followed by Western Australia (7 per cent at Year 6 and 8 per cent at Year 10).

Indigenous status

Five per cent of the Year 6 students and 3 per cent of the Year 10 students sampled identified themselves as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders (see Table 2.5).

There was little variation among most of the States and Territories, except in the Northern Territory, where 19 per cent of Year 6 students and 15 per cent of Year 10 students identified themselves as being Indigenous, and in Tasmania, where 11 per cent of Year 6 students did so.

Table 2.5: Indigenous Status - Percentages of Students Nationally, by State and Territory and by Year Level

Indigenous Status	AUST %	NSW %	VIC %	QLD %	SA %	WA %	TAS %	NT %	ACT %
Year 6									
Indigenous	**5**	6	2	5	6	5	11	19	3
Non-Indigenous	**95**	94	98	95	94	95	89	81	97
	225 392	74 922	55 907	45 796	15 575	22 369	5 416	1 604	3 985
Year 10									
Indigenous	**3**	3	1	2	4	3	5	15	2
Non-Indigenous	**97**	97	99	98	96	97	95	85	98
	163 912	55 377	35 309	30 959	12 693	18 643	4 950	1 456	4 525

As the geographic location of Indigenous students varied from that of non-Indigenous students, an analysis of these variations was undertaken for Australia as a whole, because of the very small numbers of Indigenous students in the sample.

As is shown in Table 2.6, Indigenous students were far more likely than non-Indigenous students to live or go to school in provincial or remote areas.

Table 2.6: Geographic Location and Indigenous Status - Percentages of Students Nationally, by Year Level

Geographical Location	Indigenous students %	Non-indigenous students %
Year 6		
Metropolitan	48	70
Provincial	48	29
Remote	4	1
	10 761	214 633
Year 10		
Metropolitan	59	71
Provincial	34	27
Remote	7	2
	4 043	157 895

Language background—language other than English spoken at home

As Table 2.7 shows, about 20 per cent of sampled students came from homes in which languages other than English were spoken (in place of or in addition to English).

Tasmania had the smallest percentage of students from such homes (5 per cent of Year 6 students and 8 per cent of Year 10 students), while Victoria had the largest percentage (26 per cent of Year 6 students and 25 per cent of Year 10 students).

Table 2.7: Language - Percentages of Students Nationally, by State and Territory and by Year Level

Language spoken at home	AUST %	NSW %	VIC %	QLD %	SA %	WA %	TAS %	NT %	ACT %
Year 6									
Language other than English	**19**	20	26	12	17	15	5	24	22
English	**81**	80	74	88	83	85	95	76	78
	224 431	74 549	55 821	45 508	15 437	22 149	5 384	1 608	3 975
Year 10									
Language other than English	**21**	24	25	16	17	21	8	21	24
Female	**79**	76	75	84	83	79	92	79	76
	163 829	55 208	35 147	31 161	12 687	18 713	4 959	1 444	4 510

Country of birth

Seven per cent of the Year 6 students and 11 per cent of the Year 10 students were not born in Australia (see Table 2.8). The proportion of Year 6 students born outside Australia varied from 2 per cent in Tasmania and nine per cent in the Australian Capital Territory and Western Australia. At Year 10 the percentage varied from three per cent in Tasmania to 15 per cent in Queensland and Western Australia.

Table 2.8: Country of Birth - Percentages of Students Nationally, by State and Territory and by Year Level

Country of birth	AUST %	NSW %	VIC %	QLD %	SA %	WA %	TAS %	NT %	ACT %
Year 6									
Australia	**93**	93	94	93	95	91	98	93	91
Overseas	**7**	7	6	7	5	9	2	7	9
	226 454	75 163	56 237	45 680	15 602	22 381	5 460	1 613	4 018
Year 10									
Australia	**89**	89	90	85	93	85	97	93	91
Overseas	**11**	11	10	15	7	15	3	7	9
	164 861	55 558	35 451	31 256	12 770	18 825	4 998	1 453	4 550

Socioeconomic background—parental education

Information about their parents' highest educational levels was sought only from Year 10 students because Year 6 students were considered less likely to know. Students were asked to give:

- their mother's highest level of schooling;
- their father's highest level of schooling;
- their mother's highest level of post-school qualification; and
- their father's highest level of post-school qualification.

The responses were then used to form two variables that indicated the highest reported level of school education completed by either parent, and the highest level of post-school education completed by either parent.

A major reason for generating two variables was that there were substantial missing data in the student responses to the question regarding the post school qualifications of their parents. Overall, 15 per cent of respondents (ranging from 10 per cent in New South Wales to 24 per cent in the Northern Territory) either did not answer the question about, or indicated that that they did not know, the post-school qualification of their parents. The data in Table 2.9 indicate that among the respondents 31 per cent had at least one parent with a Bachelor degree or above, 16 per cent had a parent with a diploma and 28 per cent had a parent with

a certificate. Student responses to the question about the school attainment were much more complete with only 4 per cent of students not providing an answer to this question (ranging from 3 per cent in New South Wales to 7 per cent in South Australia). In the achieved sample, 70 per cent of the Year 10 students had at least one parent who had completed Year 12.

Table 2.9: Parental Education – Percentages of Year 10 Students Nationally and by State and Territory

Highest education level of either parent	AUST %	NSW %	VIC %	QLD %	SA %	WA %	TAS %	NT %	ACT %
School education									
Completed Year 12	70	66	76	69	64	71	62	67	85
Left school before the end of Year 12	30	34	24	31	36	29	38	33	15
Total number of valid cases	158 345	53 966	33 831	30 271	11 858	17 994	4 637	1353	4433
Total number of cases with missing data	6 870	1 627	1 685	1 124	963	857	365	106	144
Post-school education									
Bachelor degree or above	31	31	37	27	21	28	28	34	49
Advanced diploma/ diploma	16	16	16	18	11	20	32	15	18
Certificate I to IV (including trade certificates)	28	31	25	30	28	27	14	24	17
No post-school qualification	25	22	23	26	39	26	28	27	17
Total number of valid cases	140 468	50 303	29 745	25 727	10 069	15 802	3 974	1 107	3 742
Total number of cases with missing data	24 747	5 290	5 771	5 668	2 753	3 049	1 029	352	835

Note: The data concerning parental education for South Australia appears anomalous insofar as it is not consistent with known patterns in that state. Investigations have not been able to explain this anomaly. As a consequence, the Year 10 information for South Australia needs to be interpreted with caution.

Socioeconomic background—parental occupation

The parental occupation variable used in this report is also a combined variable, indicating the higher occupation grouping into which either parent fell. This variable is based on questions which asked for both the name of the job the student's mother and father did and what work they did in the job. Missing data for mother's and father's occupation ranged between 8 and 10 per cent for both year levels. However, the combined variable had an acceptable 3 per cent missing data at both year levels.

The distribution of parental occupations was similar for Year 6 and Year 10 students. Around 30 per cent of students reported that their parents' highest occupation was in the group of unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff (see Table 2.10). Twenty per cent reported that their parent's occupation was that of a tradesperson or skilled office, sales or service person. Another 30 per cent had parents who were managers or associated professionals and a final 20 per cent had parents in the senior manager or professionals group.

Table 2.10: Parental Occupation - Percentage of Students Nationally, by State and Territory and by Year Level

Highest occupation level of either parent	AUST %	NSW %	VIC %	QLD %	SA %	WA %	TAS %	NT %	ACT %
Year 6									
Senior managers and professionals	**18**	20	21	14	18	18	14	17	21
Other managers and associate professionals	**28**	30	30	24	25	27	21	32	43
Tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff	**19**	19	18	24	18	20	20	18	13
Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff	**32**	30	30	37	36	34	42	31	21
	220 683	72 942	55 017	44 943	15 206	21 809	5 366	1 542	3 858
Year 10									
Senior managers and professionals	**20**	23	22	15	16	20	18	26	21
Other managers and associate professionals	**30**	29	32	31	25	26	27	30	43
Tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff	**20**	19	20	23	22	20	22	21	13
Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff	**29**	28	25	30	37	32	32	23	22
	159 890	53 703	34 206	30 682	12 301	18 291	4 836	1 424	4 447

Note: These distributions of parental occupation are similar to the values of the ABS Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas for the states. The correlation coefficients (spearman's rho) between Index of Education and Occupation and the indicators above averaged 0.75 (with the value for senior managers and professions in the Year 10 data being aberrant). Values of the ABS Index of Education and Occupation (based on collection districts) are: NSW=1009, Vic.=1012, Qld=980, SA=978, WA=998, Tas.=959, NT=980, ACT=1116. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2001). Information Paper, Census of Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) 2001, Catalogue Number 2039.0. 1.

Assessment Items and Response Types

Four test forms were used at both Year 6 and Year 10. The items were constructed in units that comprised one or more assessment items that related directly to single themes or stimuli. In its simplest form, a unit was a single, self-contained

item, and, in its most complex, a piece of stimulus material with a set of assessment items related directly to it.

Each assessment item was referenced to a single descriptor in the assessment domain, so units comprising more than one assessment item were frequently referenced to more than one descriptor within and across the two Key Performance Measures (KPM1 and KPM2).

Item-response types included dual-choice (true/false), multiple-choice, closed and constructed response. The scores allocated to items varied: dual and multiple-choice items had a maximum score of one point, while closed and constructed response items were each allocated between one and three points.

Test Booklet Construction and Rotation

Each unit was allocated to two test forms. While the order of presentation of units differed between the test forms, the order of the assessment items within the units remained the same. In constructing the test booklets, the allocation of units to test forms was managed to maximise compliance with the following six criteria (see the Technical Report for more information):

- horizontal linking of forms within year levels: it was essential that the test forms be linked horizontally within each year level to enable the common scaling of the assessment items and the common scaling of student achievement, independent of which students completed which test forms. Each unit was allocated to two forms to allow this linking. Each test form at each year level was linked horizontally to two other forms;
- placement of units within test forms: each unit was placed in a different position in each of the two test forms in which it was presented. For example, a unit appearing toward the end of one test form was placed toward the beginning of the second test form in which it was presented. This was intended to minimise any order effects on the data generated by each unit; and
- vertical linking of units between Years 6 and 10: it was essential that the test forms be linked between year levels to enable the common scaling of the assessment items and the common scaling of student achievement between Years 6 and 10. Some assessment units were predetermined as potential links between Years 6 and 10. As all units appeared in two forms within each year level, the allocated potential vertical link units appeared in two test items at Year 6 and two at Year 10.

Rigorous standards of test booklet construction were used to minimise systematic biases relating to test forms. The apportioning of horizontal and vertical link units above the necessary minimum enabled only those items with the strongest psychometric properties to be used as links when constructing the final achievement scale.

Marker Training and Marking Procedures

Markers were employed to read and mark the responses to the closed and constructed response items. The dual-choice and multiple-choice items were scanned and computer marked. A team of 24 people, led by two senior markers, took approximately a month to mark the test. The markers were familiar with similar tests and were mostly retired teachers with substantial classroom experience. They were asked to write qualitative reports on the test items and student responses and these were synthesised and used to complement the data analysis information in the preparation of this report.

Data Analysis

Test items were scaled using item response theory methodology. To place the information from the assessments on the same scale, the items for both Years were scaled together. The student achievement scores were then transformed to a standard metric based on the weighted Year 6 sample, with a mean of 400 and a standard deviation of 100. A more detailed description of these processes is provided in the Technical Report.

Concluding Comments

The National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment data were gathered from 10,712 Year 6 students from 318 schools and 9,536 Year 10 students from 249 schools. Sample weights were applied to the data so that the sample statistics accurately reflect population parameters. The sample design and procedures, and the high response rates, ensured that there was very little bias in the sample.

The student profile described includes data personal background characteristics such as age, socioeconomic background, language background, Indigenous status and location. Later analyses investigate the relationship between these characteristics and achievement in Civics and Citizenship.

The assessment was representative of the elements identified in the CCAP Assessment Domain. It made use of assessment units consisting of items linked to a common piece of stimulus material. The assessment made use of various types of item including dual-choice (true/false), multiple-choice, closed and constructed. Rotated forms of the test booklets ensured coverage of the domain.

Trained markers were engaged to mark constructed response items. The test items for both year levels were scaled together using IRT (Item Response Theory) methodology. Student achievement scores were transformed to a standard metric based on the weighted Year 6 sample, with a mean of 400 and a standard deviation of 100.

Chapter 3
Describing the Civics and Citizenship Scale

In this chapter, the Civics and Citizenship Scale is described in detail and illustrated with a selection of items from the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment. The analyses that established the position of the items and the proficiency levels forming the Civics and Citizenship Scale are reported in Chapter 4. As part of the description in this chapter, the content and difficulty of items are examined and links to the assessment domain established. A summary of the main characteristics of each of the proficiency levels is also provided.

The assessment domain contains two sub-dimensions of civics and citizenship literacy: **Civics** (Knowledge and Understanding of Civic Institutions and Processes [KPM 1]) and **Citizenship** (Dispositions and Skills for Participation [KPM 2].

While these are assumed to be different aspects of civics and citizenship, they are sufficiently highly correlated to be reported as a common scale. Therefore achievement is reported mainly by the general Civics and Citizenship Scale but occasionally by the sub-scales KPM 1 and KPM 2.

Describing the Civics and Citizenship Scale

To elaborate the Civics and Citizenship Scale, five proficiency levels, ranging from '1' (describing the least-difficult skills and understandings) to '5' (describing

the most-difficult skills and understandings) were developed. The descriptions were developed by examining the skills and understanding students needed to answer the items located in each of the proficiency levels of the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment correctly.

The location of a student at a particular proficiency level means that student was able to demonstrate the understandings and skills associated with that level and possessed the understandings and skills of lower levels.

Table 3.1 summarises the proficiency levels and describes the skills and understandings students needed to demonstrate with respect to selected items in each of the levels.

For a detailed discussion of student achievement on the proficiency levels, see Chapters 4 and 5. For the percentage correct, by score code, of the sample items referenced in this chapter, see Appendix 4. In this chapter, for each level the following are provided:

- the scale score range for items in the level (see Chapter 4 for further details);
- examples of items with typical student responses;
- information about the skills and abilities assessed by the example items, with references to the assessment domain; and
- a summary of the item characteristics.

In addition, the percentage of students answering each selected item correctly or giving a particular level of response is provided.

Table 3.1: Civics and Citizenship Proficiency Levels

Level scale range	Proficiency level description	Selected item response descriptors
Level 5 ≥795	Demonstrates precise and detailed interpretive responses to very complex civics and citizenship concepts, underlying principles or issues, in field-specific terminology.	• explain one of the principles that underlie compulsory voting • recognise the importance of precedent and its community impact • understand why refugees need to find safety in another country • understand the contribution of freedom of information laws in a democracy • analyse the tension between critical citizenship and abiding by the law
Level 4 665-794	Demonstrates precise and detailed interpretive responses to complex civics and citizenship concepts or issues. Appropriately uses conceptually-specific language.	• comment accurately on the meaning of Anzac Day • explain how understanding civic process supports civic participation • explain why disagreement between citizens can be good for society • explain how governments may change laws to ensure consistency between State and Federal legislation • understand a democratic electoral mandate gives an elected government the power to implement its policies • provide an accurate definition of the term/concept 'discrimination' • analyse the impact on public opinion of both positive or negative media reporting of an event • analyse Indigenous Australians' under-representation in parliaments
Level 3 535-664	Demonstrate comparatively precise and detailed factual responses to complex civics and citizenship concepts or issues, and some interpretation of information.	• clearly understand the mechanisms and importance of secret ballot • recognise governments advertise the laws so they are known to citizens • explain the symbolism of the Southern Cross in the Australian flag • identify the historical event remembered on Anzac Day • know two actions that might bring about change in legislation • analyse and interpret evidence of attitudinal causes of government policy changes • identify the responsibility of government in the area of health • understand the general effect of sanction in international agreements
Level 2 405-534	Demonstrate accurate responses to relatively simple civics and citizenship concepts or issues, with limited interpretation or reasoning.	• identify more than one basic feature of democracy or democratic process • know what a referendum is • identify a reason why Europeans in the nineteenth century may not have recognised Indigenous laws • offer minimal analysis of reasons for or against compulsory voting • have basic understandings of citizens' taxation and/or civic responsibilities • assert rather than analyse views on media influence • recognise tensions between democratic rights and private actions
Level 1 275-404	Demonstrate a literal or generalised understanding of simple civics and citizenship concepts, using vague terminology without interpretation.	• identify a basic feature of democracy or a democratic process • recognise that democratic governments are elected by the people • recognise some private actions open to citizens in a democracy • Identify appeals to legality or behaviour change in anti-littering posters • recognise that the right to free speech does not imply agreeing with others' views • provide one motivation for joining a community organisation • identify one possible reason for taking protest action • identify one example of the impact of 'neutral media coverage'

Civics and Citizenship Scale: Below Level 1

Items falling below Level 1 had a scale score of less than 275 (see Table 3.1). Only one item fell below Level 1; Question 1 from the Citizenship Pledge unit. This unit had items that appeared in most levels on the scale, and it will be referred to again in this chapter. The unit was a vertical link unit—that is, its items were administered at both Years 6 and 10. It was expected that link items would show a difference in student performance between the two year levels and this was observed. The item was the easiest for the Year 10 cohort. The Year 6 students also found it relatively easy, but less easy than did the Year 10 students.

The Citizenship Pledge unit had items from both the civics and citizenship sub-scales, and, since reference will be made to it throughout this chapter, it is reproduced here in full.

Figure 3.1: Citizenship Pledge Unit - Questions 1 – 4

The Australian Citizenship Pledge is made by people when they become citizens of Australia.

The Australian Citizenship Pledge

From this time forward, under God*,
I pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people,
Whose democratic beliefs I share,
Whose rights and liberties I respect, and
Whose laws I will uphold and obey.

*The words 'under God' are optional.

Q Why do you think that people are allowed to choose whether or not they say the words 'under God'?

_____

Q Why do you think that people who are Australians by birth or grow up as Australian citizens are **not** asked to make this pledge?

_____

_____

Q The pledge suggests that Australian citizens

- ❍ have both freedoms and responsibilities.
- ❍ are required to be loyal only to Australia.
- ❍ should always agree with each other.
- ❍ have more freedoms than citizens of other countries.

Q One principle of democracy is that all people are entitled to hold their own opinions.

The Citizenship Pledge includes the line 'Whose democratic beliefs I share'.

Do you think it is right for the pledge to require people becoming Australian citizens to have democratic beliefs?

❑ Yes **OR** No ❑

Put a ✓ in **one** box and explain your answer.

_____

_____

Aspects of the assessment domain assessed by Question 1 were:

- recognise key features of Australian democracy (6.1); and
- recognise that perspectives on Australian democratic ideas and civic institutions vary and change over time (10.1).

While Question 1 was open ended, it required only one level of response. The accepted response typically identified that freedom of religion (that is, the right to believe or not believe in God) was manifested in the Australian citizenship pledge—for example, '*Some people do not believe in God*', and '*Everyone has different beliefs*'. This response was located at 269 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale and was provided by 88 per cent of Year 10 students.

Civics and Citizenship Scale: Level 1

Level 1 corresponded to a scale score range of 275 to 404 (see Table 3.1).

Items that appeared in Level 1 were characterised by requiring literal or factual responses rather than a detailed interpretation of information and, by implication, the expected responses exhibited a relatively low level of complexity.

Analysis of students' responses in Level 1

A detailed analysis of some other items illustrates the skills and understandings of students described in Level 1 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale.

Figure 3.2: Citizenship Pledge Unit - Question 3

Q The pledge suggests that Australian citizens

- ❍ have both freedoms and responsibilities.
- ❍ are required to be loyal only to Australia.
- ❍ should always agree with each other.
- ❍ have more freedoms than citizens of other countries.

Aspects of the assessment domain assessed by Question 3 were:

- identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens in Australia's democracy (6.5); and
- understand the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a range of contexts (10.4).

Question 3 was a multiple-choice item and students were required to select the correct response; '*have both freedoms and responsibilities*'. These types of item responses were located at 367 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in Level 1 and were provided by 67 per cent of Year 6 and 81 per cent of Year 10 students.

Figure 3.3: Littering unit - Question 4(i)[3]

Q Jenny is walking along the street and has some rubbish to get rid of. She knows it is against the law to litter, but there are no bins around. She also knows it is very unlikely that she will be caught and get a fine.

In this situation, why is it **not** okay for Jenny to drop her rubbish on the ground?

Give what you think is the **most important** reason.

_____

_____

The aspect of the assessment domain assessed by Question 4 was:

- recognise that citizens require certain skills and dispositions to participate effectively in democratic decision-making (6.7).

This item was administered to Year 6 students only and enabled them to respond at one of three levels. The first two levels of response were mapped to Level 1.

The less complex responses, which were scored at '1', merely reiterated the legal aspects of Jenny's decision without elaborating why 'it is not OK'. These types of responses to the item were located at 309 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in Level 1 and were provided by 15 per cent of students. However, taking into account all the students who gave responses to this item, including those who scored more highly, 53 per cent of students showed they were able to achieve a Level 1 response or better on this item.

The more complex responses, which were scored at '2', provided answers in terms of the environmental effect of littering: for example: '*Because it will damage the environment*'. These types of responses were located at 387 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in Level 1 and were provided by 48 per cent of students.

The differences between the responses to this question illustrate the increasing complexity of student response and were identified by markers of the Assessment. The most complex responses to this question, which were scored at '3', were located in Level 3 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale.

Text Box 1: Proficiency Level 1 - Selected Item Response Descriptors

The following descriptors indicate the nature of student responses at this level:

- identify a basic feature of democracy or a democratic process (6.1/10.4)
- recognise that democratic governments are elected by the people (6.3)
- recognise some of the private actions open to citizens in a democracy (6.5)
- identify appeals to legality or behaviour change in anti-littering posters (6.7)
- recognise that the right to free speech does not imply agreeing with others' views (6.7/10.7)
- provide one motivation for joining a community organisation (6.10/10.10)
- identify one possible reason for taking protest action (6.10/10.10)
- identify one example of the impact of 'neutral media coverage' (10.8)

Note: Numbers in brackets refer to Assessment Domain descriptors by year level

[3] The roman numerals in the brackets following the question number refer to the fact that this question is presented more than once in the description of the scale, in order to talk about the different levels of response to the question that fall in different Proficiency Levels. The roman numeral refers to instance of presentation.

Summary characteristics of Level 1 responses

Text Box 1 provides selected item response descriptors illustrative of the items corresponding to Level 1 proficiency. It is evident from the Level 1 item descriptors and additional item response analysis that students responding at this level were able only to interpret civics and citizenship concepts and issues at the most basic level.

Theirs was a literal understanding and the cognition was concrete and narrow. This was demonstrated by students responding to open-ended items in a minimal way. They asserted rather than reasoned and their language was imprecise and generalised, indicating they had only a weak grasp of the point of the question and were possibly unsure of what was required.

Civics and Citizenship Scale: Level 2

Level 2 had a scale score range of 405 to 534 (see Table 3.1). The items in this level required relatively unsophisticated responses, although they were more complex than those in Level 1.

Analysis of students' responses in Level 2

A detailed analysis of some further items from the Citizenship Pledge unit illustrates the skills and understandings of students described in Level 2 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale. The first examples to be analysed are the less complex responses, which were scored at '1', to Questions 2 and 4 of the unit.

Figure 3.4: Citizenship Pledge Unit - Question 2(ii)

Q Why do you think that people who are Australians by birth or grow up as Australian citizens are **not** asked to make this pledge?

_____

_____

The aspects of the assessment domain assessed by Question 2 were:

- recognise that Australia is a pluralist society with citizens of diverse origins and cultural backgrounds (6.6); and
- analyse how Australia's ethnic and cultural diversity contribute to Australian democracy, identity and social cohesion (10.5).

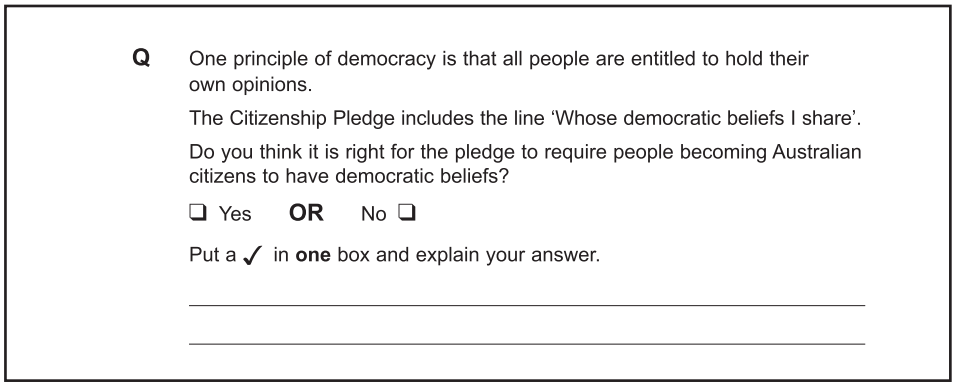
This item enabled students to respond at one of two levels.

The simplest responses, which were scored at '1' and located at 436 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in Level 2, typically identified a pragmatic reason for not being asked to make the pledge, such as the difficulty of organising such an event for a large proportion of the population or the fact that people were already (Australian) citizens: for example, '*Because they are already Australians*'.

Forty-four per cent of Year 6 students and 42 per cent of Year 10 students were able to give only this simpler level of response. However, taking into account all the students who gave responses to this item, including those who scored more highly, 53 per cent of Year 6 and 74 per cent of Year 10 students showed that they were able to demonstrate a Level 2 response or better on this item.

The more sophisticated responses to this question typically made mention of learning values embodied in the pledge and were scored at '2', which located the responses much higher on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in Level 4.

Figure 3.5: Citizenship Pledge Unit - Question 4(ii)



The aspects of the assessment domain assessed by Question 4 were:

- recognise that citizens require certain skills and dispositions to participate effectively in democratic decision-making (6.7); and
- understand that citizens require certain knowledge, skills and dispositions to participate effectively in democratic political and civic action (10.7).

This item enabled students to respond at one of three levels.

The least complex responses, which were scored at '1', required students to provide justifications for their answers. It appeared from qualitative analysis that many students failed to recognise the apparent contradiction posed by the question.

They could answer 'yes' and assert that people must accept the Australian way of life if they were going to be citizens, with responses such as: '*Because they need to respect what we believe*' and '*Because Australia is democratic, so people must understand and agree with it*'; or they could answer 'no' and assert that people should not be compelled to share democratic beliefs, with responses such as 'In a democracy people should be allowed to think what they want'.

The responses which were scored at '1' did not recognise the implicit contradiction of forcing people to think in a particular way in a democracy, or the impossibility of policing such a proposition, because beliefs cannot be enforced. These types of responses were located at 494 in Level 2 and were given by 41 per cent of Year 6 students and 56 per cent of Year 10 students. However, taking into account all the students who gave responses to this item who were scored at or above this level, 45 per cent of Year 6 and 63 per cent of Year 10 students showed they were able

to achieve Level 2 or above on this item. The higher-level responses (which were scored at '2' and '3') were located in Level 5.

Figure 3.6: Bicycle Helmets Unit - Question 2

Q Simon and Sophie are discussing this law.

Read the conversation and complete Sophie's reply.

Simon: I don't see the need for this law. I know the risks. If I have an accident, it's only me who gets hurt. So it should be my choice.

Sophie: No, it isn't just your choice, because …

_____

_____

The aspect of the assessment domain assessed by Question 2 was:

- to identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens in Australia's democracy (6.5).

The Bicycle Helmets item was administered only to Year 6 students and responses appeared at two locations in Level 2. This item enabled students to respond at one of two levels.

The less complex responses were scored at '1' and referred to the government's right to legislate on such issues, the need to obey such laws and/or the personal effects of disobeying them. This response type appeared at 434 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale and was provided by 20 per cent of Year 6 students. However, taking into account all the students who gave responses, including those who scored more highly, 58 per cent of students showed they were able to demonstrate a Level 2 response or better on the item.

The more complex responses to the question were scored at '2' and provided answers that referred to the effects on other people and on society of disobeying the law, such as: '*You could get hurt and your family would be hurt too*'. Thirty-eight per cent of students gave this type of response, which appeared at 514 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale.

Text Box 2: Proficiency Level 2 - Selected Item Response Descriptors

The following descriptors indicate the nature of student responses at this level:

- identify more than one basic feature of democracy or democratic process (6.1/10.4)
- know what a referendum is (6.2/10.2)
- identify a reason why Europeans in the nineteenth century may not have recognised Indigenous laws (6.2/10.3)
- offer minimal analysis of reasons for or against compulsory voting (6.3/10.4)
- have basic understandings of citizens' taxation and /or civic responsibilities (6.5)
- identify and generalise about democratic processes in schools (6.8/10.8)
- have a rudimentary understanding of human rights (10.6)
- assert rather than analyse views on media influence (10.8)
- recognise tensions between democratic rights and private actions (10.9)

Note: Numbers refer to assessment domain descriptors by year level

Summary characteristics of Level 2 responses

Students in this level were dealing with more complex concepts, issues and facts than was the case at Level 1. A range of item descriptors corresponding to Level 2 proficiency is provided in Text Box 2. It is important to note that the cognition and dispositions demonstrated, while not complex, were generally acutely and accurately made. A capacity to interpret and reason within defined limits was demonstrated.

Responses illustrated the main distinguishing characteristic of the cluster: the capacity to select correctly and apply the appropriate or correct fact or aspect of a definition to a situation that was 'known' or was recognisably from within the students' world. Respondents recognised that this (their) world was different from the past, that it had been changed.

Civics and Citizenship Scale: Level 3

Level 3 corresponds to a scale score range of 535 to 664 (see Table 3.1). The items represented in this level were more difficult than those in Levels 1 and 2. They required comparatively precise or detailed factual responses to complex civics and citizenship concepts or issues, and many involved the interpretation of information.

Analysis of students' responses in Level 3

The following analysis of a sample of items illustrates the skills and understandings of students in Level 3 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale. The first to be considered is the most sophisticated of the three possible scored responses for Question 4 in the Year 6 Littering unit. The student responses which were scored at '1' and '2' were discussed previously in Level 1.

Figure 3.7: Littering Unit - Question 4(iii)

Q Jenny is walking along the street and has some rubbish to get rid of. She knows it is against the law to litter, but there are no bins around. She also knows it is very unlikely that she will be caught and get a fine.

In this situation, why is it **not** okay for Jenny to drop her rubbish on the ground?

Give what you think is the **most important** reason.

The aspect of the assessment domain assessed by Question 4 was:

- recognise that citizens require certain skills and dispositions to participate effectively in democratic decision-making (6.7).

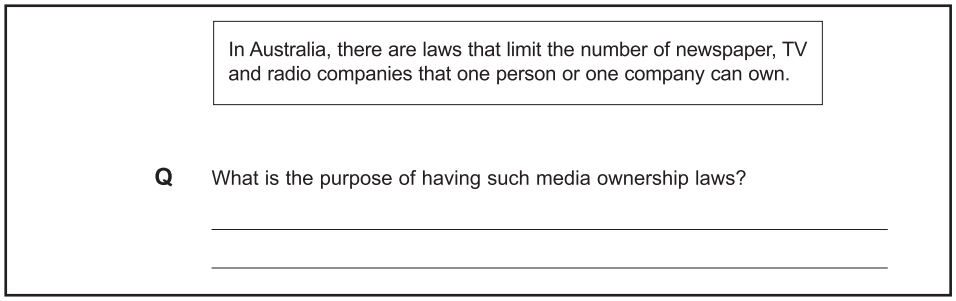
The most complex responses which were scored at '3', referred to Jenny's sense of

social responsibility influencing her decision not to drop the litter: for example, '*Because it gives a bad example to others who see the litter on the ground*', '*She's still littering and you don't do something just because you know you can get away with it*', '*She still should know it is wrong*' and '*She should have carried the rubbish with her until she found a bin*'.

These types of responses were located at 627 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in Level 3 and 19 per cent of students were able to give this level of response, which demonstrated an appreciation of the most complex dispositions and motivations—the internal, ethical values that influence behaviours—and an awareness of the impact of one's actions on others. As this is the highest possible item response level for this item, the percentage of student achievement on the item remained unchanged, at 19 per cent. Responses at this level were conceptually sophisticated, showed an acute recognition of the main issues and reacted to the issues in a number of precise ways.

Since it was a Year 6 item, only the top 8 per cent of that cohort of students, as Figure 4.1 and Table 4.1 show, were likely to be able to demonstrate the required level of citizenship to answer the question fully. Such responses indicate that Year 6 students can demonstrate very complex dispositional and conceptual civics and citizenship understandings, exercise appropriate judgements, weigh up evidence and options for their behaviours and think about the common good.

Figure 3.8: Media Ownership Unit - Question 1(i & ii)



The aspect of the assessment domain assessed by Question 1 was:

- recognise that perspectives on Australian democratic ideas and civic institutions vary and change over time. (10.1)

This single-item unit was administered only to Year 10 students and enabled them to respond at one of two levels in Level 3. The question focused on the media and the role of media ownership (and thus its points of view) in influencing citizens' perspectives on democratic ideas.

The less complex responses, which were scored at '1', referred to monopoly or domination of the media, without elaboration: for example, '*To stop one company ruling everything*', '*So one person does not control the media*'. These types of responses to the item were located at 548 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in Level 3 and were given by 21 per cent of students. However, taking into account all the students who gave responses to this item, including those who scored

more highly, 55 per cent of students showed they were able to achieve a Level 3 response or better on this item.

The more complex responses, which were scored at '2', provided answers demonstrating understandings that a media ownership monopoly could reduce the range and accuracy of public reporting, and implied that diversity of opinion in the media was valuable in a democracy, for example, '*People might not get the whole story*', '*So that all forms of media don't have the same point of view*'. These types of responses to the item were located at 623 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in Level 3 and were given by 34 per cent of students. As this was the highest response level for this item, the percentage of student achievement on the item remained unchanged at 34 per cent.

The surprise with this item was that the less complex response did not appear in an earlier proficiency level suggesting that either few Year 10 students had been taught about the purpose of media ownership laws or they had not been taught about the media in such a way as to develop an understanding of the ramifications of media bias in a democracy.

A surprising feature of the assessment was that so many students found the questions about iconic symbols, such as aspects of the Australian flags and Anzac Day, quite difficult. It had been expected that students of moderate ability and civics and citizenship knowledge and understanding would be able to correctly answer such questions. Because this proved not to be the case, and only a small proportion of students could correctly do so, these items did not appear in Levels 1 and 2, but rather at higher levels, beginning at Level 3.

Text Box 3: Proficiency Level 3 - Selected Item Response Descriptors

The following descriptors indicate the nature of student responses at this level:

- clearly understand the mechanisms and importance of secret ballot (6.3/10.4)
- provide cogent analysis of reasons against compulsory voting (6.3/10.4)
- recognise governments advertise the laws so they are known to citizens (6.5)
- explain the symbolism of the Southern Cross in the Australian flag (6.6/10.5)
- know two actions that might bring about change in legislation (6.8)
- analyse and interpret evidence of attitudinal causes of government policy changes (10.1)
- identify the responsibility of government in the area of health (10.3)
- understand the general effect of sanction in international agreements (10.6)

Note: Numbers refer to assessment domain descriptors by year level

Summary characteristics of Level 3 responses

Students at this level were dealing with much more complex concepts and issues with greater precision and in more detail than was the case with the items in Level 2. The items generally required some interpretation or analysis and the cognition and dispositions demonstrated were occasionally insightful. The language required to respond accurately and precisely to these questions, often reasonably specific to the field of civics and citizenship, was used with much greater fluency than was previously evident.

The markers commented that students at this level behaved as if they were in 'known territory'. There was less evidence of guessing or vagueness in responses to the open-ended items. Students seemed familiar with the concepts and used the concept-specific language more appropriately than had been evident with the students whose responses were mapped at Level 2. They appeared to have had the benefit of formal instruction in the area of civics and citizenship.

Civics and Citizenship Scale: Level 4

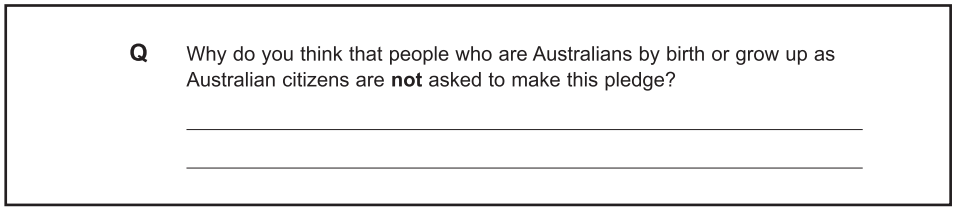
This level had a scale score range of 665 to 794 (see Table 3.1) and represented a level of conceptual complexity that 'stretched' students in demonstrating their understandings of civics and citizenship. Items that appeared in Level 4 required accurate and detailed responses to complex civics and citizenship concepts or issues and most involved the interpretation of information.

Analysis of students' responses in Level 4

A detailed analysis of items illustrates the skills and understandings of students in Level 4 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale.

The first item to be considered was administered to both Year 6 and Year 10 students. The responses to this item that were scored at '1' were discussed previously in Level 2. More sophisticated responses are treated here.

Figure 3.9: Citizenship Pledge Unit - Question 2(ii)



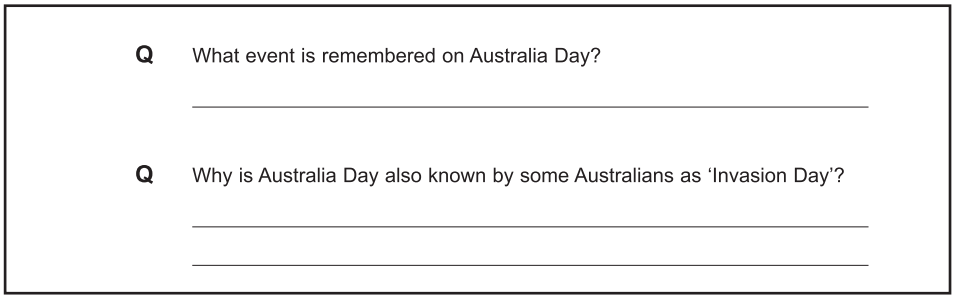
The aspects of the assessment domain assessed by Question 2 were:

- recognise that Australia is a pluralist society with citizens of diverse origins and cultural backgrounds (6.6); and
- analyse how Australia's ethnic and cultural diversity contribute to Australian democracy, identity and social cohesion (10.5).

The more sophisticated responses, which were scored at '2' and located at 670 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in Level 4, asserted explicitly that the values in the pledge were presumed to be acquired by people growing up in Australia: for example, '*You learn this as you grow up in Australia*'. Nine per cent of Year 6 and 32 per cent of Year 10 students provided such responses. As this was the highest response level for this item, the percentage of students demonstrating this level of response or better remained unchanged at 9 per cent for Year 6 and at 32 per cent for Year 10.

In the next two items to be analysed, both the inherent conceptual complexity and the relative item difficulty contributed to the placement of the items at the higher proficiency level.

Figure 3.10: Australia Day Unit - Questions 1(i) and 2(i)



The aspects of the assessment domain assessed by Questions 1 and 2 were:

- recognise that Australia is a pluralist society with citizens of diverse origins and cultural backgrounds (6.2); and
- analyse how Australia's ethnic and cultural diversity contribute to Australian democracy, identity and social cohesion (10.2).

Question 1 was open ended, with only one level of response, located at 744 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in Level 4. Typically, the accepted response referred to the start of British settlement in Australia: for example, '*When the First Fleet arrived*' *and* '*The English coming to Australia*'. It is surprising that only 16 per cent of Year 6 students and 23 per cent of Year 10 students were able to provide this basic fact in their responses. As this was the only response level for this item, the percentage of student achievement remained unchanged at 16 per cent for Year 6 and 23 per cent for Year 10.

Question 2 enabled students to respond at one of two levels.

The less complex responses, which were scored at '1' and located at 672 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in Level 4, typically referred to the British occupation of Indigenous land or asserted that the British settlement in Australia was a bad thing for the Indigenous population: for example, '*The coming of the British brought a lot of bad things for the Aborigines*' and 17 per cent of Year 6 students and 27 per cent of Year 10 students were able to provide such responses.

The more complex responses, which were scored at '2', required responses demonstrating an understanding that Indigenous land was taken. Since very few students gave this simple factual response it was placed at a higher than expected level.

The final additional item responses to be analysed were from the Year 10 Sovereignty unit, with a less complex response to Question 2 mapped to Level 2. In this unit, the concept inherent in the title provided a problem for students.

Figure 3.11: Sovereignty Unit - Questions 1 and 2

Treaties are agreements between countries. National legislation must be passed before a treaty can take effect. Australia has signed many treaties with many countries on issues such as the environment, human rights, national security and trade.

A political commentator said the following about such treaties:

> By signing a treaty, a country gives up some of its independence. We then end up having citizens forced to obey laws that they haven't voted for.

Q Why might a national government still be prepared to sign a treaty even if it meant giving up 'some of its independence'?

Q The political commentator claims that we 'end up having citizens forced to obey laws that they haven't voted for'.

What is the best argument you can think of **against** this opinion?

The aspect of the assessment domain assessed by Questions 1 and 2 was:

- analyse Australia's role as a nation in the global community (10.6).

The less complex responses to Question 1, which were scored at '1' and located at 501 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in Level 2, required only that students recognise reciprocity at national and regional levels of government.

The more complex responses, which were scored at '2' and located at 753 on the scale in Level 4, required that students identify the international or national benefits of signing: for example, '*Treaties are about protecting the signers*'. Only 16 per cent of Year 10 students were able to provide such responses. As this was the highest response level for this item, the percentage of student achievement remained unchanged at 16 per cent.

Question 2 enabled students to respond at one of two levels.

The less complex responses, which were scored at '1' and located at 701 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in Level 4, required students to have an understanding of the relationships among voters, policy and national independence in order to reject the claim, 'it's undemocratic', being made by the politician in the stimulus to the unit. This was even more difficult for students to demonstrate than more complex responses to Question 1, and only 10 per cent of Year 10 students were able to do so.

If students understood the underlying concept, they were almost equally likely to be able to articulate the more complex response, which was scored at '2' and located at 748 on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in Level 4. The best argument against the proposition of loss of national independence was that the citizens do not endorse all government policies and legislation: for example, '*The elected*

governments have the right to make such decisions, Australians don't vote for any laws. They vote for the party that establishes those laws'. Knowing this fact about the process enabled students to apply the underlying concept and answer the question. Only 13 per cent of Year 10 students could do so. As this was the highest scored response level for this item, the percentage of student achievement remained unchanged at 13 per cent.

As noted in the Level 3 discussion, the less complex student responses to the Anzac Day item required an understanding of the significance of the event, and, given the nature of the more complex responses in Level 4, it appeared that very few students had this information.

A similar situation applied in relation to the most complex responses, which were scored at '3' to a question on the Australian flag. Only responses by students in Level 4 demonstrated any precision in describing the symbolism of the Union Jack in the Australian flag.

Text Box 4: Proficiency Level 4 - Selected Item Response Descriptors

The following descriptors indicate the nature of student responses at this level:

- comment accurately on the meaning of Anzac Day (6.6/10.5)
- explain how understanding civic processes supports civic participation (6.8/10.7)
- explain why disagreement between citizens can be good for society (6.9/10.9)
- explain how governments may change laws to ensure consistency between State and Federal legislation (10.1)
- understand a democratic electoral mandate gives an elected government the power to implement its policies (10.6)
- provide an accurate definition of the term/concept 'discrimination' (10.6)
- analyse the impact on public opinion of both positive or negative media reporting of an event (10.8)
- analyse Indigenous Australians' under-representation in parliaments (10.9)

Note: Numbers refer to assessment domain descriptors by year level

Summary characteristics of Level 4 responses

Students at Level 4 demonstrate clear and appropriate understandings, and, in responding with precision, they demonstrate a familiarity with most of the civics and citizenship concepts required by the assessment domain. Additionally, the responses at this level are generally clearly expressed, with the correct and specific terminology. Students at this level are dealing with high levels of conceptual complexity and competency.

Civics and Citizenship Scale: Level 5

Level 5 had a scale score range of 795 and above (see Table 3.1). On a five-level scale, this was the location of items that had the conceptual complexity to 'stretch' the highest-ability students in their demonstration of civics and citizenship understandings. As Figure 4.1 indicates, and Table 4.4 reveals, very few Year 10 students were able to respond at this level, in fact just a little less than 0.1 of 1 per cent of the Year 10 cohort.

Analysis of students' responses in Level 5

The items in Level 5 were conceptually very complex, requiring responses that demonstrated understandings and skills of the highest order.

Citizenship Pledge was discussed previously in relation to responses scored at '1' in Level 2. Very few students at either Year 6 or 10 achieved scores of '2' or '3' on this question. Responses scored at '2' or '3' in Level 5 were too difficult for most students in Years 6 and 10.

Figure 3.12: Citizenship Pledge Unit - Question 4(iii)

Q One principle of democracy is that all people are entitled to hold their own opinions.

The Citizenship Pledge includes the line 'Whose democratic beliefs I share'.

Do you think it is right for the pledge to require people becoming Australian citizens to have democratic beliefs?

❑ Yes **OR** No ❑

Put a ✓ in **one** box and explain your answer.

The aspects of the assessment domain assessed by Question 4 were:

- recognise that citizens require certain skills and dispositions to participate effectively in democratic decision-making (6.7); and
- understand that citizens require certain knowledge, skills and dispositions to participate effectively in democratic political and civic action (10.7).

The item responses which were scored at '2' indicated an understanding that the pledge was symbolic rather than literally binding: for example, '*Yes: You say the pledge to commit to Australia, you don't have to believe all the words*', and '*No: Even though it is only symbolic and you don't have to believe it, it is still stupid to make people say something they don't believe*'. Four per cent of Year 6 students and 5 per cent of Year 10 students provided such responses. However, taking into account all the students who gave responses to this item that were scored at or above this level, 4 per cent of Year 6 students and 7 per cent of Year 10 students showed they were able to achieve Level 5 or above on this item.

The most complex responses, which were scored at '3', showed recognition of the apparent contradiction between wanting symbolic agreement and demanding agreement within a democracy, and referred to the concept of the 'common good', or the limitations on the power of individuals. Two such responses were: '*Yes: If they do not believe there will be more chaos due to belief conflicts*', and '*Yes: You can still believe what you want, but you can't change the political system*'. A few Year 6 students —less than 1 per cent—and 2 per cent of Year 10 students were able to provide such responses. As this was the highest item response level for this item, the percentage of student achievement remained unchanged at less than 1 per cent for Year 6 students and 2 per cent for Year 10 students.

The following is the final item to be analysed in detail. It is a multiple choice item which comprised a Year 6 unit.

Figure 3.13: 'Governor-General's Responsibility' Unit: Question 1

Q Which of the following is one of the Governor General's official responsibilities?

- ❍ to suggest new laws
- ❍ to sit on the High Court
- ❍ to swear in new Governments
- ❍ to control Australia's Government

The aspect of the Domain assessed by Question 1, 'Governor General's Responsibility' unit was to describe the development of Australian self-government and democracy (6.2).

This multiple choice item was administered to Year 6 and Year 10 students, and since only 7 per cent of Year 6 students were able to correctly answer it, is a Level 5 item for Year 6. However 23 per cent of Year 10 students were able to correctly select the right response, and for that year level it is a Level 4 item. The correct response was: '*to swear in new Governments*'. Since the other response options were unambiguously incorrect due to their not being ceremonial but politically or legally substantive, one can only infer that students are not being taught about the role of the Governor General.

In the light of the widespread ignorance indicated by the student response to the 'Governor General's Responsibility' item, some additional analysis of the shortfall in student knowledge of this important aspect of the Assessment Domain, can be provided by another item which was dropped after the analysis from the item set, due to some statistical issues. It was also a single multiple choice item, called 'Head of State', which dealt with the same content as the 'Governor General's Responsibility' item, and it was administered to students in both Years 6 and 10. Had it been retained, it would have been allocated to Level 5, with the highest difficulty level of any item in the test. The responses revealed that the great majority of Year 6 and Year 10 students do not know that the Queen Elizabeth 11 is Australia's Head of State.

Text Box 5: Proficiency Level 5 - Selected Item Response Descriptors

The following descriptors indicate the likely nature of student responses at this level :

- explain one of the principles that underlie compulsory voting (6.3/10.4)
- recognise the importance of precedent and its community impact (6.9,
- understand why refugees need to find safety in another country (10.6)
- understand the contribution of freedom of information laws in a democracy (10.8)
- analyse the tension between critical citizenship and abiding by the law (10.10)

Note: Numbers refer to assessment domain descriptors by year level

Summary characteristics of Level 5 responses

By definition, Level 5 items were those the students found most difficult. Items in Level 5 were characterised as requiring accurate responses to very complex civics and citizenship concepts and underlying principles or issues in cases where the identification and interpretation of key information was important. Level 5 included the most difficult sections of the assessment domain, though there were some surprises in what students found most difficult. Their responses indicated some unexpected gaps in knowledge and understanding which are manifested by the number and substance of the items mapped to Level 5, but student responses to several of the items in this Level indicated some unexpected gaps in students' learning.

Concluding Comments

Describing the Civics and Citizenship Scale makes it possible to show what students in Years 6 and 10 knew, understood and could do in relation to the concepts, knowledge and dispositions outlined in the Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment Domain for 2004. This chapter mapped and described the differences in student achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Scale. It referenced the five Proficiency Levels and provided examples of items and the student responses mapped to these five levels.

Chapter 4 describes the development of the Civics and Citizenship Scale and provides more detail about student achievement by examining proficiency levels overall and for each State and Territory. Chapter 5 will compare the performance of students in Year 6 and Year 10 and suggest inferences regarding the impact of student background on the achievement in civics and citizenship.

Chapter 4
Student Achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Scale in the States and Territories

Chapter 3 described the Civics and Citizenship Scale, referred to the five proficiency levels and provided examples of items and student responses from the five levels of the scale.

This chapter describes the development of the Civics and Citizenship Scale through psychometric analysis of the data and the establishment of the proficiency levels and standards. It provides details of the distribution of student achievement on that scale for Australia as a whole and for each State and Territory.

Developing the Scale

To describe students' proficiency in civics and citizenship, their responses to the items were analysed, using the Rasch model (see the *Technical Report* for more information about the model). Rasch analysis produces information about the relative difficulty of items as well as information about students' abilities. All these data were located on a continuum to form the Civics and Citizenship Scale. To assist interpretation of the scores, the scale was constructed so that the mean of the national Year 6 sample was 400 and the standard deviation 100.

The proficiency levels

To describe student proficiency on the Civics and Citizenship Scale, the continuum was divided into five proficiency levels, ranging from '1' (containing the least

difficult items) to '5' (containing the most difficult items). To establish the levels, a combination of experts' knowledge of the skills required to answer each item and information from the analysis of students' responses was used.

The location of a student at a particular proficiency level means that student was able to demonstrate the understandings and skills associated with that level and possessed the understandings and skills of lower levels. The widths of the levels were set to be equal.

The difficulty range spanned by each level was such that students whose scores were at the top of a level had a 62 per cent chance of answering the hardest items in that level correctly and an 86 per cent chance of answering the easiest items correctly. Students whose scores were at the bottom of the level had a 62 per cent chance of answering the easiest items in that level correctly and a 38 per cent chance of answering the hardest items correctly. On average, students located at a particular level would be expected to answer at least half of the items in the level correctly. The understandings and skills associated with each level were described in Chapter 3.

Setting the proficient standard

To identify what students should know and be able to do by the end of Year 6 and Year 10, experts (including curriculum officers and experienced teachers) from government, Catholic and independent schools in all States and Territories were brought together. The members of the expert group used their classroom experience and knowledge of curricula provision in their jurisdictions to examine items from the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment to locate a proficient standard for both year levels.

The standard was a challenging level of performance, with students needing to demonstrate more than minimal or elementary skills to be regarded as having reached it. In terms of the proficiency levels, the standard for Year 6 was found to be equivalent to Level 2 and for Year 10 to Level 3.

This standard provides parents, educators and the community with a clear picture of the proficiency students were expected to demonstrate by the end of Years 6 and 10. Students who exceeded the proficient standard showed exemplary performance. Students who did not achieve the proficient standard demonstrated only partial mastery of the skills and understandings expected and were on the way to becoming proficient.

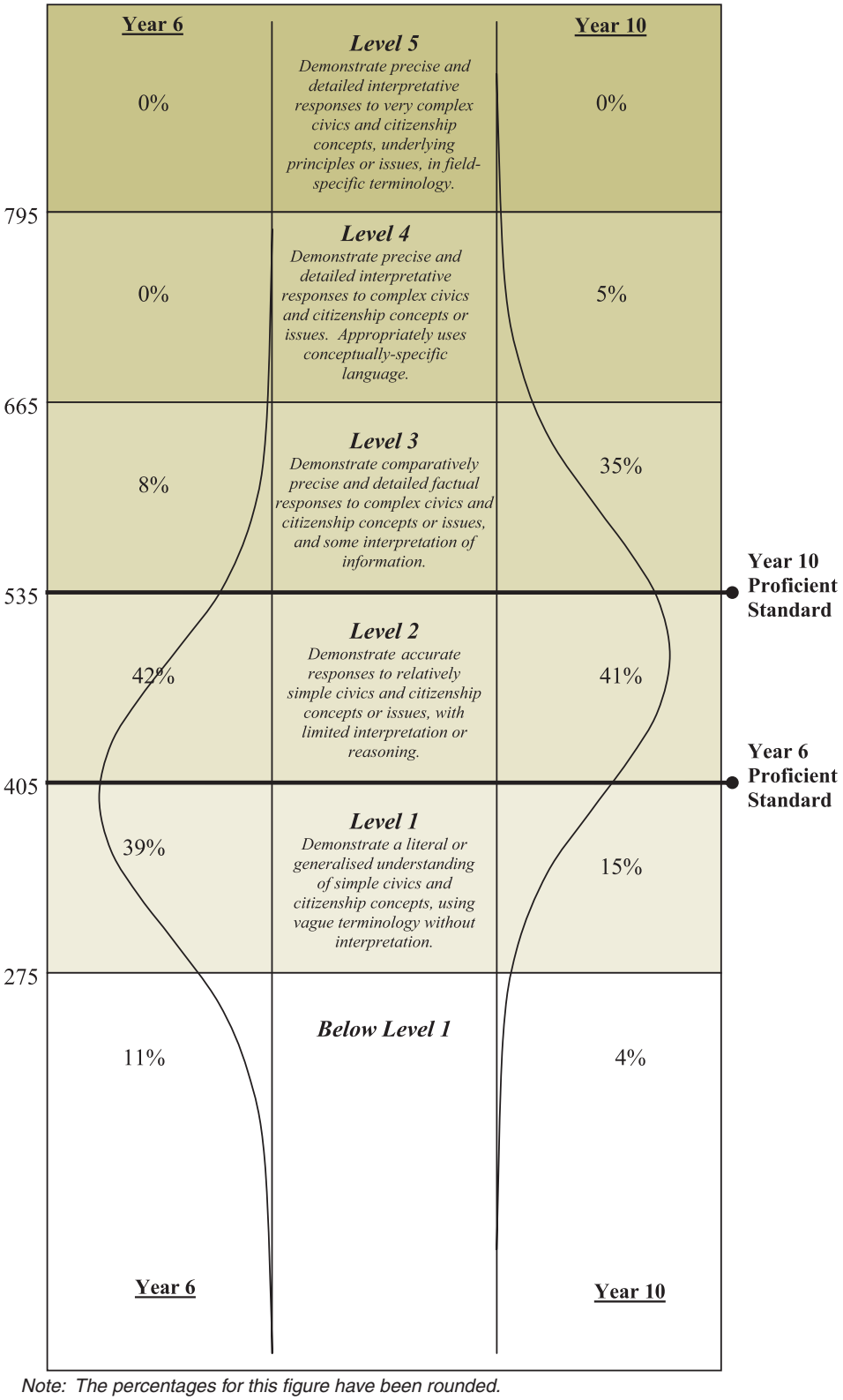
The proficient standard will be the main reference point for monitoring civics and citizenship in Australian schools over time. Every three years a National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment will be conducted to gauge whether student proficiency has improved.

Achievement at each of the proficiency levels

Student proficiency with respect to the skills and understandings described by the Civics and Citizenship Scale is shown in Figure 4.1, which shows the distribution

of Year 6 and Year 10 scores on the scale against the proficiency levels. Level cut points are shown on the left of the figure. The mean achievement for Year 6 was at a scale score of 400 and for Year 10 of 495. The cut points for the Years 6 and 10 Proficient Standards are marked and named on the right hand side of the figure.

Figure 4.1: Distribution of Years 6 and 10 students on the Civics and Citizenship Scale



Note: The percentages for this figure have been rounded.

Figure 4.1 shows that half of Year 6 students achieved Level 2 or above and 40 per cent of Year 10 students achieved Level 3 or above. Figure 4.1 also reveals considerable overlap in proficiency between the Year 6 and Year 10 populations: for example, 35 per cent of the latter achieved at the same level as the top 8 per cent of Year 6 students. The growth in proficiency between Years 6 and 10 is discussed further in Chapter 5.

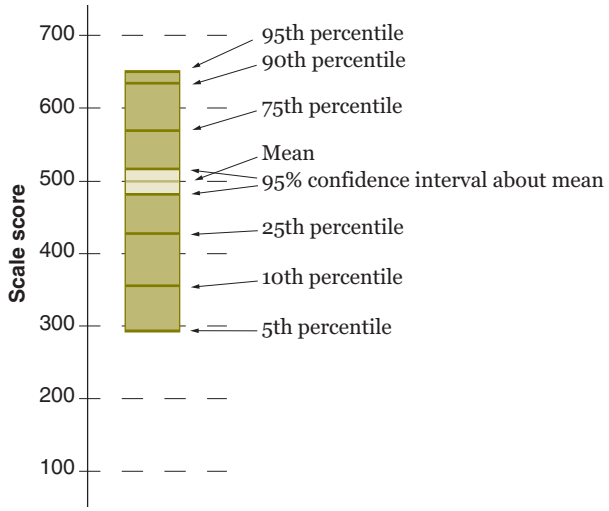
Representation of State and Territory Distributions on Bar Charts

Figure 4.2 is an example of the bar chart used to display the scaled means and distributions for States and Territories at the two year levels.

A vertical bar shows the range of student performance. The highest point in the bar is the 95th percentile, which is the point above which the highest-scoring 5 per cent of the students are located. The lowest point on the vertical bar is the 5th percentile, which is the point below which the lowest-scoring 5 per cent of students are located.

Located in the middle region of each bar is a pale band with a thin horizontal line. This line denotes the mean score, while the pale regions on either side give an indication, through the height of the band, of the level of accuracy with which the mean was measured (the smaller the band, the more accurate the measurement).

Figure 4.2: Example of a Bar Chart



In technical terms, the pale band represents a region of about two ‘standard errors’ (SE) of the mean on either side of it. Each State and Territory’s result was an estimate of the total population value, inferred from the result obtained by the sample of students tested. Because it was an estimate, it was subject to uncertainty. If the mean scores were estimated from different samples drawn from the same population of students, the actual results for the mean would

vary a little. However, the reader may be confident that the population mean lies between the value obtained and about two SE (actually 1.96) on either side of it.

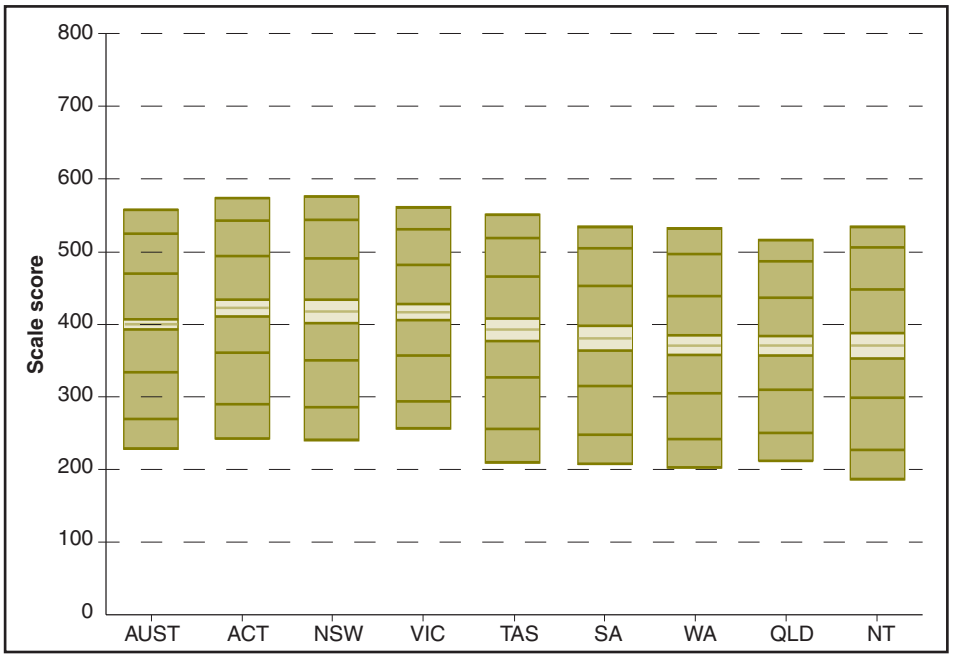
According to statistical theory, the estimate of the mean from repeated sampling would be expected to fall within the range for 95 of 100 samples drawn.

The pale bands (confidence intervals) vary in size from one State and Territory to another. Their width is a function of the State or Territory sample size and the spread of achievement scores on the test. The sample sizes vary in proportion to population, so the jurisdictions with the smallest populations have the smallest samples and the widest pale bands.

The bar charts can be used to determine visually whether one State or Territory's mean score is significantly different from that of another. For the means to be significantly different, the pale bands on the State and Territory bars should not overlap on the vertical (scores) scale.

Figure 4.3 shows the Year 6 student performance in civics and citizenship for each State and Territory.

Figure 4.3: Year 6 Student Achievement by State and Territory on the Civics and Citizenship Scale – Means, Confidence Intervals and Percentiles



	Aust	ACT	NSW	VIC	TAS	SA	WA	QLD	NT
Mean	400.0	422.9	417.9	416.5	392.8	381.3	371.4	370.7	370.6
95% CI	(6.7)	(11.3)	(15.4)	(10.9)	(15.1)	(16.6)	(13.2)	(13.3)	(17.1)

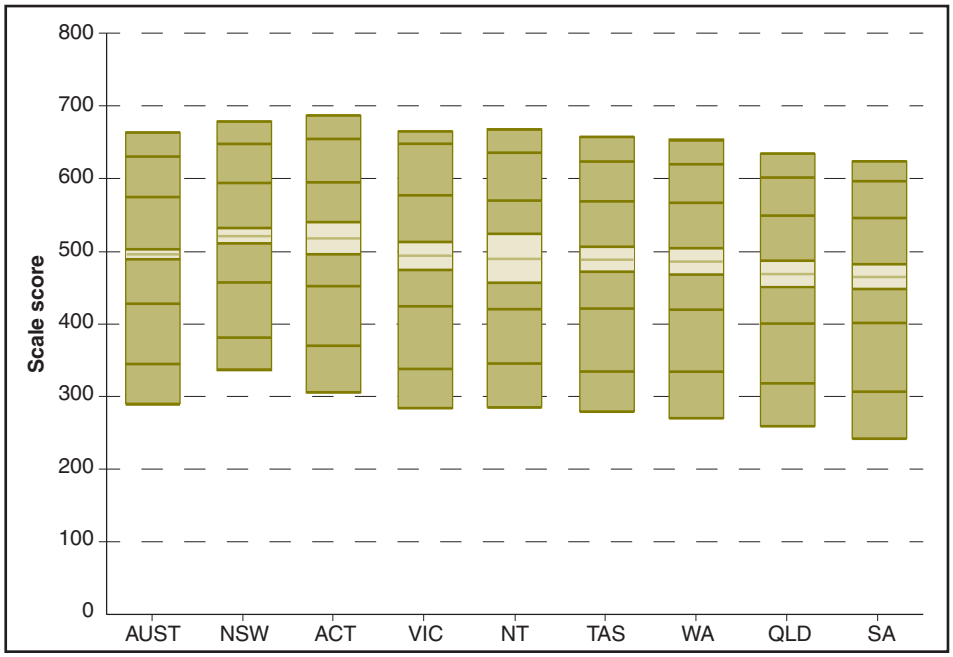
Figure 4.3 shows that although there was some variation in mean score and spread of scores across the jurisdictions, there were more similarities than differences in performance.

The spread of scores achieved by the middle 90 per cent of Year 6 students (those between the 5th and 95th percentiles) across Australia was approximately 329. The Northern Territory had the widest spread of scores (a range of about 345 scale points). Most jurisdictions had ranges of between about 325 and 345 scale points. Victoria and Queensland had the smallest spreads, with ranges of just over 300 scale points.

All jurisdictions had greater spreads of scores between the 5th and the 25th percentiles than between the 75th and 95th percentiles, indicating that the lower-performing students tended to be further behind the rest of the students but the higher-performing students were not so far ahead. Victoria and Queensland had two of the shortest 'tails' (the 25th percentile to the 5th percentile), indicating that their lower-performing students were not as far behind the rest of the students in these States.

Figure 4.4 shows the Year 10 student performance for each State and Territory. As was apparent in the Year 6 results, the variations in performance were relatively small.

Figure 4.4: Year 10 Student Achievement by State and Territory on the Civics and Citizenship Scale – Means, Confidence Intervals and Percentiles



	Aust	NSW	ACT	VIC	NT	TAS	WA	QLD	SA
Mean	495.8	521.4	518.1	493.7	490.4	488.8	486.1	469.4	465.0
95% CI	(7.0)	(10.6)	(21.5)	(19.0)	(33.2)	(16.6)	(17.5)	(17.6)	(16.2)

It can be seen from Figure 4.4 that Western Australia had the widest spread of scores achieved by the middle 90 per cent of Year 10 students (those between the 5th and 95th percentiles), a range of about 383. The spread for Australia as a whole was approximately 374. New South Wales had the smallest spread of 342.

All of the States and Territories had greater spreads of scores between the 5th and the 25th percentiles than between the 75th and 95th percentiles, indicating that the lower-performing students tended to be further behind the rest of the students but the higher-performing students were not so far ahead. New South Wales had the shortest 'tail', indicating that the lower-performing students in that State were not as far behind the rest of the students as they were in other jurisdictions.

The chief difference between Year 6 and Year 10 achievement, as shown in Figures 4.3 and 4.4, is that the spread of scores was greater at Year 10 than it was at Year 6 and the 'tail' was far longer at Year 10, indicating that lower-performing students were further behind the rest of the students at Year 10 than they were at Year 6.

Comparisons of Achievement

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 enable comparisons of State and Territory mean achievement to be made. The jurisdictions are listed in order of their mean scores on the Civics and Citizenship Scale and a State or Territory's performance can be compared with that of the others by reading across the appropriate row.

As this report uses estimates of population results inferred from the results achieved by the samples of students tested, apparent differences between the mean scores of the jurisdictions may not be statistically significant. Differences that are significant are those for which the confidence intervals do not overlap. In Tables 4.1 and 4.2, the shading shows whether a mean score for one State or Territory is significantly lower, not statistically different from or significantly higher than a mean score of another State or Territory.

However, when making multiple comparisons (that is, comparing the performance of one jurisdiction with those of all the others), a more cautious approach is required. Multiple comparison significance tests that limit the probability of mistakenly finding a difference in performance to 5 per cent were applied (Bonferroni Adjustment). In Tables 4.1 and 4.2, those comparisons that were statistically significant according to these tests are indicated by the upward- or downward-pointing symbols.

Table 4.1: Multiple Comparisons of Year 6 Mean Performance on the Civics and Citizenship Scale Among States and Territories

			ACT	NSW	VIC	TAS	SA	WA	QLD	NT
		Mean	423	418	417	393	381	371	371	371
	Mean	95% CI	11.3	15.4	10.9	15.1	16.6	13.2	13.3	17.1
ACT	423	11.3		●	●	●	●	▲	▲	▲
NSW	418	15.4	●		●	●	●	●	▲	●
VIC	417	10.9	●	●		●	●	▲	▲	●
TAS	393	15.1	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
SA	381	16.6	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
WA	371	13.2	▼	●	▼	●	●		●	●
QLD	371	13.3	▼	▼	▼	●	●	●		●
NT	371	17.1	▼	●	●	●	●	●	●	

Note: Read across the appropriate row to compare one State or Territory's performance with the jurisdictions listed across the top of the columns.

Legend

Without the Bonferroni Adjustment

	Mean scale score statistically significantly higher than in comparison State/Territory
	No statistically significant difference from comparison State/Territory
	Mean scale score statistically significantly lower than in comparison State/Territory

With the Bonferroni Adjustment

▲	Mean scale score statistically significantly higher than in comparison State/Territory
●	No statistically significant difference from comparison State/Territory
▼	Mean scale score statistically significantly lower than in comparison State/Territory

Performance data for Year 6 students from each State and Territory are provided in Table 4.1. Students in the Australian Capital Territory achieved a significantly higher mean score than those from Western Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory. Students in New South Wales achieved a significantly higher mean score than did those in Queensland and students in Victoria achieved a significantly higher mean score than did those in Western Australia and Queensland. There were no significant differences between any of the other pairings of jurisdictions.

Corresponding performance data for Year 10 students are provided in Table 4.2. Students in the New South Wales achieved a significantly higher mean score than did those in Queensland and South Australia. There were no significant differences between any of the other pairings of jurisdictions.

Table 4.2: Multiple Comparisons of Year 10 Mean Performance on the Civics and Citizenship Scale Among States and Territories

			NSW	ACT	VIC	NT	TAS	WA	QLD	SA
		Mean	521	518	494	490	489	486	469	465
	Mean	95% CI	10.6	21.5	19.0	33.2	16.6	17.5	17.6	16.2
NSW	521	10.6		●	●	●	●	●	⮝	⮝
ACT	518	21.5	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
VIC	494	19.0	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
NT	490	33.2	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
TAS	489	16.6	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
WA	486	17.5	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
QLD	469	17.6	⮟	●	●	●	●	●		●
SA	465	16.2	⮟	●	●	●	●	●	●	

Note: Read across the appropriate row to compare one State or Territory's performance with the jurisdictions listed across the top of the columns.

Legend

Without the Bonferroni Adjustment

	Mean scale score statistically significantly higher than in comparison State/Territory
	No statistically significant difference from comparison State/Territory
	Mean scale score statistically significantly lower than in comparison State/Territory

With the Bonferroni Adjustment

⮝	Mean scale score statistically significantly higher than in comparison State/Territory
●	No statistically significant difference from comparison State/Territory
⮟	Mean scale score statistically significantly lower than in comparison State/Territory

Students achieving the Years 6 and 10 Proficient Standards

The information in this section draws on the distribution of students' performances across proficiency levels, as shown in Figure 4.1.

Attention is given to the percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 students in all jurisdictions who reached the relevant proficient standards.

Table 4.3, which is an extension of Figure 4.1, shows the percentage of Year 6 students who achieved or exceeded each of the proficiency levels across the States and Territories, with confidence intervals.

Overall, 89 per cent of Year 6 students achieved Level 1 or above, half achieved Level 2 or above and 8 per cent Level 3 or above. Only 0.1 per cent achieved Level 4 or above.

Table 4.3: Percentages of Year 6 Students At or Above Each Proficiency Level on the Civics and Citizenship Scale, by State and Territory

State / Territory	Proficiency Level			
	Level 1 or above	Level 2 or above	Level 3 or above	Level 4 or above
NSW	91.7 (+/- 3.3)[a]	56.6 (+/- 6.6)[a]	12.1 (+/- 4.0)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.2)[a]
VIC	93.0 (+/- 2.8)[a]	57.7 (+/- 5.3)[a]	9.2 (+/- 2.4)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.2)[a]
QLD	85.1 (+/- 3.4)[a]	37.3 (+/- 6.4)[a]	2.9 (+/- 1.7)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]
SA	85.2 (+/- 5.2)[a]	43.0 (+/- 6.7)[a]	4.7 (+/- 2.1)[a]	-
WA	83.3 (+/- 4.0)[a]	38.5 (+/- 5.7)[a]	4.7 (+/- 1.9)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.0)[a]
TAS	87.3 (+/- 4.5)[a]	48.1 (+/- 6.6)[a]	7.3 (+/- 2.5)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.2)[a]
NT	80.8 (+/- 5.2)[a]	40.6 (+/- 7.1)[a]	4.8 (+/- 2.5)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.2)[a]
ACT	92.0 (+/- 2.3)[a]	60.5 (+/- 4.7)[a]	11.8 (+/- 3.5)[a]	0.2 (+/- 0.3)[a]
AUST	89.2 (+/- 1.6)[a]	50.0 (+/- 3.0)[a]	8.1 (+/- 1.5)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]

[a] *95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.*

Figure 4.5 shows the percentage of Year 6 students that achieved the proficient standard set for Year 6, with the 95 per cent confidence intervals (shown as the lighter toned segment at each end of the bar).

Figure 4.5: Percentages of Year 6 Students Achieving the Year 6 Proficient Standard or Better, by State and Territory

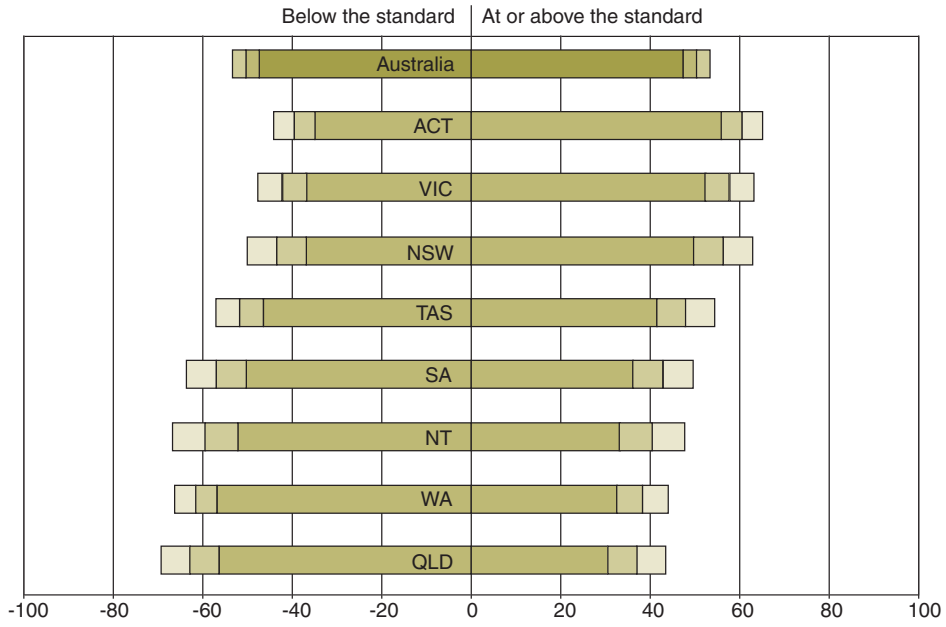


Figure 4.5 shows that approximately 50 per cent of Australian Year 6 students achieved the Year 6 Proficient Standard, which is set at Level 2. It also showed that approximately 60 per cent of students from the Australian Capital Territory achieved the Year 6 Proficient Standard, while approximately 37 per cent of students from Queensland did so.

The percentage in the Australian Capital Territory was significantly higher than the percentages in the Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia. The percentage in Victoria was significantly higher than the percentages in the Northern Territory, Queensland and Western Australia, and the percentage in New South Wales was significantly higher than the percentages in Queensland and Western Australia. There were no other statistically significant differences after applying the Bonferroni Adjustment.

Table 4.4, which is an extension of Figure 4.1, shows the percentage of Year 10 students who achieved at or above each of the proficiency levels across the States and Territories, with confidence intervals.

It describes the same trends in student proficiency as those discussed for Figure 4.4 and shows that 96 per cent of Year 10 students achieved at Level 1 or above, 80 per cent at Level 2 or above and 39 per cent at Level 3 or above. Five per cent achieved at Level 4 or above and 0.1 per cent achieved Level 5.

Table 4.4: Percentages of Year 10 Students At or Above Each Proficiency Level on the Civics and Citizenship Scale, by State and Territory

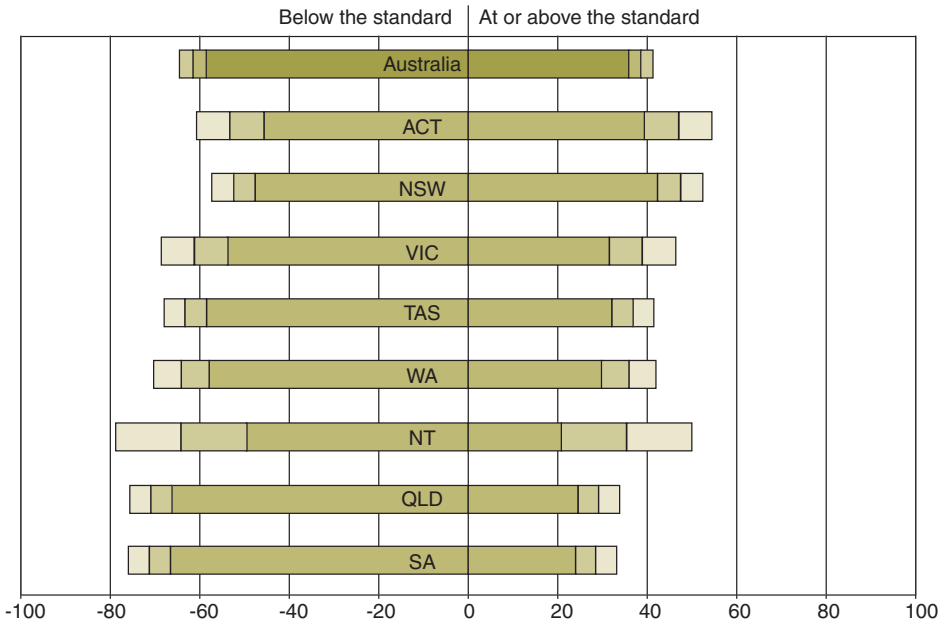
State / Territory	Proficiency Level				
	Level 1 or above	Level 2 or above	Level 3 or above	Level 4 or above	Level 5 or above
NSW	97.9 (+/- 1.2)[a]	86.6 (+/- 2.3)[a]	47.5 (+/- 4.9)[a]	7.0 (+/- 2.4)[a]	0.3 (+/- 0.3)[a]
VIC	95.5 (+/- 2.0)[a]	79.3 (+/- 5.3)[a]	39.6 (+/- 7.4)[a]	5.1 (+/- 2.4)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.0)[a]
QLD	94.0 (+/- 2.7)[a]	73.9 (+/- 5.8)[a]	29.7 (+/- 5.5)[a]	2.3 (+/- 1.2)[a]	-
SA	92.7 (+/- 3.6)[a]	74.1 (+/- 5.5)[a]	29.2 (+/- 4.8)[a]	1.4 (+/- 1.0)[a]	0.0 (+/- 0.1)[a]
WA	94.7 (+/- 2.7)[a]	78.7 (+/- 4.6)[a]	36.3 (+/- 6.1)[a]	3.8 (+/- 2.1)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]
TAS	95.0 (+/- 2.8)[a]	78.9 (+/- 5.6)[a]	37.1 (+/- 4.7)[a]	4.0 (+/- 2.1)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.0)[a]
NT	95.7 (+/- 3.9)[a]	78.8 +/- 9.0)[a]	35.9 (+/- 14.6)[a]	5.0 (+/- 4.4)[a]	0.2 (+/- 0.1)[a]
ACT	96.5 (+/- 2.5)[a]	84.8 (+/- 5.4)[a]	48.0 (+/- 7.6)[a]	8.0 (+/- 3.4)[a]	0.3 (+/- 0.5)[a]
AUST	95.7 (+/- 0.9)[a]	80.4 (+/- 1.9)[a]	39.3 (+/- 2.8)[a]	4.8 (+/- 1.1)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]

[a] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

Figure 4.6 shows the percentage of Year 10 students achieving the proficient standard set for Year 10, with the 95 per cent confidence intervals (shown as the lighter toned segment at each end of the bar).

About 39 per cent of the Year 10 students achieved the Year 10 Proficient Standard, which was set at Level 3. Achievement varied from a high of about 48 per cent in the Australian Capital Territory to a low of about 29 per cent in South Australia.

Figure 4.6: Percentages of Year 10 Students Achieving the Year 10 Proficient Standard or Better, by State and Territory



The percentage of Year 10 students achieving the Year 10 Proficient Standard in the Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales was significantly higher than the percentage in Queensland and South Australia. There were no other statistically significant differences after applying the Bonferroni Adjustment.

Civics and citizenship sub-scales

The civics and citizenship assessment domain was conceived around the two sub-scales of civics knowledge and understanding (KPM1) and skills and values for active citizenship participation (KPM2).

While these were assumed to be different aspects of civics and citizenship, analyses of the data from the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment showed that they were highly correlated: for example, the proportions of Year 6 students at or above Level 2 on the two sub-scales were 49.5 per cent for KPM1 and 49.9 per cent for KPM2. Similarly, in Year 10 the proportions of students at or above Level 3 on the two sub-scales were 39.4 per cent for KPM1 and 39.3 per cent for KPM2.

The extent to which students' proficiency on the two sub-scales was similar can be seen by referring to the tables A3.1 - A3.8 comparing mean performances by State and Territory and by proficiency level in Appendix 3.

Concluding Comments

Differences in the means and dispersion of student achievement by State and Territory and year level were observed across Australia. Among Year 6 students in the mean scores for the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales and Victoria were almost 50 scale points higher than those from Western Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory. Among Year 10 students the mean scores in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory were a little more than 50 points higher than those from Queensland and South Australia, although only in the case of New South Wales was the difference statistically significant. The magnitude of these differences can be gauged by reference to the magnitude of the difference in the mean scores for Year 6 (400) and Year 10 (496).

Among all States and Territories and year levels, lower-achieving students were more spread out on the Civics and Citizenship Scale than were the higher-achieving students. This indicated that the distribution of achievement was skewed, with the lower-performing students tending to be further behind the middle group of students than the higher-performing students were ahead of the middle group. These differences were more pronounced in Year 10, for which the spread of student scores was greater than for Year 6.

Dividing the Civics and Citizenship Scale into proficiency levels enabled student achievement in groups and sub-groups to be described in terms of percentages achieving each level, as well as by means of conventional descriptive and inferential statistics. In general terms, the average performance of Year 10 students was one level above that of Year 6 students, with the top 40 per cent of Year 10 students achieving at or above the level of the top 8 per cent of Year 6 students.

The proficient standards were established to provide a picture of the knowledge and understandings which proficient students were expected to demonstrate by the end of Years 6 and 10. The proficient standard was a challenging level of performance, with students needing to demonstrate more than minimal or elementary skills to be regarded as having reached it. The standard for Year 6 was established as being equivalent to Level 2 and the standard for Year 10 as being equivalent to Level 3. About half of Year 6 and 40 per cent of Year 10 students achieved the respective proficient standards. As with the mean scores, differences in the proportions of students achieving the standards were observed among the jurisdictions.

Chapter 5
Achievement in Civics and Citizenship and Background Characteristics

Previous chapters have described student achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Scale. From studies of student achievement in other fields, it is known that this is influenced by many factors: age, level of schooling, gender, socioeconomic background, language background, geographic location, opportunity to learn, interest and participation in related activities. Students come from a wide range of backgrounds and experience a range of learning environments, and it is important to understand the extent to which these factors relate to their achievements.

This chapter examines the relationship between students' performances in the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment and their civic experiences and personal and family backgrounds. The first section of the chapter focuses on differences in proficiency between different groups of students in Year 6 and in Year 10. The second examines the relationship between students' performance and each of the individual background characteristics about which information was collected in the survey.

As part of the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment, students completed a background survey. A discussion of some aspects of the student background survey was conducted in Chapter 2. The discussion in Chapter 2 related to the information collected about students' gender, age, Indigenous status, language background, school location and family background The survey also included questions about the opportunities students had had to take part in

civic activities. Three sets of questions were included: participation in citizenship activities outside school; opportunities for participation in citizenship activities at school; and learning about governance at school. The chapter concludes with a brief report of analyses of the combined influence of the background characteristics and civic participation activities on students' proficiency in civics and citizenship.

Differences in Proficiency between Students in Years 6 and 10

The 'growth' in proficiency between Years 6 and 10 has been inferred from the differences observed between the Year 6 and Year 10 students who were assessed in 2004. The data collected in the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment in Civics is taken to be the base from which future measurement of growth in student achievement in this area will be constructed. The differences in proficiency were reported as both the differences in mean performance on the Civics and Citizenship Scale by group or sub-group.

Differences in student achievement by year level

Table 5.1 shows the difference in performance between Years 6 and 10 for all surveyed students. The overall difference was 95.8 scale points. In other words, the difference between the means for Year 6 and Year 10 students was approximately the same as the standard deviation for Year 6.

Table 5.1: Year Differential Performance Between Years 6 and 10 for All Surveyed Students

Mean/standard deviation	Year 6	Year 10	Difference (Year 10 -Year 6)
Mean	400.0 (+/- 6.7)[a]	495.8 (+/- 7.0)[a]	95.8
Standard deviation	100.0	114.4	

[a] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

Differences in student achievement by year level and by State and Territory

Table 5.2 shows the differences in performance between Years 6 and 10 by State and Territory. Victoria and South Australia demonstrated the smallest absolute differences in mean performance and Western Australia and the Northern Territory the largest.

Table 5.2: Differences in Mean Performance Between Years 6 and 10, Nationally and by State and Territory

State/ Territory	Mean/standard deviation	Year 6	Year 10	Difference (Year 10-Year 6)
NSW	Mean	417.9 (+/-15.4)[a]	521.4 (+/-10.6)[a]	103.5 (+/-26.0)
	Standard deviation	101.4	106.1	
VIC	Mean	416.5 (+/-10.9)[a]	493.7 (+/-19.0)[a]	77.1 (+/-29.9)
	Standard deviation	93.3	117.2	
QLD	Mean	370.7 (+/-13.3)[a]	469.4 (+/-17.6)[a]	98.7 (+/-30.9)
	Standard deviation	93.4	113.7	
SA	Mean	381.3 (+/-16.6)[a]	465.0 (+/-16.2)[a]	83.7 (+/-32.8)
	Standard deviation	99.0	114.5	
WA	Mean	371.4 (+/-13.2)[a]	486.1 (+/-17.5)[a]	114.7 (+/-30.7)
	Standard deviation	99.8	115.4	
TAS	Mean	392.8 (+/-15.1)[a]	488.8 (+/-16.6)[a]	96.0 (+/-31.7)
	Standard deviation	103.6	115.4	
NT	Mean	370.6 (+/-17.1)[a]	490.4 (+/-33.2)[a]	119.8 (+/-50.3)
	Standard deviation	107.1	114.6	
ACT	Mean	422.9 (+/-11.3)[a]	518.1 (+/-21.5)[a]	95.2 (+/-32.8)
	Standard deviation	101.3	115.8	
AUST	Mean	400.0 (+/-6.7)[a]	495.8 (+/-7.0)[a]	95.8 (+/-13.7)
	Standard deviation	100.0	114.4	

[a] *95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.*

Nationally, the difference between the means for Year 10 and Year 6 performance was 96 scale points. For Western Australia, the difference was 115 scale points and for Victoria, 77. These differences invite further exploration of variations in curriculum and other associated factors, only some of which could be explored in this first National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment.

Differences in student achievement by Years 6 and 10 and by males and females

Table 5.3 shows the differences in performance between Years 6 and 10 by gender. The mean score for female Year 6 students was higher than that for male Year 6 students by approximately 18 points and the difference was statistically significant[4]. The same trend was evident in Year 10, where the mean score for female students was higher than that for male students by approximately 30 points. This suggests that that the gap in performance by gender increases marginally with increasing year level.

Table 5.3: Year Differential Performance Between Years 6 and 10, by Gender

Gender	Mean/standard deviation	Year 6	Year 10	Difference (Year 10-Year 6)
Male	Mean	390.7 (+/- 7.5)[(a)]	480.2 (+/- 9.2)[(a)]	89.6
	Standard deviation	100.8	117.5	
Female	Mean	409.0 (+/- 7.8)[(a)]	511.0 (+/- 8.4)[(a)]	101.9
	Standard deviation	98.4	109.1	

[(a)] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

Table 5.4 shows the relative performance of males and females by State and Territory. Among Year 6 students, females in the Australian Capital Territory were the highest performing group (with a mean score of 432), followed by those in New South Wales and Victoria (with a mean score of 425). Of the male students, those in the Australian Capital Territory were the highest performing (with a mean score of 414) and those in Queensland (with a mean score of 358) were the lowest. While the difference between males and females was significant for Australia as a whole, the differences in individual States and Territories were not. However, in all jurisdictions, the tendency was for females to record higher mean scores than males.

Among Year 10 students, females in New South Wales were the highest performing group (with a mean score of 540), followed by females in Australian Capital Territory (with a mean score of 530). Of the male students, those in the Australian Capital Territory were the highest performing (with a mean score of 505) and those in South Australia were the lowest (with a mean score of 452). Once again, as with the Year 6 students, although the difference between males and females was significant for Australia as a whole, the differences in most of the States and Territories were not significant except in New South Wales. In all jurisdictions, the tendency was for females to record higher mean scores than males.

4 The differences between two means can be inferred to be statistically significant if the confidence intervals associated with each of them do not overlap.

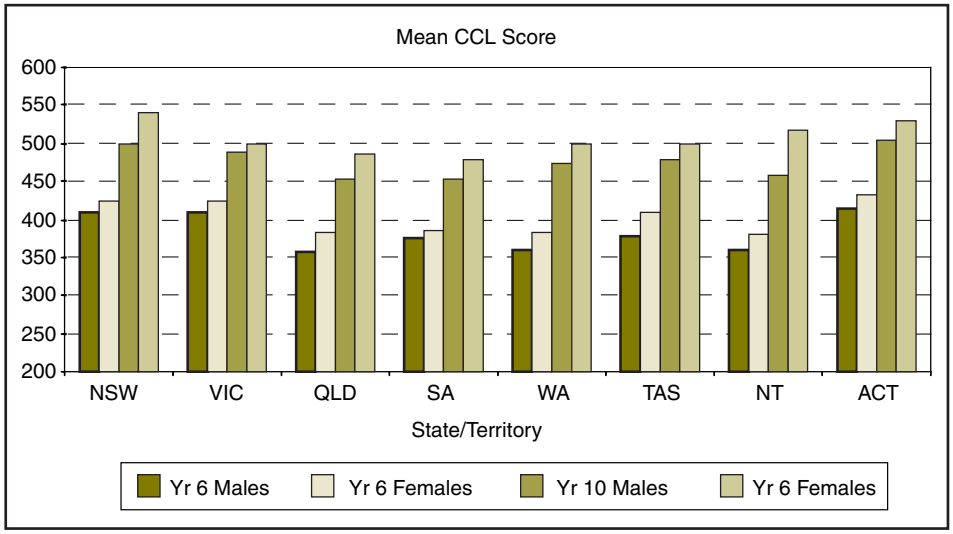
Table 5.4: Mean Performance by Males and Females on the Civics and Citizenship Scale, by Year Level and State and Territory

	Year 6		Year 10	
State/Territory	**Males**	**Females**	**Males**	**Females**
NSW	409.8 (+/- 17.2)[a]	425.1 (+/- 17.9)[a]	500.4 (+/- 15.3)[a]	540.0 (+/- 14.1)[a]
VIC	408.8 (+/- 11.5)[a]	424.8 (+/- 13.2)[a]	489.0 (+/- 22.0)[a]	498.5 (+/- 24.2)[a]
QLD	357.6 (+/- 13.8)[a]	382.4 (+/- 15.7)[a]	453.4 (+/- 22.9)[a]	487.0 (+/- 14.7)[a]
SA	375.9 (+/- 18.0)[a]	387.0 (+/- 17.4)[a]	451.9 (+/- 23.8)[a]	479.9 (+/- 18.9)[a]
WA	359.4 (+/- 14.6)[a]	384.1 (+/- 15.1)[a]	472.6 (+/- 24.7)[a]	499.7 (+/- 17.9)[a]
TAS	377.1 (+/- 19.0)[a]	409.4 (+/- 13.8)[a]	477.7 (+/- 24.0)[a]	500.6 (+/- 16.3)[a]
NT	360.2 (+/- 17.1)[a]	379.6 (+/- 20.0)[a]	458.2 (+/- 28.2)[a]	518.5 (+/- 40.3)[a]
ACT	413.9 (+/- 14.8)[a]	432.3 (+/- 12.6)[a]	505.3 (+/- 24.5)[a]	530.3 (+/- 21.1)[a]
AUST	390.7 (+/- 7.5)[a]	409.0 (+/- 7.8)[a]	480.4 (+/- 9.2)[a]	510.8 (+/- 8.4)[a]

[a] *95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.*

Figure 5.1 shows the means for Year 6 and Year 10 male and female students by State and Territory. This figure shows that the gap between female and male students increases from Year 6 to Year 10, but not uniformly across the jurisdictions. In particular, in New South Wales and the Northern Territory, the gap between female and male students at Year 10 is rather larger than the gap at Year 6.

Figure 5.1: Year 6 and Year 10 Male and Female Mean Performance on the Civics and Citizenship Scale, by State and Territory



Note: The confidence intervals shown in Table 5.4 also apply to this figure.

Table 5.5: Percentages of Males and Females at Each Proficiency Level on the Civics and Citizenship Scale

Gender	Proficiency Level				
	Level 1 or above	Level 2 or above	Level 3 or above	Level 4 or above	Level 5 or above
Year 6					
Male	87.2 (+/- 1.8)[a]	46.5 (+/- 3.5)[a]	6.7 (+/- 1.6)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]	
Female	91.2 (+/- 2.2)[a]	53.4 (+/- 3.3)[a]	9.5 (+/- 2.0)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]	
Year 10					
Male	94.2 (+/- 1.5)[a]	75.7 (+/- 2.9)[a]	34.7 (+/- 3.2)[a]	3.7 (+/- 1.1)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]
Female	97.3 (+/- 0.7)[a]	84.8 (+/- 2.2)[a]	43.7 (+/- 3.9)[a]	5.9 (+/- 1.9)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.2)[a]

[a] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the percentages.

Table 5.5 shows the percentages of male and female students at or above each proficiency level. More female students than male students at both year levels achieved at or above each proficiency level, except Level 4 for Year 6 students and Level 5 for Year 10 students. The differences were significant only for Year 10 students and then only at Levels 1 to 3.

Differences in student achievement by Years 6 and 10 and Indigenous status

Indigenous Year 6 and Year 10 students' mean performance relative to that of non-Indigenous students is shown in Table 5.6. At both year levels, Indigenous students did not perform as well as non-Indigenous students on the Civics and Citizenship Scale. The gap between the non-Indigenous and Indigenous students was about 70 scale points at both year levels, a statistically significant difference. The percentage of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students at each proficiency level are shown in Table 5.7.

Table 5.6: Mean Scores for Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Year 6 and Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Scale

Indigenous status	Year 6	Year 10
Non-Indigenous	403.8 (+/-6.6)[a]	498.2 (+/-7.0)[a]
Indigenous	330.5 (+/-15.8)[a]	426.9 (+/-22.3)[a]

[a] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

Table 5.7: Percentages of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Students at Each Proficiency Level on the Civics and Citizenship Scale

Indigenous status	Proficiency Level				
	Level 1 or above	Level 2 or above	Level 3 or above	Level 4 or above	Level 5 or above
Year 6					
Non-indigenous	90.2 (+/- 1.5)[a]	51.4 (+/- 3.0)[a]	8.4 (+/- 1.5)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]	
Indigenous	72.7 (+/- 6.6)[a]	23.8 (+/- 6.7)[a]	1.7 (+/- 2.0)[a]		
Year 10					
Non-indigenous	96.1 (+/- 0.9)[a]	81.1 (+/- 1.9)[a]	39.9 (+/- 2.8)[a]	4.9 (+/- 1.1)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]
Indigenous	86.5 (+/- 6.0)[a]	57.8 (+/- 8.9)[a]	22.4 (+/- 8.2)[a]	1.8 (+/- 2.8)[a]	0.2 (+/- 0.4)[a]

[a] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the percentages.

Seventy-three per cent of Year 6 Indigenous students achieved Level 1, compared with 90 per cent of non-Indigenous students. At every level, the percentage of Year 6 Indigenous students achieving at or above that level was significantly lower than the percentage of non-Indigenous students achieving at or above that level.

Fifty-eight per cent of Year 10 Indigenous students achieved Level 2, compared with 81 per cent of non-Indigenous students. At each of Levels 1, 2 and 3, the percentage of Year 10 Indigenous students achieving at or above that level was significantly lower than the percentage of non-Indigenous students achieving at or above that level. Interestingly, the percentage of Indigenous Year 10 students achieving Levels 4 and 5 was not significantly different from that of non-Indigenous students and some Indigenous students achieved Level 5.

Differences in student achievement by Years 6 and 10 by languages other than English

Table 5.8 compares the mean scores of students who spoke languages other than English at home with students who spoke only English. At both year levels, the former scored slightly lower than students who spoke only English at home but the difference was not statistically significant. Table 5.8 also compares the performance of students born in Australia with that of students born overseas.

Table 5.8: Mean Scores of Year 6 and Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Scale, by Language Background and Country of Birth

	Year 6	Year 10
Language spoken at home		
English	402.2 (+/-7.6)[a]	499.2 (+/-7.3)[a]
Language other than English	391.6 (+/-9.0)[a]	486.1 (+/-11.4)[a]
Country of birth		
Australia	400.8 (+/-7.0)[a]	499.0 (+/-7.0)[a]
Overseas	389.3 (+/-14.4)[a]	473.7 (+/-14.6)[a]

(a) 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

The distributions across the proficiency levels of students who spoke languages other than English at home compared with those students who spoke only English are shown in Table 5.9. A similar pattern to that shown by Table 5.8 is evident. At both year levels, the proportion of the former achieving each proficiency level or higher was slightly lower than the proportion of those who spoke only English at home achieving that level or higher. However, this difference was not significant.

Table 5.9: Percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 Students at Each Proficiency Level on the Civics and Citizenship Scale, by Language Spoken at Home

Language spoken at home	Proficiency Level				
	Level 1 or above	Level 2 or above	Level 3 or above	Level 4 or above	Level 5 or above
Year 6					
Only English spoken at home	89.5 (+/- 1.7)[a]	50.8 (+/- 3.4)[a]	8.6 (+/- 3.4)[a]	0.1 (+/- 3.4)[a]	
Language other than English spoken at home	88.3 (+/- 2.5)[a]	47.1 (+/- 5.0)[a]	6.0 (+/- 5.0)[a]	0.1 (+/- 5.0)[a]	
Year 10					
Only English spoken at home	96.1 (+/- 1.0)[a]	81.4 (+/- 1.9)[a]	40.4 (+/- 1.9)[a]	5.0 (+/- 1.9)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]
Language other than English spoken at home	94.8 (+/- 1.6)[a]	77.2 (+/- 3.2)[a]	36.1 (+/- 3.2)[a]	4.3 (+/- 3.2)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.3)[a]

(a) 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the percentages.

Differences in student achievement by Years 6 and 10 and by school location

Table 5.10 shows the mean scores on the Civics and Citizenship Scale of students attending schools in metropolitan, provincial and remote areas. At Year 6, metropolitan students scored higher on the scale than did students who attended schools in provincial or remote areas. In the case of provincial students, the difference was statistically significant. However, because of the very large confidence interval of the remote students (associated with the small numbers attending schools), the difference between metropolitan and remote locations was not significant.

Table 5.10: Mean Scores for Year 6 and Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Scale, by Geographic Location of School and Student (Year 10 only)

Geographical Location	Geographic location of school		Location of student
	Year 6	Year 10	Year 10
Metropolitan	407.9 (+/- 8.9)[a]	496.9 (+/- 9.7)[a]	497.1 (+/-9.6)[a]
Provincial	382.5 (+/- 9.5)[a]	494.6 (+/- 13.1)[a]	499.4 (+/-11.1)[a]
Remote	384.2 (+/- 45.2)[a]	455.7 (+/- 77.1)[a]	463.3 (+/-48.0)[a]

[a] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

Table 5.10 also shows that, at Year 10, metropolitan and provincial students achieved very similar mean scores and that these were higher than those achieved by students attending schools in remote areas. However, because of the very large confidence interval of the remote students (small numbers of students attended schools in remote areas), this difference was not significant.

Information regarding home location was sought for students in Year 10 but not for students in Year 6. The third column of Table 5.10 shows the mean scores for geographic location based on the Year 10 students' residential addresses. Differences between home and school in the geographic location code were mainly evident for students in remote locations. Thus Table 5.10 shows the same pattern of difference as that for school location.

Table 5.11 shows the distribution across the proficiency levels of Year 6 and Year 10 students attending schools in metropolitan, provincial or remote areas. These data indicate that there was some difference in the percentages of Year 6 students attending schools in different geographic locations achieving each of the proficiency levels. Significantly more metropolitan students than provincial students achieved Level 2 and significantly more metropolitan than provincial and remote students achieved Level 3. At Year 10, significantly more metropolitan students than remote students achieved Levels 3 and 4.

Table 5.11: Percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 students at Each Proficiency Level on the Civics and Citizenship Scale, by Geographic Location of School

Geographical Location	Proficiency Level				
	Level 1 or above	Level 2 or above	Level 3 or above	Level 4 or above	Level 5 or above
Year 6					
Metropolitan	90.5 (+/- 1.8)[a]	53.5 (+/- 1.9)[a]	9.4 (+/- 1.0)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]	
Provincial	86.6 (+/- 3.3)[a]	42.3 (+/- 2.4)[a]	5.2 (+/- 0.8)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]	
Remote	85.2 (+/- 10.9)[a]	42.2 (+/- 10.9)[a]	5.4 (+/- 2.7)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]	
Year 10					
Metropolitan	95.6 (+/- 1.1)[a]	80.4 (+/- 1.3)[a]	40.2 (+/- 1.9)[a]	5.1 (+/- 0.7)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]
Provincial	96.3 (+/- 1.6)[a]	80.9 (+/- 1.9)[a]	37.4 (+/- 2.8)[a]	4.0 (+/- 0.8)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]
Remote	93.7 (+/- 10.6)[a]	69.6 (+/- 15.5)[a]	25.6 (+/- 10.9)[a]	2.0 (+/- 1.6)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]

[a] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the percentages.

Differences in student achievement by Years 6 and 10 by parental occupation and attainment

Information about two aspects of the home (or parental) background of students was collected as part of the survey: parental occupation and educational attainment.

Differences by parental occupation

The occupations of parents were provided by students and classified into five categories following the PMRT classification: (1), senior managers and professionals; (2), other managers and associate professionals; (3), tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff; (4), unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff; and (5), not in paid work in the last 12 months.

Where occupations were available for two parents, the higher coded occupation was used in the analyses. Mean scores for each group of students (based on the parental occupation that was the higher in cases where two parental occupations were indicated) are recorded in Table 5.12.

There were differences in the mean scores among students from each of these occupation groups; the trend was linear; the difference was as expected on the basis of underlying socioeconomic differences; and the differences between adjacent groups were statistically significant.

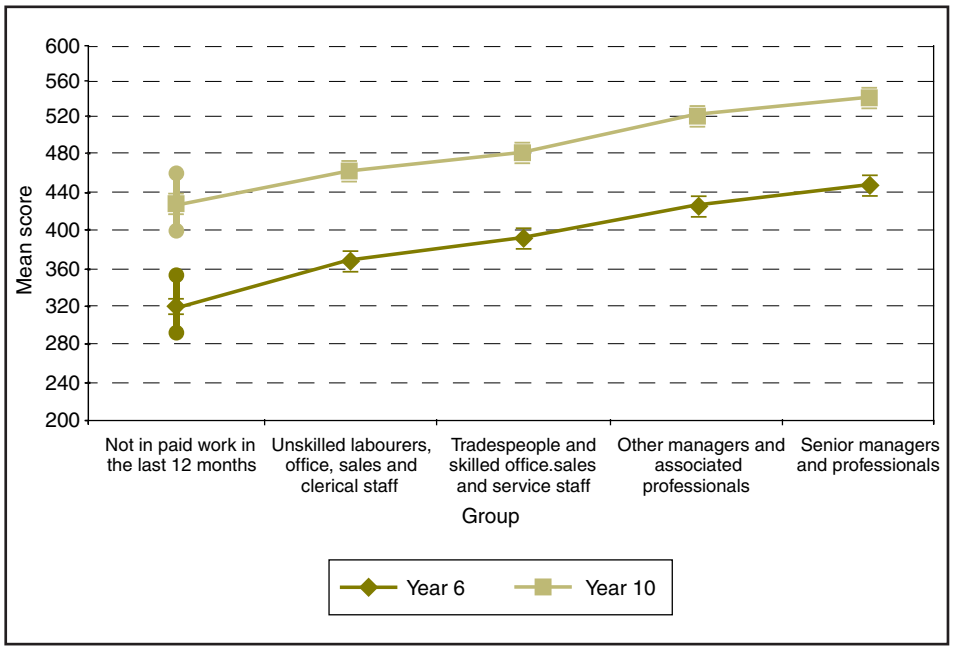
Table 5.12: Mean Scores for Year 6 and Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Scale, by Parental Occupation Group

Occupational group	Year 6	Year 10
Senior managers and professionals	447.4 (+/-7.8)[a]	540.5 (+/-10.0)[a]
Other managers and associate professionals	425.3 (+/-7.5)[a]	521.6 (+/-8.6)[a]
Tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff	391.8 (+/-7.6)[a]	482.1 (+/-7.9)[a]
Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff	367.9 (+/-7.2)[a]	462.7 (+/-9.3)[a]
Not in paid work in the last 12 months	317.2 (+/-25.6)[a]	424.8 (+/-24.7)[a]

[a] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

Figure 5.2 displays the same data as Table 5.12 in a graphical form.

Figure 5.2: Mean Scores of Students on the Civics and Citizenship Scale, by Parental Occupation Group[a]



[a] Confidence intervals associated with group means are shown.

Table 5.13 records the corresponding data as the percentage of students in each proficiency level by parental occupation group. It can be seen that in Year 6, 69 per cent of the students with one or both parents, from parent occupation group 1 (senior managers and professionals) achieved the Proficient Standard for Year 6 (Level 2). This compared to 36 per cent of students with parents classified in parent occupation group 4 (unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff). The corresponding percentages for Year 10 students, for which the Proficient Standard was set at Level 3, were 57 per cent of students with one or both parents classified in parental occupation group 1, and 27 per cent of students with parents classified in parental occupation group 4.

Table 5.13: Percentage of Students Nationally, by Civics and Citizenship Proficiency Level and Parental Occupation Group

Occupational group	Proficiency Level				
	Level 1 %	Level 2 %	Level 3 %	Level 4 %	Level 5 %
Year 6					
Senior managers and professionals	96.7 (+/- 1.6)	69.4 (+/- 4.5)	16.0 (+/- 3.4)	0.3 (+/- 0.4)	0
Other managers and associate professionals	94.2 (+/- 1.5)	61.3 (+/- 3.9)	11.3 (+/- 2.3)	0.1 (+/- 0.2)	0
Tradespeople & skilled office, sales and service staff	89.9 (+/-2.5)	45.3 (+/- 4.7)	5.3 (+/- 1.8)	0.1 (+/- 0.1)	0
Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff	83.6 (+/-2.6)	36.0 (+/- 3.2)	3.5 (+/- 1.5)	<0.1 (+/- 0.01)	0
Year 10					
Senior managers and professionals	98.1 (+/- 1.5)	89.3 (+/- 2.5)	57.0 (+/- 4.1)	9.6 (+/- 2.3)	0.2 (+/- 0.4)
Other managers and associate professionals	98.1 (+/- 0.7)	87.6 (+/- 2.2)	47.5 (+/- 3.8)	6.5 (+/- 2.1)	0.2 (+/- 0.2)
Tradespeople & skilled office, sales and service staff	95.3 (+/- 1.6)	78.7 (+/- 3.5)	32.8 (+/- 3.3)	2.6 (+/- 1.2)	0.1 (+/- 0.1)
Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff	94.0 (+/- 1.8)	72.4 (+/- 3.4)	27.0 (+/- 3.7)	1.8 (+/- 0.8)	<0.1 (+/- 0.01)

The strength of the association between parental occupation background and achievement in civics and citizenship was broadly similar to that observed for achievement in other assessment / learning domains. The simple correlation coefficient between parental occupation group and achievement in civics and citizenship literacy was 0.30[5]. This was approximately the same as the correlation between reading literacy achievement and parental occupation reported in PISA (Thomson, Cresswell & de Bortoli, 2004).

Differences by parental educational attainment

The student background survey asked Year 10 students for additional information about the educational qualifications of their parents. As was the case for parental occupation, where educational attainment was provided for two parents, the higher of the levels was used for analysis. These data are recorded in Table 5.14.

[5] Since the occupation categories were ordinal, Kendall's Tau was used as the correlation coefficient. Parental occupations were also coded on the ANU4 scale of socioeconomic status and a variable based on the higher status of the two possible parental occupations provided a similar relationship with scores on the civics and citizenship scale (r=0.31) to that reported above.

Table 5.14: Mean Scores for Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Scale, by Parental Education

Highest education level of either parent	Mean score
School education	
Year 12 or equivalent	514.5 (+/-7.1)[a]
Year 11 or equivalent or below	468.0 (+/- 8.0)[a]
Post-school education	
Bachelor degree or above	544.9 (+/-11.3)[a]
Advanced diploma/diploma	512.7 (+/-9.0)[a]
Certificate I to IV (including trade certificate)	492.5 (+/-8.9)[a]
No post-school qualification	478.7 (+/-8.1)[a]

[a] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

The corresponding data, in terms of percentage achieving various levels of proficiency for each parental education group, are shown in Table 5.15.

Table 5.15: Percentage of Year 10 Students Nationally by Civics and Citizenship Proficiency Level and Parental Education

Highest education level of either parent	Proficiency Level				
	Level 1 %	Level 2 %	Level 3 %	Level 4 %	Level 5 %
School education					
Year 12 or equivalent	97.3 (+/- 0.8)	84.8 (+/- 1.7)	45.6 (+/- 3.1)	6.5 (+/- 1.4)	0.8 (+/- 0.2)
Year 11 or equivalent or below	94.3 (+/- 1.6)	74.7 (+/- 2.9)	28.7 (+/- 3.4)	1.7 (+/- 0.8)	0
Post-school education					
Bachelor degree or above	98.3 (+/- 1.2)	90.4 (+/- 3.1)	58.4 (+/- 4.6)	10.4 (+/- 2.7)	0.3 (+/- 0.4)
Advanced diploma/diploma	97.7 (+/- 1.1)	85.3 (+/- 3.0)	44.4 (+/- 4.5)	5.1 (+/- 2.1)	0.1 (+/- 0.3)
Certificate I to IV (including trade certificate)	97.0 (+/- 1.4)	81.7 (+/- 3.5)	35.5 (+/- 4.6)	3.2 (+/- 1.3)	0.1 (+/- 0.2)
No post-school qualification	96.2 (+/- 1.4)	77.9 (+/- 2.8)	31.1 (+/- 3.7)	2.0 (+/- 0.9)	0

It can be seen from both Tables 5.14 and 5.15 that there was an association between achievement in civics and citizenship and parental educational level. The performance of students who had at least one parent with a bachelor degree or above was significantly higher than that of all other students and the performance of those who had a parent with a diploma was significantly higher than that of all other groups except for those with parents with bachelor degrees. Fifty-eight per cent of Year 10 students whose parents were bachelor degree graduates attained the Proficient Standard of Level 3, compared to 31 per cent of those whose parents had no post-school qualifications. In terms of school education, those students whose parents had attained Year 12 scored significantly higher than those whose parents had attained Year 11 or below. Forty-six per cent of students whose parents had completed Year 12 attained the Proficient Standard compared to 29 per cent of those whose parents had attained Year 11 or below.

Influence of Background on Student Achievement in Civics and Citizenship: A Regression Analysis

The net influence of background characteristics and civic participation activities on student performance was examined using multiple regression analysis. This provides an indication of the net effect of each variable or block of variables on civics and citizenship scores after allowing for the effects of associated variables.

A regression analysis is based on an equation that has student performance (the student's score on the Civics and Citizenship Scale) as the dependent variable and the other variables as predictors. The analysis generates coefficients (B) that provide an indication of the net influences of the predictor or independent variables in the analysis (e.g. parental occupation status) on the dependent variable (student performance on the Civics and Citizenship Scale). The larger the (B) coefficient is, the stronger the effect of that variable as a predictor on the dependent variable. The magnitude of B represents the effect on the citizenship scale units (where the mean for Year 6 is 400 and the standard deviation is 100 units). For a dichotomously coded variable (e.g. sex) the magnitude of the B coefficient is the net effect of the difference between having that characteristic and not having that characteristic on the performance measure. For continuous variables the size of the coefficient represents the effect of a one standard deviation difference in the independent variable on the performance measure. The analysis also indicates the percentage of the variance explained by the groups of independent variables on performance.

The analysis of influences on performance was conducted by entering blocks of variables in sequence. Of course at the final stage of the process the result is the same as if all variables had been analysed simultaneously. However, the block-wise process provides additional information. Firstly, the results at each stage indicate how much the model is improved by including additional blocks of

variables. Secondly it is possible to examine changes in the regression coefficients as additional blocks are added and thus infer the extent to which the observed effects are direct or transmitted.

- Block 1 included age and sex.
- Block 2 included country of birth (Australian or other), Indigenous status (Indigenous or not Indigenous) and language background other than English.
- Block 3 contained the variables concerned with parental occupation[6]. Because parental occupation was coded in one of five groups it was represented as a set of dummy variables (coded as 0 or 1 to reflect whether the parental occupation was in that group). These were senior managers and professionals, other managers and associate professionals, tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff and not in paid work in last 12 months. The reference category (that was necessarily excluded from the analysis) was unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff and the results for the other occupational groups are relative to that group.
- Block 4 is school location represented as a set of dummy variables (coded as 0 or 1 to reflect whether the school was located in metropolitan or remote area). Regional location was the reference category (that was necessarily excluded from the analysis) and the results reported are relative to students in a regional location.

Results of the regression analysis are shown in Table 5.16.

[6] Parental education was not included in the regression for two reasons. First, there was a substantial amount (15 per cent of cases) of missing data in parental education but not for parental occupation. Second, parental occupation and parental education are highly correlated and including both in the same regression analysis could cause difficulties for interpretation of the results.

Table 5.16: Results of Regression Analysis of Achievement in the Civics and Citizenship Student Characteristics

		Year 6 Students			Year 10 Students		
	Independent	**B ***	**SE**	**Change in R-sq**	**B ***	**SE**	**Change in R-sq**
Intercept	bo	365.8	10.3		463.5	10.2	
Block 1	Age	21.8	3.9	3.7%	-2.6	4.2	2.0%
	Sex	-19.4	3.1		-28.5	5.0	
Block 2	Australian born	12.4	6.9	2.1%	23.2	6.7	1.3%
	Indigenous	-49.5	7.5		-56.8	10.1	
	Language background other than English	-8.1	4.8		-1.8	5.8	
Block 3	Senior managers & professionals	72.6	4.4	10.5%	77.1	6.9	9.0%
	Other managers & associate professionals	52.5	4.3		57.4	5.9	
	Tradespeople, skilled office, sales service	22.5	5.1		18.4	4.3	
	Not in paid work in last 12 months	-44.6	13.8		-32.7	13.0	
Block 4	Remote location	-9.4	8.8	0.7%	-24.16	13.8	0.2%
	Metropolitan location	14.2	6.5		-4.0	8.5	
Missing	Missing information on age	-52.3	7.6		-78.0	19.7	
	Missing information on occupation	-44.0	13.3		-53.4	11.4	
Full model				17.0%			12.5%

** Regression coefficients in bold are significant (< .05).*

The results showed that age (within year level) had a positive effect on performance in Year 6 (that is, older students in Year 6 performed better than younger students) but no significant effect in Year 10.

Girls performed better than boys, with a larger gender difference in Year 10 (19 scale points in Year 6 and 29 scale points in Year 10). Age and sex together explained 4 per cent of the variance in performance in Year 6 and 2 per cent of the variance in performance in Year 10.

Other personal characteristics, included in Block 2 in the analysis, explained relatively little of the variance in performance (around 2 per cent in Year 6 and 1 per cent in Year 10). The strongest predictor among the personal characteristics was Indigenous background, which had a strong negative effect of approximately 50 points at both year levels. The reason why only a small percentage of the variance in the full sample was explained by Indigenous status was that the sample included relatively few Indigenous students. Language background was

not significantly associated with performance (the negative effect of 8 scale points among Year 6 students for language other than English spoken at home was not statistically significant). Being born in Australia had a positive effect of 23 scale points among Year 10 students.

Parental occupation explained 10 per cent of the variance in Year 6 and 9 per cent of variance in Year 10. The magnitudes of the effects were greater at Year 6 than 10. In Year 6, the net effect of parental occupation being at the level of senior manager or professional was 73 scale points compared with 'unskilled labourer, office, sales and service staff'. The corresponding effects for the category 'other managers and associate professionals' was 53 points and for 'tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff' the effect was 23 scale points. For those whose parents had not been in paid work in last 12 months, the effect was a score 45 points lower than that of the reference group. In Year 10 the net effect of parental occupation of a senior manager or professional was 77 points (compared to the 'unskilled labourer, office, sales and service staff' category). The corresponding net effects for 'other managers and associate professionals' and 'tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff' were 57 and 18 points respectively. For those whose parents had not been in paid work in the last 12 months, the effect was a score 33 points lower than that of the 'unskilled labourer, office, sales and service staff' category.

For Year 10, school location had no significant effects in this model. However, in Year 6, students from metropolitan schools had an advantage of 14 scale points over students from regional locations (which is the comparison group) after controlling for the other variables in the model.

All the social and demographic predictors together explained 17 per cent of the variance in performance for Year 6 and 13 per cent for Year 10. Although this leaves most of the variance in performance as unexplained by these variables the result is similar to many similar analyses of student performance. For example, a meta-analysis of the association between achievement and socioeconomic status shows an average correlation coefficient of 0.30 which corresponds to 9 per cent of the variance being explained by socioeconomic status (Sirin, 2005). The challenge is to identify, through the accumulation of research evidence, other factors associated with schools, teaching, home environments and student interests that explain more of the variance. The study of those factors is beyond the scope of a national assessment survey.

Concluding Comments

Analyses were conducted of the influence of student background characteristics on student performance. The magnitude of these influences can be grouped as 'large' effects (associated with a difference of more than 70 scale points), 'moderate effects' (a difference of between 30 and 70 scale points) and 'small' effects (a difference of less than 30 scale points). There was a large difference between the mean scores of students in Year 6 and Year 10.

Parental occupation had large effects on civics and citizenship literacy. The difference in civics and citizenship achievement between children of unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff and senior managers and professionals is just less than 80 score points for both Year 6 and Year 10. Indigenous status had a moderate negative effect of approximately 50 scale points at each year level.

The remaining effects were small: the difference between males and females was approximately 20 scale points (but slightly greater at Year 10 than at Year 6) and metropolitan location had a small effect for Year 6 students but none for Year 10 students.

Chapter 6
Participation in Civics and Citizenship Activities

As was mentioned in Chapter 2, in the student background survey students were asked about the opportunities available in their schools for participation in certain specified civics-related activities. The survey included questions intended to obtain an indication of the opportunities students had experienced in citizenship participation. This chapter provides data and findings on student participation in civics and citizenship activities at and outside school. It reports data collected from the student background survey and discusses some relationships between student views on these activities and achievement in civics and citizenship.

Civics-related Activities at School in the Student Background Survey

Three sets of indicators of opportunities and examples of citizenship participation were developed. They were:

- participation in citizenship activities outside school;
- opportunities for participation in citizenship activities at school; and
- learning about governance at school.

The questions on participation in citizenship activities outside school asked students how often they:

- obtained access to news about current events through newspapers, television and radio;
- talked to family members about political and social issues;
- took part in sporting or musical activities with others; and
- took part in community or volunteer work or environmental activities.

The questions on opportunities for participation in citizenship activities at school asked students if students at their schools could:

- vote for class representatives;
- be represented on student councils (also known as student representative councils);
- contribute to decision making;
- help prepare school papers;
- participate in mentoring or peer support programs; and
- participate in activities outside of class or in the community.

The questions on learning about governance at school asked students whether they thought that they had learnt at school about:

- the importance of voting in elections;
- how to represent other students;
- how to understand people who had ideas that were different from their own;
- how to work cooperatively with other students;
- how to be interested in how their school 'worked'; and
- how to contribute to solving 'problems' at their school.

The data collected on these civics and citizenship activities in and outside school are the subject of this chapter. The relationship between these variables and the achievement data will be explored.

Student views about opportunities to participate in civics-related activities at school

Students were asked if opportunities to participate in the following civic-related activities existed at their school. They were not asked if they themselves had taken up these opportunities. According to the students, opportunities exist in most schools for them to participate in decision making and school governance activities. These data are recorded in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Opportunities for Participation in Civics-related Activities at School, by Year Level

At my school...	Year 6 % 'Yes'	Year 10 % 'Yes'
Students vote for class representatives	77	63
Students are represented on student councils	81	93
Student representatives contribute to decision making	85	92
Students can help prepare a school paper or magazine	56	75
Students can participate in peer support programs	90	80
Students can participate in activities in the community	84	93
Students can participate in activities outside the classroom	97	97

At both year levels, 97 per cent agreed that students at their schools could participate in extracurricular activities, such as sport, drama and debating. Over 90 per cent of Year 10 students and over 80 per cent of Year 6 students agreed that students at their schools could participate in activities in the community. 'Buddy' or peer support programs were perceived by 90 per cent of Year 6 students and 80 per cent of Year 10 students to be available at their schools.

By way of contrast, only 56 per cent of Year 6 students and 75 per cent of Year 10 students felt that their schools gave students opportunities to help prepare school papers or magazines. Over 90 per cent of Year 10 students and over 80 per cent of Year 6 students reported that their schools provided opportunities for students to be represented on student councils and contribute to decision making. Fewer students (77 per cent of Year 6 students and 63 per cent of Year 10 students) indicated that opportunities to vote for class representatives existed in their schools.

The apparent discrepancy between student representation on student councils and opportunities to vote for class representatives may simply reflect the reality that some student councils have representatives voted for by the entire student body, rather than by class, and where this distinction is made there may not be representation in any school-wide representative body.

Associations between civics-related activities at school

Schools that encourage students to learn about decision making and school governance through participation could be expected to provide a number of ways for them to participate. In order to investigate whether opportunities to participate in governance and civics-related activities at school were associated with one another, correlations among the indicators were analysed. These data are recorded in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Correlations Among Civics-related Activities at School

At my school...	Students are represented on student councils		Student representatives contribute to decision making		Students can help prepare a school paper or magazine		Students can participate in peer support programs		Students can participate in activities in the community		Students can participate in activities outside the classroom	
	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10
Students vote for class representatives	0.39	0.22	0.38	0.22	0.07	0.09	0.09	0.15	0.06	0.10	0.07	0.07
Students are represented on student councils			0.46	0.43	-0.01	0.13	0.11	0.19	0.04	0.13	0.08	0.15
Student representatives contribute to decision making					0.10	0.19	0.12	0.22	0.11	0.18	0.06	0.20
Students can help prepare a school paper or magazine							0.10	0.18	0.15	0.16	0.03	0.11
Students can participate in peer support programs									0.07	0.16	0.07	0.16
Students can participate in activities in the community											0.09	0.22

Note: All correlation coefficients displayed are statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As can be seen from Table 6.2 a moderate association at both Year 6 and Year 10 was found between students being represented on student councils and a belief that student representatives are able to contribute to decision making. This suggests that, in some schools at least, students felt that their representatives on student councils were able to contribute meaningfully to decision making and school governance. At Year 6, there was a moderate association among being able to vote for class representatives, student representation on student councils and student representatives being able to contribute to decision making.

There is also an association between these three aspects of participation in school governance at Year 10, but it was weaker than at Year 6. The opportunity in Year 10 to participate in peer support or mentoring programs was associated with student representatives being able to contribute to decision making. Additionally, at Year 10 the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities was associated with opportunities to participate in activities in the community.

A factor analysis[7] conducted separately with Year 6 and Year 10 data indicates that there are two distinct groups of items concerned with civic-related activities in school.

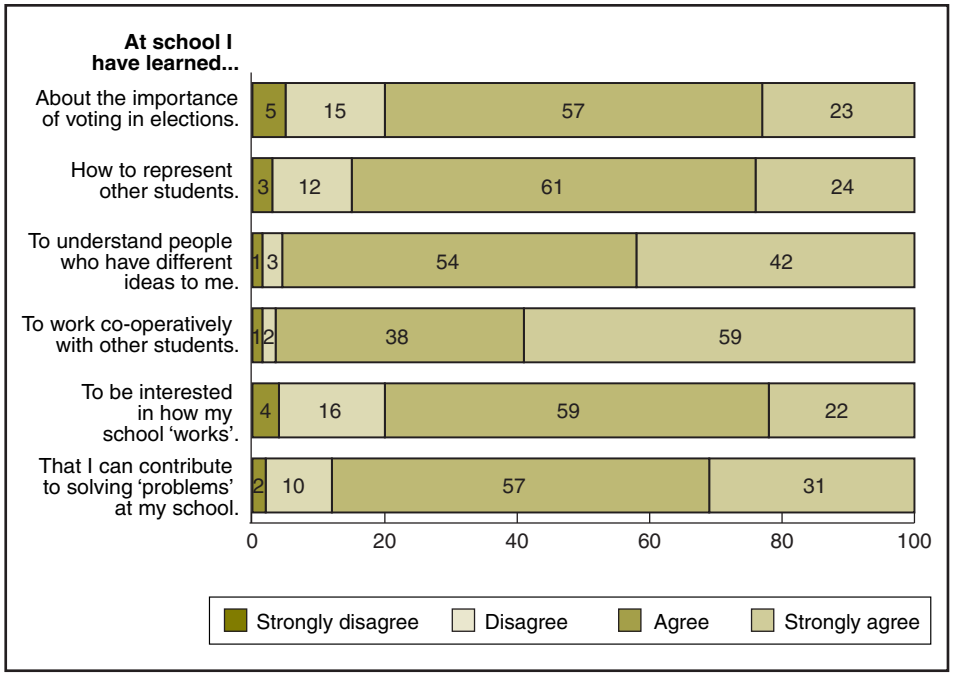
The first group consists of three items that involve the roles of students in school governance (vote for class representatives, represented on student councils, representatives contribute to decision making).

The second group includes the four items concerned with participation in general school activities (help prepare a school paper or magazine, participate in peer support programs, participate in activities in the community and participate in activities outside the classroom). The two groups of items were not related to each other. This clustering of items was evident in the responses of Year 6 and Year 10 students.

Student views about learning about governance at school

As well as investigating the opportunities for participation in civics and governance related activities at school, the student background survey included questions to determine whether students felt that they had learnt about governance and other civics and citizenship issues at school. These data (which have been rounded) are recorded in Figures 6.1 and 6.2.

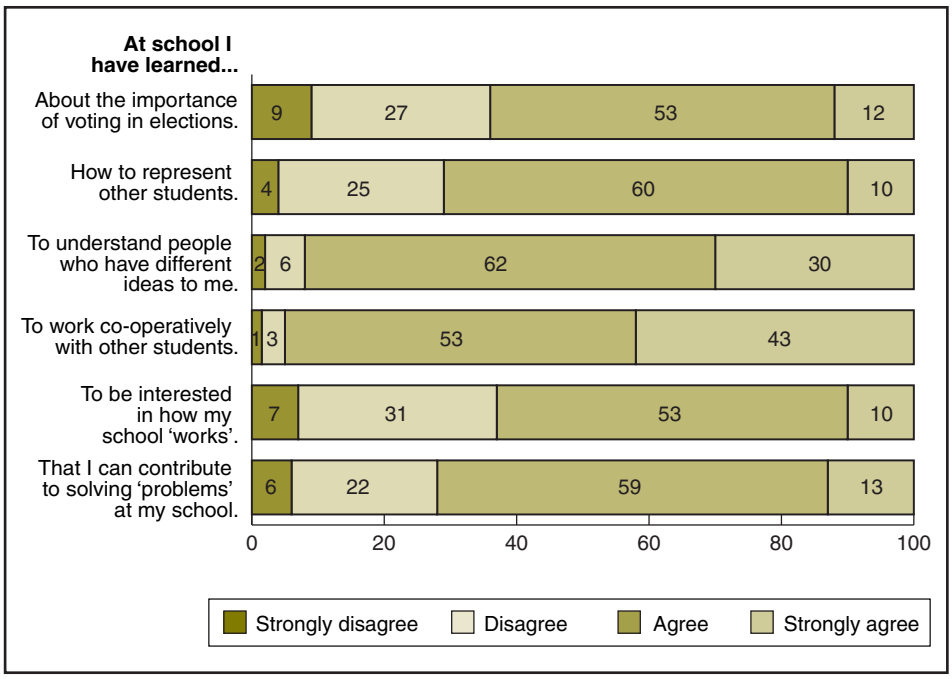
Figure 6.1: Learning About Governance at School: Year 6 Students



7 An analysis of the patterns among correlation coefficients

Most Year 6 students agreed or agreed strongly that they had learned about governance at school. Over 80 per cent thought that they had learnt about the importance of voting in elections and could contribute to solving 'problems' at their schools. Over 85 per cent felt that they had learned to be interested in how their schools 'worked' and how to represent other students. More than 95 per cent agreed or agreed strongly that they had learned to work cooperatively with other students and to understand people who had ideas that were different from their own.

Figure 6.2: Learning About Governance at School: Year 10 Students



Year 10 students were less sure than the Year 6 students that they had learned about governance at school. Around 65 per cent agreed or agreed strongly they had learned about the importance of voting in elections and over 70 per cent agreed that they had learnt that they could contribute to solving 'problems' at their schools. Similarly, approximately 65 per cent had learnt to be interested in how their schools 'worked', while 70 per cent had learnt how to represent other students. However, 90 per cent of Year 10 students agreed or agreed strongly that they had learned to understand people who had ideas that were different from their own and over 95 per cent had learned to work cooperatively with other students.

Associations among student views

It might be expected that student responses as to whether they agreed they had learned certain concepts about governance and civics and citizenship would correlate with one another. Almost all of the concepts about governance and civics and citizenship were correlated moderately strongly with one another. As Table 6.3 shows, there was a substantial association, at both Year 6 and Year 10,

between whether students agreed that they had learned to work cooperatively with other students and whether they agreed that they had learned to understand people who had ideas that were different from their own. Additionally, agreement to having learned to be interested in how a school 'worked' correlated strongly with agreement that students could contribute to solving 'problems' at a school. In all these cases, the association was stronger at Year 10 than at Year 6. A principal components analysis indicated that for both Year 6 and Year 10 students there was one underlying dimension for the responses to the six items on leaning about governance at school.

Table 6.3: Correlations Among Student Views About What Has Been Learned About Governance at School

At school I have learned...	How to represent other students		To understand people who have different ideas to me		To work co-operatively with other students		To be interested in how my school 'works'		That I can contribute to solving 'problems' at my school	
	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10
About the importance of voting in elections	0.24	0.39	0.16	0.31	0.14	0.23	0.23	0.31	0.21	0.28
How to represent other students			0.28	0.40	0.23	0.33	0.31	0.41	0.32	0.42
To understand people who have different ideas to me					0.42	0.55	0.29	0.38	0.33	0.38
To work co-operatively with other students							0.30	0.37	0.31	0.39
Students can participate in peer support programs									0.39	0.56
To be interested in how my school 'works'										

Note: All correlation coefficients displayed are statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Participation in Civics-related Activities Outside of School

As was outlined in Chapter 2, students were asked how often they participated in a number of specified civics-related activities outside school. These data (which have been rounded) are reported in Figures 6.3 and 6.4.

Figure 6.3: Year 6 Participation in Civics-related Activities Outside School

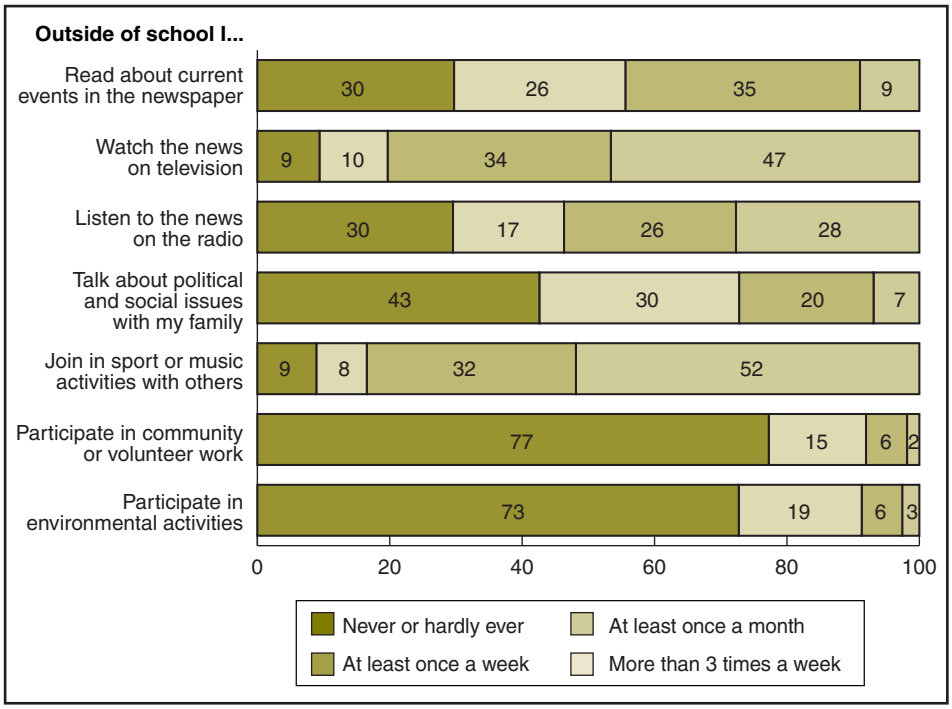
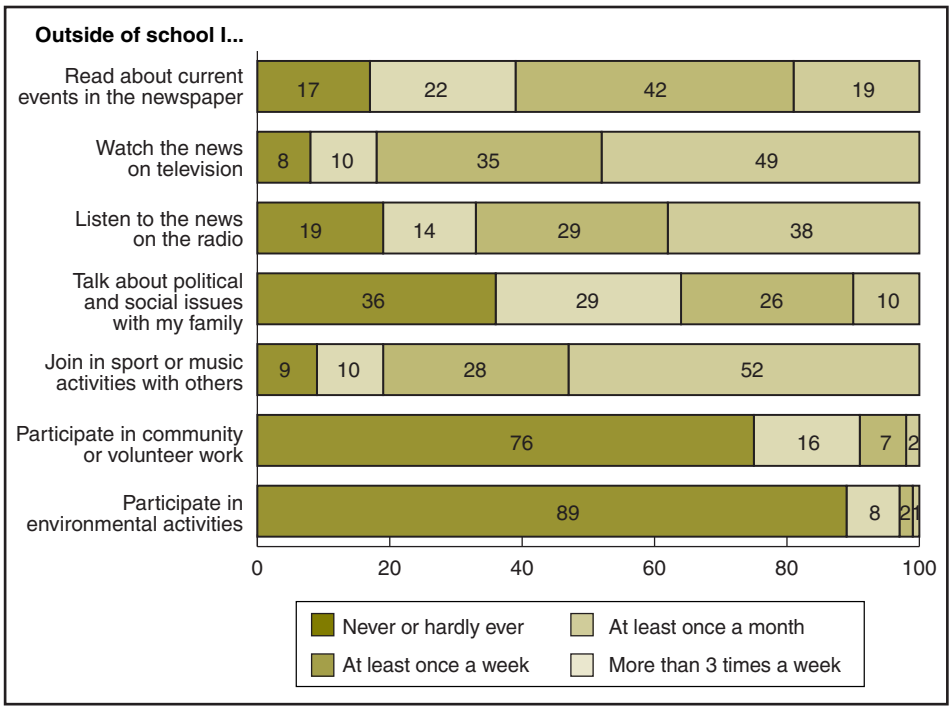


Figure 6.4: Year 10 Participation in Civics-related Activities Outside School



For both Year 6 and Year 10 students, watching television news and participating in group activities, such as music and sport, were the activities most frequently engaged in, with over 80 per cent of students participating at least once a week. For both year levels, listening to radio news and reading about current events in newspapers were the next most common activities, although about 10 per cent more Year 10 students than Year 6 students engaged in them at least once a week.

Fifty-seven per cent of Year 6 students and 65 per cent of Year 10 students talked about political and social issues with their families at least once a month, while 27 per cent of Year 6 students and 36 per cent of Year 10 students did so at least once a week. Few students participated in environmental activities or community and volunteer work outside of school. Less than a quarter of students at both year levels participated in community or volunteer work at least once a month. Students at Year 6 were more likely to participate in environmental activities outside of school: 27 per cent participated at least once a month, compared with only 11 per cent of Year 10 students.

Correlations among civics-related activities outside school

It was considered possible that participation in one civics-related activity might be related to participation in other civics-related activities. Analyses were conducted to investigate associations between different civics-related activities. As Table 6.4 shows, students who obtained access to news and current events in one form were likely to also obtain access to news in other forms (although the correlation coefficients were modest).

Table 6.4: Correlations Among Civics-related Opportunities Outside of School

Outside of school I learned to...	Watch the news on television		Listen to the news on the radio		Talk about political and social issues with my family		Join in sport or music activities with others		Participate in community or volunteer work		Participate in environmental activities	
	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10
Read about current events in the newspaper	0.30	0.40	0.28	0.28	0.29	0.32	0.20	0.18	0.15	0.12	0.08	0.10
Watch the news on television			0.25	0.27	0.21	0.28	0.12	0.14	0.08	0.08	0.07	0.07
Listen to the news on the radio					0.22	0.22	0.14	0.16	0.09	0.10	0.08	0.06
Talk about political and social issues with my family							0.12	0.14	0.14	0.16	0.12	0.15
Join in sport or music activities with others									0.13	0.14	0.10	0.09
Participate in community or volunteer work											0.37	0.32

Note: All correlation coefficients displayed are statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Talking about political and social issues with family members was also associated with obtaining access to news and current affairs through different forms of media. Participation in environmental activities and participation in community

or volunteer work were associated moderately with one another. An association existed between obtaining access to news and current events but it was associated only very weakly with participation in community, volunteer, sporting or musical activities.

A factor analysis showed that there were two groups of items in this set (or there were two underlying dimensions to the student responses). This grouping was evident in both the Year 6 and the Year 10 student responses. The first group of items was concerned with civic and political life (read about current events in the newspaper, watch the news on television, listen to the news on the radio, talk about political and social issues with my family, join in sport or music activities with others). The last of this set is more weakly related to the group than the first four items.

The second group of items consisted of the two that concerned more general participation (participate in community or volunteer work and participate in environmental activities). The two groups are not related to each other.

Relationships Between In-school and Out-of-school Participation in Civics-related Activities

As was mentioned in Chapter 1, students' experience of formal teaching of civics and citizenship was generally low and fragmented. In this climate, it was to be expected that much of what students had learnt about civics and citizenship had come from other sources, such as the media, family and the broader community.

Schools might also have contributed to teaching about civics and citizenship through informal methods such as providing opportunities for participation in school governance. It was considered highly likely that students who had been given opportunities to participate in school governance, through voting for class representatives, being represented on student councils and having student representatives who were able to contribute to school decision making, would be more likely to feel that they had learned about governance at school.

A further analysis of all of the variables used to examine the opportunities students had experienced in citizenship participation found that the correlation coefficients between the variables representing civic-related participation were small. The strongest relations were between participation in civic-related activities outside school and perceived civics learning ($r \geq 0.22$) and between opportunities to participate in school governance and general participation in school life ($r \geq 0.22$). There was little relationship between participation in civics-related activities outside of school and the experiences students might have had in school. Similarly, there appeared to be little to no relationship between students having opportunities to participate in citizenship activities at school and believing that they had learned anything about civics and citizenship at school.

Relationship of Student Achievement to Civics-related Activities

Civics achievement and civic-related activities in school

There was a set of seven items in which students responded to questions about opportunities to participate in various activities at their school. These items were responded to dichotomously as 'yes' or 'no' and formed two groups. One group was concerned with opportunities for participation in school governance and the other was concerned with opportunities for participation in more general aspects of school life.

For each group it was possible to form a scale based on a count of the number of items to which a 'yes' response was provided. Since the items were describing what happened at the school, a mean score was then computed for the school. Based on the mean score obtained by the school on each scale, schools were divided into four equal groups (quartiles) representing: Low opportunity; Medium-Low opportunity; Medium-High opportunity; and High opportunity for participation in these activities. The civics and citizenship achievement scores for each group and the results of the comparison of these scores are recorded in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5: Mean Civics and Citizenship Achievement by Participation Categories

Level of opportunity for participation	School governance		General activities	
	Year 6	Year 10	Year 6	Year 10
Low	394.2	476.4	390.8	481.2
Medium-Low	377.8	483.6	432.1	489.8
Medium-High	395.2	504.6	397.4	508.1
High	415.3	515.8	397.7	500.9
Significance of differences	≈0.05	<0.001	ns	ns

[(a)] Significance levels computed using a multilevel analysis (HLM) with individuals at level 1 and schools at level 2.

The results in Table 6.5 suggest that there is an association between being in a school that provides opportunities for participation in governance and civics achievement scores among Year 10 students. The equivalent correlation coefficient between participation in governance and civics achievement is 0.17 for Year 10 students but only 0.04 for Year 6 students. Of course this does not establish causality but it is of interest that the association is evident in the data for Year 10 students. The results in Table 6.5 also show that there is no significant association between being in a school that provides opportunities for general participation and civics achievement scores.

Civics achievement and student views about learning about governance at school

Previously in this chapter it has been noted that for both Year 6 and Year 10 students there was one underlying dimension for the responses to the six items on learning about governance at school. A scale based on a combination of these items was correlated to a small extent with civics achievement scores at both Year 6 (r = 0.17) and Year 10 (r = 0.20). These are relatively small correlations indicating only a slight association between student views about their civics learning at school and civics achievement as measured by this assessment tool.

Civics achievement and civics-related activities outside school

An initial analysis indicated that there was an association between participation in civics-related activities outside school and civics achievement. There were four items concerned with participation in civic and political life: read about current events in the newspaper, watch the news on television, listen to the news on the radio, talk about political and social issues with my family. The item 'join in sport or music activities with others' forms part of the group, but only weakly, therefore the focus of the analysis was on the four main items.

Table 6.6: Civics Achievement by Participation in Civics-related Activities Outside School

	Mean score for response category				
	Never or hardly ever	At least once a month	At least once a week	More than 3 times a week	Correlation with achievement
Year 10					
Read a Newspaper	458.7	496.0	500.5	524.6	0.17
Watch TV News	457.6	484.9	495.6	504.9	0.10
Listen to Radio News	462.1	487.3	497.7	518.0	0.18
Talk Politics & Social Issues with Family	457.3	504.4	525.8	546.0	0.28
Year 6					
Read a Newspaper	371.5	411.5	411.5	422.8	0.17
Watch TV News	361.1	402.5	403.4	406.6	0.11
Listen to Radio News	376.8	403.9	412.1	414.6	0.15
Talk Politics & Social Issues with Family	383.8	413.5	412.6	418.0	0.13

The data in Table 6.6 indicate that there is an association between participation in civics-related activities outside of school and civics achievement. That association is generally stronger at Year 10 than at Year 6. The strongest association is

between civics achievement and 'talking about politics and social issues with family' among Year 10 students. For Year 6 students the strongest correlate of civics achievement was 'reading a newspaper' but it was still modest.

Regression Analysis of the Influence of Civic Participation on Achievement in Civics and Citizenship

In Chapter 5 the influence of background characteristics and civic participation activities on student performance was examined, using multiple regression analysis. That analysis provided an indication of the net effect of each variable or block of variables on civics and citizenship scores, after allowing for the effects of associated variables[8]. The analysis generated coefficients (B) that provide an indication of the net influences of the predictor or independent variables in the analysis on the dependent variable (student performance). The larger the (B) coefficient is, the stronger the effect of that variable is as a predictor on the dependent variable. The analysis also indicates the percentage of the variance explained by the groups of independent variables on performance. Greater detail about the procedure has been provided in Chapter 5.

In this chapter that analysis is extended by adding variables reflecting student participation in out-of-school civic-related activities. Each of these was coded on a four point ordinal scale, reflecting frequency (from 'never or hardly ever', through 'at least once a month', and 'at least once a week' to 'more than three times a week'. These variables constitute Block 5 in the analysis and the results reflect their influence after allowance for the effects of associated background characteristics. For example the frequency of participation in each of the out-of-school civic-related activities was greater among students whose parents were senior managers and professionals than among students whose parents were unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff. The regression analysis makes allowance for associations such as these. The variables in Block 5 were:

- reading about current events in the newspaper,
- watching the news on television,
- listening to the news on the radio, and
- talking about political and social issues with family.

[8] In the regression of achievement on student background the predictor variables were: Block 1 (age and sex); Block 2 [country of birth (Australian or other), Indigenous status (Indigenous or not Indigenous) and language background other than English]; Block 3 (parental occupation) and Block 4 (school location).

The results of the analysis shown in Table 6.7 provide an indication of the net effect of participation in civic-related activities, after allowing for the effects of background characteristics. The inclusion of the variables that represented participation in out-of-school civic-related activities provided additional explanatory power for the variation in student achievement in Civics and Citizenship.

For Year 6 students these variables accounted for an additional 3 per cent of the variance in civics achievement scores (after allowing for the influence of student background characteristics). The strongest influence was for frequency of reading a newspaper.

For Year 10 students participation in out-of-school civic-related activities accounted for an additional 7 per cent of the variance in civics achievement scores (after allowing for the influence of student background characteristics).

The strongest influence was for the frequency of talking about politics and social issues with family: the effect of one standard deviation increase in frequency of discussion was more than 20 points on the achievement scale. One standard deviation is equivalent to one frequency category, so the net difference in achievement scores between a Year 10 student who never or hardly ever engages in these discussions and a Year 10 student who does so more than three times a week, is almost 70 points. This difference is after allowing for the influence of concomitant differences in student background on civics achievement.

Out of school participation in civic related activities influence the development of civic knowledge of secondary school students.

Table 6.7: Results of Regression Analysis of Achievement in Civics and Citizenship on Student Characteristics and Participation in Civic-related Activities

		Year 6 Students			Year 10 students		
	Independent	B *	SE	Change in R-sq	B *	SE	Change in R-sq
Intercept	bo	332.0	11.4		417.6	11.6	
Block 1	Age	19.8	4.0	3.7%	-5.4	4.1	2.0%
	Sex	-18.7	3.0		-26.6	4.5	
Block 2	Australian born	11.2	7.3	2.2%	20.4	6.3	1.3%
	Indigenous	-46.3	7.3		-55.1	9.6	
	Language background other than English	-10.5	4.6		-3.3	5.7	
Block 3	Senior managers & professionals	70.5	4.5	10.5%	62.9	6.8	9.0%
	Other managers & associate professionals	50.8	4.3		47.7	6.0	
	Tradespeople, skilled office, sales, service	20.2	5.0		14.7	4.5	
	Not in paid work in last 12 months	-36.7	13.0		-20.0	13.1	
Block 4	Remote location	-8.9	8.2	0.7%	-19.4	12.8	0.2%
	Metropolitan location	15.0	6.3		-.8	8.2	
Block 5	Newspaper reading frequency	11.7	1.7	3.2%	8.3	2.5	6.5%
	Television news viewing frequency	5.5	1.6		1.1	1.9	
	Radio news listening frequency	3.5	1.2		6.1	1.3	
	Discussion of politics and social issues	4.8	1.8		22.5	1.9	
Missing	Missing information on age	-47.4	8.0		-72.0	18.4	
	Missing information on occupation	-36.2	14.3		-44.7	10.2	
Full model				20.3%			19.0%

** Regression coefficients in bold are significant (a< .05).*

Concluding Comments

Watching the news on television was the most frequent civic-related activity outside school, with four out of five students watching news at least once a week. Listening to the news on the radio and reading about current events in newspapers were less frequent activities, with three out of five students listening to news and one half of the students reading about current events at least once a week. One third of the students talked about political and social issues with their family at least once per week. All of these civic activities were more frequent for Year 10 students than Year 6 students.

According to students, opportunities existed in most schools for students to participate in decision making and school governance activities. More than four fifths of the students (including nine out of ten Year 10 students) indicated that their school provided an opportunity for students to be represented on student councils and that student representatives could contribute to decision-making.

More than four fifths of the Year 6 students, and two thirds of the Year 10 students, indicated that at school they had learned about governance, the importance of voting in elections and how to represent other students and were interested in how their school worked. Furthermore, more than nine tenths of the students agreed that they had learned to work co-operatively with other students and to understand people who had ideas which are different ideas from their own.

Achievement in civics and citizenship appeared to be influenced by participation in civic-related activities over and above student background. There were small effects of the opportunity to participate in school governance (as measured at school level) on civics achievement among Year 10 students. Participation in out-of school civic-related activities appeared to have a moderate contribution to civics achievement among Year 10 students. Specifically, frequent engagement in talking about politics and social issues with family was quite strongly related to civics achievement.

Chapter 7
Concluding Discussion

The development of the civics and citizenship assessment began early in 2003 with the construction of an assessment domain and the writing of items that were trialled and revised before being assigned to sets of booklets in a systematic rotation.

In October 2004, students at Years 6 and 10 in 600 randomly-sampled schools completed the assessment tasks.

A hallmark of the work was an intensive consultative and iterative process, with particular involvement by jurisdictional stakeholders. The data were collected, expert marking was conducted and data analysis and scaling were undertaken. The process of setting the proficient standard involved consideration of student responses by experts and practitioners, and iterative consideration by the MCEETYA Performance and Measurement and Reporting Taskforce.

This assessment presented various challenges resulting in part from the substance of civics and citizenship—the contestable nature of many of the propositions considered to fall within this area and written into the assessment domain.

These challenges included the varying profiles that civics and citizenship had been given by the different education authorities.

Additionally, the area included some non-formal school and non-school related activities, necessitating the questioning of students through surveys.

Finally, it was, of course, the first time that a national assessment had been undertaken in the area of civics and citizenship.

Implications of the Assessment Domain

The positive effects of this first National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment have already been felt through the development and dissemination of the assessment domain. The domain has been in the public arena since early in 2004 and has underpinned professional development activities in several jurisdictions.

It is likely to be refined during subsequent assessment cycles.

Reporting Student Achievement in Civics and Citizenship

Student achievement was reported on the Civics and Citizenship Scale, which was common to Years 6 and 10. A description was presented for each of the five proficiency levels on the scale, with a focus for discussion being the number of Year 6 and Year 10 students who achieved the proficient standard corresponding to their year level.

Each of the levels on the Civics and Citizenship Scale was illustrated by sample item descriptors and a detailed discussion of sample items. These were all linked to the assessment domain.

The sample items were selected to illustrate the full breadth of the Civics and Citizenship Scale, the range of items included in the assessment and the complexity of the understandings required to answer the items.

Main Characteristics of Student Achievement in Civics and Citizenship

The difficulties students experienced with this assessment were most evident at the extremes of the Civics and Citizenship Scale. There were relatively few items and many students at the lower end of the scale and many items and few students at the higher end of the scale.

Items that appeared in Level 1, for instance, were characterised in Chapter 4 as:

> *... requiring a literal or factual response rather than any detailed interpretation of information. Thus the items in this band, by implication, require responses of a relatively low level of complexity.*

And yet many students found such items a serious challenge:

> *Theirs was a literal understanding and the cognition was concrete and narrow. This was demonstrated by their selecting the correct response in a multiple-choice question, and by responding to an open-ended item in minimal or somewhat vague terminology. They asserted rather than reasoned, and their language was imprecise and generic/generalised,*

indicating they had only a weak grasp of the point of the question and might be unsure of what was required.

The issue of what holds back these students from making more complex responses is an important one.

The language they used was commonly generalised, and it may be hypothesised that this was due to the students not having the concepts or having the concepts but not having the specificity of language that would enable them to respond in a more sophisticated way.

This is always an issue in testing, but in dealing with an area in which there is often a low incidence of formal instruction—such as civics and citizenship—the inhibition of not having a formal, specific, precise language with which to express the required levels of response becomes an important matter.

By way of comparison, items that appeared in Levels 4 and 5 were such that very few students at either year level were able to achieve success with them.

It is important to note that there were many such items.

The item response descriptors for these levels show clearly the civic knowledge (including the appropriate use of specific relevant terminology) and complexity of the analytical interpretation needed to demonstrate achievement of higher proficiency levels.

This is the knowledge, understandings, dispositions and skills that most students could not demonstrate.

The specificity of terminology used by students at these higher levels, especially in the open-ended responses, was not evident at lower proficiency levels. The few students who were able to achieve the higher levels of performance were described in Chapter 4 as:

… demonstrating clear and appropriate understandings, and in responding with such precision they demonstrated a familiarity with most of the civics and citizenship concepts required by the assessment domain.

The item response descriptors for Levels 4 and 5 also indicated the understandings and dispositions that require more teaching. Students will need to be provided with more opportunities to learn and develop these understandings and dispositions if they are to demonstrate higher performance in subsequent assessment cycles.

The concepts and understandings with which students appeared to have the greatest difficulty were of two types:

- concepts such as ‘the common good’ or strategies that refer to how individuals can influence systems for the benefit of society. It is unclear whether students do not have such a concept at all, don’t believe in the common good or do not see how individuals can act for the common good; and

- so-called ‘iconic knowledge’: the widespread ignorance of key information about national events and nationally representative symbols, which, it had generally been assumed, had been ‘taught to death’ in Australian schools, was a surprise. More targeted teaching is required if students are to learn about these things.

Another matter for concern was the fact that many of the Year 10 students clearly did not have the knowledge outlined in the assessment domain as being designated for Year 6. This was especially the case in relation to information about the constitutional structure of Australian democracy in Year 10.

Ignorance of such fundamental information indicates a lack of knowledge of the history of our democratic tradition, and this ignorance will permeate and restrict the capacity of students to make sense of many other aspects of Australian democratic forms and processes. Without the basic understandings, they will be unable to engage in a meaningful way in many other levels of action or discourse.

Despite the concerns about the relatively low levels of achievement, one of the most encouraging aspects was the fact that some students were able to achieve at higher levels than had been expected. Eight per cent of Year 6 students were able to perform at Level 3 and 5 per cent of Year 10 students at Level 4.

It is not possible to know whether this performance was a result of particular teaching or life experiences, but the specificity of knowledge and complexity of response required (as demonstrated by the item response descriptors) suggests that well taught students can indeed achieve well beyond the expected proficiency in civics and citizenship.

Differences in Performance between Year 6 and Year 10

Such differences provide a point-in-time indicator of the ‘growth’ that occurs in student learning between Years 6 and 10.

Although some caution should be exercised in generalising these data to represent measures of true longitudinal growth that could be obtained though measuring the achievement of the same cohort of students in Year 6 and, later in Year 10, the data do provide some insight into how Australian students’ knowledge and understanding of civics and citizenship change between Years 6 and 10.

Student performance in Years 6 and 10 was centred on Levels 1 and 2 and Levels 2 and 3 respectively. Year 10 performance can be considered to be approximately one performance level above Year 6 performance.

Whether a difference of one performance level, or an effect size of one between Years 6 and 10 is sufficient is difficult to judge without more detailed investigation.

It is fair to assume that, ignoring the background variables that influence student achievement but are unlikely to change significantly in students' lives between Years 6 and 10, the magnitude of 'growth' in learning between Years 6 and 10 is a primarily a function of the way in which civics and citizenship is taught in schools.

It is also true that civics and citizenship education does not have the same prominence in school programs as literacy, numeracy and science for example. As such, it is not reasonable to expect the same levels of 'growth' between Years 6 and 10 as occurs in some other learning areas.

At face value, the data raise some concerns about the achievement of Year 10 students in particular. The concepts and thinking processes required for Levels 4 and 5 achievement require formal teaching to introduce or crystallise experiences and concepts that students may (or may not) have confronted in their daily lives.

Addressing this may increase the difference in performance between Years 6 and 10.

Factors Associated with Student Achievement in Civics and Citizenship

Parental occupation had a substantial effect, with differences of approximately 80 scale points between the bottom and top occupational categories. The magnitude of this effect was similar to those found in assessments in other areas of learning.

Indigenous students performed less well than non-Indigenous students by approximately 50 scale points.

The difference between males and females was approximately 20 scale points in favour of females, and was slightly greater at Year 10 than Year 6.

There were only small and inconsistent effects of location and language background.

Participation in citizenship activities had varied but mainly small effects on student performance. However, participation in family discussions of current events by Year 10 students had a moderate effect on student performance. Other things being equal, Year 10 students who talked more frequently about political and social issues with their families performed better than their peers (as did Year 6 students who read more frequently about current events in the newspapers).

This suggests that students who participate in these activities out of school gain knowledge about civics and citizenship that their non-participating peers do not.

Implications of Student Achievement in Civics and Citizenship

Student achievement at both year levels was below that expected by the experts who participated in the proficienct standards setting exercise, by the State and Territory officers who participated in the marker training and by the experts who marked the open-ended responses.

Half of Year 6 students achieved the designated Year 6 Proficient Standard, and 39 per cent of Year 10 students the designated Year 10 standard.

If the expectation is that most students should be able to meet the proficient standard for their levels, the achievements of Year 6 and Year 10 students in 2004 will be seen as disappointing.

However, if the view is taken that students should not be expected to achieve the relevant proficient standard if they have not received formal, consistent instruction by way of an appropriate curriculum, then disappointment may not be as great.

Formal, consistent instruction has not been the experience of Australian students in civics and citizenship.

The major support for civics and citizenship programs in schools in recent years has been the Discovering Democracy program funded by the Australian Government and implemented by the States and Territories.

The evaluation of the second, professional development phase of that program referred to key elements that had been judged important in the successful take-up of the program, and they remain the way forward, if performance is to be improved in this area:

> *The findings from this evaluation point the way to the shape of professional development in any agenda that may be a focus for the future. Critically, professional development should be structured as an integral aspect of any major national agenda from its inception, as 'materials' of themselves gain deeper credibility in schools when they 'fit' with teachers' professional learning. Importantly, there need to be structures in the States and Territories that facilitate cross-sectoral engagement and professional dialogue – these two elements have been absolutely vital in the achievements of the professional development work undertaken in Discovering Democracy, as has the pivotal role played by the professional development officers.*
>
> (Erebus, 2003, p. xiv)

Although young Australians appear to accept and appreciate their democracy, their level of knowledge and understanding of civics and citizenship is less than was expected by a range of experts in the field.

Subsequent National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessments may show an improvement in student performance if students receive more consistent instruction in civics and citizenship and if teachers receive the professional development referred to in the Erebus evaluation. Such a change in curriculum delivery may come about following this assessment and the implementation of, for example, the National Statements of Learning at the level of school-based curriculum.

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Appendix 1
Assessment Domain

MCEETYA PMRT Civics & Citizenship Assessment Domain: Domain Descriptors

Yr 6 Civics & Citizenship Key Performance Measures

KPM 1: Civics: Knowledge & Understanding of Civic Institutions & Processes

Knowledge of key concepts and understandings relating to civic institutions and processes in Australian democracy, government, law, national identity, diversity, cohesion and social justice.

Within primary schooling this KPM anticipates that students can:

6.1: Recognise key features of Australian democracy.

6.2: Describe the development of Australian self-government and democracy.

6.3: Outline the roles of political and civic institutions in Australia.

6.4: Understand the purposes and processes of creating and changing rules and laws.

6.5: Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens in Australia's democracy.

6.6: Recognise that Australia is a pluralist society with citizens of diverse ethnic origins and cultural backgrounds.

KPM 2: Citizenship: Dispositions & Skills for Participation

Understandings related to the attitudes, values, dispositions, beliefs and actions that underpin active democratic citizenship.

Within primary schooling this KPM expects that students can:

6.7: Recognise that citizens require certain skills and dispositions to participate effectively in democratic decision-making.

6.8: Identify ways that Australian citizens can effectively participate in their society and its governance.

6.9: Recognise the ways that understanding of and respect for, commonalities and differences contribute to harmony within a democratic society.

6.10: Understand why citizens choose to engage in civic life and decision-making.

Yr 10 Civics & Citizenship Key Performance Measures[9]

KPM 1: Civics: Knowledge & Understanding of Civic Institutions & Processes

Knowledge of key concepts and understandings relating to civic institutions and processes in Australian democracy, government, law, national identity, diversity, cohesion and social justice.

Within secondary schooling this KPM expects that students can:

10.1: Recognise that perspectives on Australian democratic ideas and civic institutions vary and change over time.

10.2: Understand the ways in which the Australian Constitution impacts on the lives of Australian citizens.

10.3: Understand the role of law-making and governance in Australia's democratic tradition.

10.4: Understand the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a range of contexts.

10.5: Analyse how Australia's ethnic and cultural diversity contribute to Australian democracy, identity and social cohesion.

10.6: Analyse Australia's role as a nation in the global community.

KPM 2: Citizenship: Dispositions & Skills for Participation

Understandings related to the attitudes, values, dispositions, beliefs and actions that underpin active democratic citizenship.

Within secondary schooling this KPM expects that students can:

10.7: Understand that citizens require certain knowledge, skills and dispositions to participate effectively in democratic political and civic action.

10.8: Analyse the role of a critical citizenry in Australia's democracy.

10.9: Analyse the relationship between democratic values and social justice as an important aspect of Australia's democratic tradition.

10.10: Analyse the reasons Australians make choices about participating in political and civic processes.

[9] The Year 10 KPMs assume the Year 6 KPMs have already been achieved by students

MCEETYA PMRT Civics & Citizenship Assessment Domain: Professional Elaboration

Yr 6 Civics & Citizenship Key Performance Measures

KPM 1: Civics: Knowledge & Understanding of Civic Institutions & Processes

Knowledge of key concepts and understandings relating to civic institutions and processes in Australian democracy, government, law, national identity, diversity, cohesion and social justice.

Within primary schooling this KPM anticipates that students can:

6.1: Recognise key features of Australian democracy.

Identify and be able to describe the following key features of Australian democracy:

Australian citizens use a secret ballot to elect representatives to govern on their behalf.

A majority of elected representatives can form a government to exercise decision making authority, which is then responsible to the elected representatives.

Laws can be passed with the support of a majority of elected representatives.

Basic values in a democratic society include the rule of law, freedom of speech, freedom of the media, freedom of religion, freedom of association.

Everyone, including government, is subject to the law.

6.2: Describe the development of Australian self-government and democracy.

Indigenous Australians have always had formal, traditional processes of governance and these processes continue to exist today.

Permanent British occupation of Australia began with the settlement of a penal colony in Sydney in 1788.

After European occupation the indigenous inhabitants came under British law and their rights to the land were said not to exist, since the land was said to be 'Terra Nullius'.

Until the mid nineteenth century appointees of the British Government made Australian political decisions: the Governors, the Legislative Councils, and a system of courts. Local municipal governments were established over time.

During the nineteenth century the British Government, under continuous pressure from colonists, enlarged the franchise for voting and the responsibilities of the Legislative Councils in the colonies. Australian colonies slowly adapted most aspects of the Westminster system.

By 1901, the colonies had agreed to federate and the Commonwealth of Australia was created, as a federation under a constitutional monarchy, with a bi-cameral legislature and with the British monarch as the head of state, represented nationally by the Governor-General.

At Federation, not all Australians had voting rights. During the 20th Century the franchise was extended to all adult citizens, including: women, indigenous people and immigrants.

6.3: Outline the roles of political and civic institutions in Australia.

Identify the three levels of government in Australia: – local, state and federal.

Describe electoral processes that operate in these three levels and how citizens can become elected representatives.

Understand that each level of government is responsible for providing different services to citizens, and that they therefore impact on citizens' lives differently.

Recognise the importance of having an independent public service to advise governments.

6.4: Understand the purposes and processes of creating and changing rules and laws.

Understand that the purpose of all laws (and some rules) is to govern the behaviour of individuals, groups and nations.

Understand that rules and laws can be made in many locations and times.

Understand that laws are created by parliaments and by precedents established by courts.

Understand that laws are designed to address issues in society.

Recognise that laws and rules may be altered as circumstances change.

Understand important principles of law such as independence of the judiciary, equality before the law, and innocence until proof of guilt.

Appreciate the possible impact of international conventions and treaties on Australia's laws and policies.

6.5: Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens in Australia's democracy.

Identify some of the political, legal, social and economic rights Australian citizens enjoy.

Recognise that these rights help protect citizens from exploitation and abuse.

Identify some of the political, legal, social and economic responsibilities Australian citizens have.

6.6: Recognise that Australia is a pluralist society with citizens of diverse ethnic origins and cultural backgrounds.

Recognise that individuals belong to different groups according to their age, gender, ethnic background and location. Some individuals will belong to a number of groups.

Appreciate the contribution different life experiences make to the development of personal and group identities.

Understand that 'being an Australian' can mean different things to different people and groups.

Recognise there are iconic Australian individuals and groups, symbols and events, and understand the national meanings they have and what they represent.

KPM 2: Citizenship: Dispositions & Skills for Participation

Understandings related to the attitudes, values, dispositions, beliefs and actions that underpin active democratic citizenship.

Within primary schooling this KPM expects that students can:

6.7: Recognise that citizens require certain skills and dispositions to participate effectively in democratic decision-making.

Understand that in a democratic society people are entitled to hold and express their views on civic and political matters, within the law, and in turn must respect the rights of others to do the same.

Understand the importance in democratic decision-making of providing evidence to support views and opinions.

Value and respect the process of negotiation and problem solving in groups.

Appreciate that when individuals and groups work together they can 'make a difference' to civic life.

6.8: Identify ways that Australian citizens can effectively participate in their society and its governance.

Understand that Australians can become active citizens at all levels of civil society, through formal and informal democratic processes.

Describe a range of ways that Australian students can participate in their school and its governance.

Describe how all Australians can actively engage in the community by applying the dispositions, values and skills outlined in 6.7.

Demonstrate good citizenship by adopting the dispositions and learning the skills outlined in 6.7, and undertaking the actions outlined in 6.8.

6.9: Recognise the ways that understanding of and respect for, commonalities and differences contribute to harmony within a democratic society.

Appreciate that knowledge of, and respect for, people from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds positively contributes to social harmony in a pluralist society.

Describe how democratic values can contribute to peace and equity in a group or community.

Understand that social harmony is more likely when individuals and groups work collaboratively.

6.10: Understand why citizens choose to engage in civic life and decision-making.

Understand that citizens may wish to influence civic outcomes that benefit them.

Understand that citizens may wish to influence civic outcomes that benefit the common good.

Yr 10 Civics & Citizenship Key Performance Measures[10]

KPM 1: Civics: Knowledge & Understanding of Civic Institutions & Processes

Knowledge of key concepts and understandings relating to civic institutions and processes in Australian democracy, government, law, national identity, diversity, cohesion and social justice.

Within secondary schooling this KPM expects that students can:

10.1: Recognise that perspectives on Australian democratic ideas and civic institutions vary and change over time.

Identify key characteristics of a democracy and of democratic institutions.

Recognise that the formal processes of democracy have political, legal and civic components.

Recognise that perspectives on the 'health' of democracy vary across time, individuals and groups.

Understand how and why Australian democratic and civic institutions have changed over time.

Understand the role of political parties and lobby groups in a democracy.

Understand the role that international declarations and agreements can play in changing perspectives on Australian democratic ideas and institutions.

Describe how civic institutions both contribute and adapt to social change in democracies.

10.2: Understand the ways in which the Australian Constitution impacts on the lives of Australian citizens.

Understand that a constitution is a framework by which a group can manage some of its social, political and economic goals.

Understand that the Australian constitution outlines the powers of the legislature, the executive and the judiciary, and the formal relationships between them.

Outline the relationship between Commonwealth and State governments, within the federal system, as defined in the Australian Constitution, and how it has changed since Federation.

Understand the part referenda play in changing the Constitution.

Understand how the Constitution is interpreted by the High Court and appreciate the impact these rulings, when applied, have on Australian society and people's daily lives.

10.3: Understand the role of law-making and governance in Australia's democratic tradition.

Recognise that law-making processes in Australia have changed over time.

Understand that in a democracy, policy formulation involves debate in and outside parliaments, and may result in legislation being formulated.

Describe the ways in which laws are created, amended, and interpreted through parliaments, courts and constitutions.

Understand the difference between statute and common law, and how both serve to protect citizens' rights.

Analyse how policies and laws are implemented by the courts, public service and other bodies.

Understand the interactions and tensions that exist between democratic law-making, other processes of governance and civic life.

Understand that protest and open debate have contributed to the process of legislative and civic change in Australia's democracy.

10.4: Understand the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a range of contexts.

Demonstrate that citizens have the right to address civic issues and present their views, through a range of ways and institutions and at all levels.

Understand tensions between competing rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

[10] The Year 10 KPMs assume the Year 6 KPMs have already been achieved by students

Be able to apply these understandings to a range of contexts and situations.

Understand how the exercise of these rights and responsibilities contributes to Australian society and its freedoms.

Understand the ways democratic governments and other civic institutions impact on the lives of individuals and communities.

Understand the ways democratic governments and other civic institutions can be threatened by individuals and communities.

10.5: Analyse how Australia's ethnic and cultural diversity contribute to Australian democracy, identity and social cohesion.

Recognise and appreciate that Australia is a pluralist society of people from a range of ethnic origins.

Appreciate how personal, family, cultural and national histories contribute to the development of individual, civic and national identity.

Understand how social cohesion can be maintained, even in times of social discord, by active acceptance of and respect for cultural and ethnic diversity.

Demonstrate how the rule of law and parliamentary democracy can promote social diversity and cohesion.

Understand that national Australian identity can have different meanings for different individuals and communities.

Recognise how national identity can be expressed and shaped by individuals and groups, events and icons.

Recognise that regionalism, ethnic diversity and individualism can impact on national cohesion.

10.6: Analyse Australia's role as a nation in the global community.

Understand how relationships between nations are affected by particular national policies.

Understand the role of international agreements in managing relations between nations.

Understand how Australia interacts on governance issues with other nations.

Understand the importance of international conventions and treaties (eg. UN Rights of the Child) and agreements to Australia's international relationships.

Show an awareness of the actions and motivations of some of Australia's global interactions since Federation.

Analyse reactions to Australian international policies and practises.

Understand the potential for tension between national security and civil rights.

KPM2: Citizenship: Dispositions & Skills for Participation

Understandings related to the attitudes, values, dispositions, beliefs and actions that underpin active democratic citizenship.

Within secondary schooling this KPM expects that students can:

10.7: Understand that citizens require certain knowledge, skills and dispositions to participate effectively in democratic political and civic action.

Understand the historical and policy context of a public issue.

Understand and be able to apply rules to a range of decision making processes and situations

Analyse a range of arguments and evidence in decision-making.

Understand the role of information and communication technologies (ICT) and the media in civic life, and develop critical analysis and communication skills.

Work collaboratively with others, across a range of styles/modes of problem solving.

Recognise that participation in political and civic institutions is an important way for citizens to exercise their responsibilities in a democratic society.

10.8: Analyse the role of a critical citizenry in Australia's democracy.

Understand the importance to effective democracy of informed and active citizens.

Understand that citizen engagement can be through a range of political and civic processes.

Understand the contribution that citizen engagement makes to Australian society and its freedoms.

Understand the impact on a democracy of a free, informed and critical media.

Appreciate the impact on a democracy of an active and informed citizenry.

Appreciate that the accountability of governments and parliaments can be enhanced through critical evaluation by citizens and the media.

10.9: Analyse the relationship between democratic values and social justice as an important aspect of Australia's democratic tradition.

Identify and appreciate the democratic values that underpin Australian democracy.

Explain how beliefs about social justice and democratic values developed in Australia and why they are still important today.

Recognise the ways in which these beliefs about social justice and democratic values can be affected by local, national and international events.

10.10: Analyse the reasons Australians make choices about participating in political and civic processes.

Identify ways in which Australian citizens can participate actively and effectively in political and civic processes.

Identify and analyse the reasons why some Australian citizens engage in political and civic processes while others do not.

Appendix 2
Student Background Survey
(including Assessment of Civics and Citizenship Opportunities)

In this section you will find questions about you and your family; what you do outside school; and your experience of school.

Please read each question carefully and answer as accurately as you can.

You may ask for help if you do not understand something or are not sure how to answer a question.

If you make a mistake when answering a question, cross out your error and make the correction, either by ticking the correct box or writing the correct answer on the line.

In this section, there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. Your answers should be the ones that you decide are best for you.

Question 1 was asked of Year 10 only

Q1 **Where do you live?** Please write in below the place name, State/Territory (eg NT) and postcode of your ***permanent home address*** (ie the last line of your home address).

*(If you are boarding away from home, please think of your **permanent home address**.)*

*(If you have a PO Box, please think of your **home** rather than the PO Box address.)*

_____ ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

(Place name) (State/Territory) (Postcode)

Q 2 **Are you a boy or a girl?** Boy ☐1 Girl ☐2

Q 3 **How old are you?** _____ ***Years*** _____ ***Months***

Q 4 **Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?**

*(Please tick **only one box**)*

No ..... ☐1
Yes, Aboriginal ..... ☐2
Yes, Torres Strait Islander ..... ☐3
Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ..... ☐4

Q 5 **In which country were you born?**

Australia ☐1 Other, ☐2 please specify country: _____

Q 6 **In which country was your mother/female guardian born?**

Australia ☐1 Other, ☐2 please specify country: _____

Q 7 **In which country was your father/male guardian born?**

Australia ☐1 Other, ☐2 please specify country: _____

Q 8 **Do you or your parents/guardians speak a language other than English *at home*?** *(Please tick **only one box** for each person)*

	a) You	b) Your mother/ female guardian	c) Your father/ male guardian
No, English only	☐1	☐1	☐1
Yes, please specify language	☐2 _____	☐2 _____	☐2 _____

Q 9 **What is your mother's/female guardian's main job? (e.g., school teacher, cleaner, sales assistant)** *If she is not working now, please tell us her last main job.*

Please write in the job title. _____

Q 10 **What does your mother/female guardian do in her main job? (e.g., Teaches school students, cleans offices, sells things)**

If she is not working now, please tell us what she did in her last main job.
Please use a sentence to describe the kind of work she does or did in that job.

_____

Q 11 **What is your father's/male guardian's main job? (e.g., school teacher, cleaner, sales assistant)** *If he is not working now, please tell us his last main job.*

Please write in the job title. _____

Q 12 **What does your father male guardian do in his main job? (e.g., Teaches school students, cleans offices, sells things)**

If he is not working now, please tell us what he did in his last main job.
Please use a sentence to describe the kind of work he does or did in that job.

_____

Questions 13 and 14 were asked of Year 10 only

Q 13 What is the highest year of primary or secondary schooling your parents/guardians have completed?

*(Please tick **only one box** for each person)*

a) Your mother/female guardian	b) Your father/male guardian
☐1 Year 12 or equivalent	☐1 Year 12 or equivalent
☐2 Year 11 or equivalent	☐2 Year 11 or equivalent
☐3 Year 10 or equivalent	☐3 Year 10 or equivalent
☐4 Year 9 or equivalent or below	☐4 Year 9 or equivalent or below

Q14 What is the level of the *highest* qualification your parents/guardians have completed?

*(Please tick **only one box** for each person)*

a) Your mother/female guardian	b) Your father/male guardian
☐1 Bachelor degree or above	☐1 Bachelor degree or above
☐2 Advanced diploma/diploma	☐2 Advanced diploma/diploma
☐3 Certificate I to IV (inc. trade cert.)	☐3 Certificate I to IV (inc. trade cert.)
☐4 No non-school qualification	☐4 No non-school qualification

Q 15 Outside of school, how often do you….

*(Please tick **only one box** for each activity)*

		Never or hardly ever	At least once a month	At least once a week	More than three times a week
a)	read about current events in the newspaper? .	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
b)	watch the news on television?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
c)	listen to news on the radio?.....	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
d)	talk about political or social issues with your family ?.....	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
e)	join in sport or music activities with others? .	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
f)	participate in community or volunteer work?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
	Please tell us what you do in this work: _____				
g)	participate in environmental activities?	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
	Please tell us what you do as part of these activities: _____				

Q 16 At my school…

	Yes	No
a) students vote for class representatives	☐1	☐2
b) students are represented on Student Councils or Student Representative Councils (SRCs)	☐1	☐2
c) student representatives contribute to decision making	☐1	☐2
d) students can help prepare a school paper or magazine	☐1	☐2
e) students can participate in peer support, 'buddy' or mentoring programs	☐1	☐2
f) students can participate in activities in the community	☐1	☐2
g) students can participate in activities outside of class (such as drama, sports, music and debating)	☐1	☐2

Q 17 At school I have learned…

*(Please tick **only one box** for each statement)*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a) about the importance of voting in elections	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
b) how to represent other students	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
c) to understand people who have different ideas to me	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
d) to work co-operatively with other students	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
e) to be interested in how my school "works"	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4
f) that I can contribute to solving "problems" at my school	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4

This is the end of Part A.

Please do NOT turn the page until told to do so.

Appendix 3
Civics and Citizenship Sub-scales

Civic Knowledge and Understanding sub-scale (KPM1)

Tables A3.1 and A3.2 provide comparisons of State and Territory mean achievement on the Civic Knowledge and Understanding sub-scale of the Civics and Citizenship Scale.

The State and Territories are listed in order of their mean scores on this sub-scale.

As for previous tables, apparent differences in mean performance need to be treated with caution and only those that are statistically significant should be taken to be established for the population.

Table A3.1: Multiple Comparisons of Year 6 Mean Performance on the Civic Knowledge and Understanding Sub-scale (KPM1) Among States and Territories

			ACT	NSW	VIC	TAS	SA	WA	QLD	NT
		Mean	424	418	416	391	381	373	372	371
	Mean	95% CI	10.6	15.3	11.5	15.1	16.1	13.2	13.1	17.2
ACT	424	10.6		●	●	●	●	▲	▲	▲
NSW	418	15.3	●		●	●	●	●	▲	●
VIC	416	11.5	●	●		●	●	▲	▲	●
TAS	391	15.1	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
SA	381	16.1	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
WA	373	13.2	▼	●	▼	●	●		●	●
QLD	372	13.1	▼	▼	▼	●	●	●		●
NT	371	17.1	▼	●	●	●	●	●	●	

Note: read across the appropriate row to compare one State or Territory's performance with the jurisdictions listed across the top of the columns.

Legend

Without the Bonferroni Adjustment

Mean scale score statistically significantly higher than in comparison State/Territory

No statistically significant difference from comparison State/Territory

Mean scale score statistically significantly lower than in comparison State/Territory

With the Bonferroni Adjustment

▲ Mean scale score statistically significantly higher than in comparison State/Territory

● No statistically significant difference from comparison State/Territory

▼ Mean scale score statistically significantly lower than in comparison State/Territory

Data for Year 6 student achievement on the sub-scale are shown in Table A3.1. Students in the Australian Capital Territory achieved a significantly higher mean score than those in Western Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory. Students in New South Wales achieved a significantly higher mean score than those in Queensland and students in Victoria achieved a significantly higher mean score than those in Western Australia and Queensland. There were no significant differences between any of the other pairings of States and Territories.

Table A3.2: Multiple Comparisons of Year 10 Mean Performance on the Civic Knowledge and Understanding Sub-scale (KPM1) Among States and Territories

			NSW	ACT	VIC	NT	TAS	WA	QLD	SA
		Mean	522	519	494	490	488	485	469	466
	Mean	95% CI	10.8	21.8	19.4	33.9	16.1	17.1	18.0	15.1
NSW	522	10.8		●	●	●	●	●	▲	▲
ACT	519	21.8	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
VIC	494	19.4	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
NT	490	33.9	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
TAS	488	16.1	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
WA	485	17.1	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
QLD	469	18.0	▼	●	●	●	●	●		●
SA	466	15.1	▼	●	●	●	●	●	●	

Note: read across the appropriate row to compare one State or Territory's performance with the jurisdictions listed across the top of the columns.

Legend

Without the Bonferroni Adjustment

	Mean scale score statistically significantly higher than in comparison State/Territory
	No statistically significant difference from comparison State/Territory
	Mean scale score statistically significantly lower than in comparison State/Territory

With the Bonferroni Adjustment

▲	Mean scale score statistically significantly higher than in comparison State/Territory
●	No statistically significant difference from comparison State/Territory
▼	Mean scale score statistically significantly lower than in comparison State/Territory

Data for Year 10 student achievement on the sub-scale are shown in Table A3.2. Students in New South Wales achieved a significantly higher mean score than those in Queensland and South Australia. There were no significant differences between any of the other pairings of States and Territories.

Table A3.3 shows the percentages of Year 6 students who achieved at or above each of the proficiency levels for the sub-scale, with confidence intervals. As for the Civics and Citizenship Scale as a whole, there was some variation in achievement across the States and Territories at each of the levels. Overall, 90 per cent of students achieved Level 1 or above, half achieved Level 2, and 8 per cent achieved Level 3 or above. Only 0.1 per cent achieved Level 4.

Table A3.3: Percentages of Year 6 Students At or Above Each Proficiency Level on the Civic Knowledge and Understanding Sub-scale (KPM1), by State and Territory

State / Territory	Proficiency Level			
	Level 1 or above	Level 2 or above	Level 3 or above	Level 4 or above
NSW	91.6 (+/- 3.2)[a]	56.2 (+/- 6.1)[a]	12.3 (+/- 4.2)[a]	0.2 (+/- 0.3)[a]
VIC	93.2 (+/- 2.5)[a]	57.0 (+/- 6.2)[a]	8.3 (+/- 2.1)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.3)[a]
QLD	86.2 (+/- 3.2)[a]	37.2 (+/- 6.1)[a]	3.0 (+/- 1.6)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]
SA	85.7 (+/- 4.8)[a]	42.7 (+/- 7.0)[a]	4.6 (+/- 2.2)[a]	-
WA	84.6 (+/- 3.6)[a]	37.8 (+/- 5.7)[a]	4.8 (+/- 2.5)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.2)[a]
TAS	86.9 (+/- 4.0)[a]	47.1 (+/- 6.3)[a]	6.9 (+/- 2.5)[a]	0.0 (+/- 0.1)[a]
NT	81.4 (+/- 5.0)[a]	39.0 (+/- 6.6)[a]	5.4 (+/- 2.4)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.2)[a]
ACT	92.3 (+/- 2.7)[a]	60.8 (+/- 4.4)[a]	12.1 (+/- 3.4)[a]	0.3 (+/- 0.4)[a]
AUST	89.6 (+/-1.4)[a]	49.5 (+/- 3.1)[a]	8.0 (+/- 1.7)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]

[a] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

Table A3.4 shows the percentages of Year 10 students who achieved or bettered each of the proficiency levels for the sub-scale, with confidence intervals. As for the Civics and Citizenship Scale as a whole, there was some variation in achievement across the States and Territories at each of the levels. Overall, 96 per cent of students achieved Level 1 or above, 80 per cent achieved Level 2 and 39 per cent achieved Level 3 or above. Only 5 per cent achieved Level 4 or above, while 0.2 per cent achieved Level 5.

Table A3.4: Percentages of Year 10 Students At or Above each Proficiency Level on the Civic Knowledge and Understanding sub-scale (KPM1) by State and Territory

State / Territory	Proficiency Level				
	Level 1 or above	Level 2 or above	Level 3 or above	Level 4 or above	Level 5 or above
NSW	98.2 (+/- 1.0)[a]	86.1 (+/- 2.8)[a]	47.5 (+/- 4.8)[a]	7.9 (+/- 2.5)[a]	0.3 (+/- 0.3)[a]
VIC	95.7 (+/- 2.0)[a]	79.1 (+/- 5.6)[a]	39.6 (+/- 7.4)[a]	5.8 (+/- 2.9)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]
QLD	94.0 (+/- 2.6)[a]	73.2 (+/- 5.5)[a]	30.3 (+/- 5.4)[a]	2.5 (+/- 1.2)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]
SA	93.9 (+/- 3.0)[a]	73.6 (+/- 5.2)[a]	28.5 (+/- 4.9)[a]	1.8 (+/- 1.1)[a]	-
WA	94.9 (+/- 2.6)[a]	77.8 (+/- 4.6)[a]	35.7 (+/- 5.6)[a]	4.0 (+/- 2.1)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.2)[a]
TAS	95.2 (+/- 3.0)[a]	78.1 (+/- 5.2)[a]	36.4 (+/- 5.4)[a]	4.4 (+/- 1.6)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.0)[a]
NT	96.0 (+/- 3.0)[a]	78.5 (+/- 9.4)[a]	35.9 (+/- 12.8)[a]	5.2 (+/- 4.7)[a]	0.3 (+/- 0.1)[a]
ACT	96.9 (+/- 2.3)[a]	84.1 (+/- 5.2)[a]	47.7 (+/- 7.9)[a]	8.7 (+/- 4.0)[a]	0.5 (+/- 0.8)[a]
AUST	96.0 (+/- 0.9)[a]	79.9 (+/- 2.0)[a]	39.1 (+/- 2.6)[a]	5.4 (+/- 1.0)[a]	0.2 (+/- 0.1)[a]

[a] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

Skills and Values for Active Citizenship Participation sub-scale (KPM2)

Tables A3.5 and A3.6 provide comparisons of State and Territory mean achievement on the Skills and Values for Active Citizenship Participation sub-scale of the Civics and Citizenship Scale. The jurisdictions are listed in order of mean scores on the sub-scale. Apparent differences in mean performance need to be treated with caution and only those that are statistically significant should be taken into account.

Table A3.5: Multiple Comparisons of Year 6 Mean Performance on the Skills and Values for Active Citizenship Participation Sub-scale (KPM2) Among States and Territories

			ACT	NSW	VIC	TAS	SA	QLD	NT	WA
		Mean	425	418	416	391	381	370	369	366
	Mean	95% CI	12.2	15.8	11.1	15.8	16.8	14.1	19.3	13.1
ACT	425	12.2		●	●	●	●	▲	▲	▲
NSW	418	15.8	●		●	●	●	●	●	▲
VIC	416	11.1	●	●		●	●	▲	●	▲
TAS	391	15.8	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
SA	381	16.8	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
QLD	370	14.1	▼	●	▼	●	●		●	●
NT	369	19.3	▼	●	●	●	●	●		●
WA	366	13.1	▼	▼	▼	●	●	●	●	

Note: Read across the appropriate row to compare one State or Territory's performance with the jurisdictions listed across the top of the columns.

Legend

Without the Bonferroni Adjustment

- Mean scale score statistically significantly higher than in comparison State/Territory
- No statistically significant difference from comparison State/Territory
- Mean scale score statistically significantly lower than in comparison State/Territory

With the Bonferroni Adjustment

- ▲ Mean scale score statistically significantly higher than in comparison State/Territory
- ● No statistically significant difference from comparison State/Territory
- ▼ Mean scale score statistically significantly lower than in comparison State/Territory

It can be seen in Table A3.5 that the students in the Australian Capital Territory achieved a significantly higher mean score than those in Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia. The students in New South Wales achieved a significantly higher mean score than those in Western Australia and the students in Victoria achieved a significantly higher mean score than those in Queensland

and Western Australia. There were no significant differences between any of the other pairings of States and Territories.

A comparison of Tables A3.5 and A3.6 shows that State and Territory mean performances of the Year 6 students were slightly different on each of the sub-scales. However, most of the differences were very small and none were statistically significant.

Table A3.6: Multiple Comparisons of Year 10 Mean Performance on the Skills and Values for Active Citizenship Participation Sub-scale (KPM2) Among States and Territories

			NSW	ACT	VIC	TAS	NT	WA	QLD	SA
		Mean	520	517	494	490	487	484	469	467
	Mean	95% CI	11.2	22.8	19.2	17.8	33.3	17.7	18.4	16.5
NSW	520	11.2		●	●	●	●	●	▲	▲
ACT	517	22.8	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
VIC	494	19.2	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
TAS	490	17.8	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
NT	487	33.3	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
WA	484	17.7	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
QLD	469	18.4	▼	●	●	●	●	●		●
SA	467	16.5	▼	●	●	●	●	●	●	

Note: Read across the appropriate row to compare one State or Territory's performance with the jurisdictions listed across the top of the columns.

Legend

Without the Bonferroni Adjustment

	Mean scale score statistically significantly higher than in comparison State/Territory
	No statistically significant difference from comparison State/Territory
	Mean scale score statistically significantly lower than in comparison State/Territory

With the Bonferroni Adjustment

▲	Mean scale score statistically significantly higher than in comparison State/Territory
●	No statistically significant difference from comparison State/Territory
▼	Mean scale score statistically significantly lower than in comparison State/Territory

It can be seen from Table A3.6 that students in New South Wales achieved a significantly higher mean score than those in Queensland and South Australia. There were no significant differences between any of the other pairings of States and Territories.

A comparison of Tables A3.2 and A3.6 shows that State and Territory mean performance of the Year 10 students was slightly different on each of the sub-scales. However, the differences were very small and not statistically significant.

Table A3.7 shows the percentages of Year 6 students who achieved or exceeded each of the proficiency levels for KPM 2, with confidence intervals.

Table A3.7: Percentages of Year 6 Students At or Above Each Proficiency Level on the Skills and Values for Active Citizenship Participation Sub-scale (KPM2), by State and Territory

State / Territory	Proficiency Level			
	Level 1 or above	Level 2 or above	Level 3 or above	Level 4 or above
NSW	89.7 (+/- 3.8)[a]	56.3 (+/- 6.1)[a]	13.7 (+/- 4.0)[a]	0.4 (+/- 0.4)[a]
VIC	91.7 (+/- 2.9)[a]	57.2 (+/- 5.0)[a]	10.4 (+/- 2.6)[a]	0.3 (+/- 0.4)[a]
QLD	82.9 (+/- 3.9)[a]	38.6 (+/- 6.2)[a]	4.2 (+/- 2.0)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.1)[a]
SA	83.8 (+/- 5.1)[a]	43.0 (+/- 6.3)[a]	6.2 (+/- 2.4)[a]	0.2 (+/- 0.3)[a]
WA	80.8 (+/- 3.4)[a]	37.0 (+/- 5.1)[a]	5.1 (+/- 1.7)[a]	0.2 (+/- 0.3)[a]
TAS	85.0 (+/- 4.6)[a]	48.2 (+/- 6.1)[a]	8.8 (+/- 2.7)[a]	0.2 (+/- 0.2)[a]
NT	78.9 (+/- 5.2)[a]	41.5 (+/- 6.9)[a]	7.0 (+/- 2.8)[a]	0.2 (+/- 0.4)[a]
ACT	91.1 (+/- 3.0)[a]	61.3 (+/- 5.0)[a]	14.8 (+/- 4.5)[a]	0.5 (+/- 1.0)[a]
AUST	87.3 (+/- 1.8)[a]	49.9 (+/- 2.8)[a]	9.4 (+/- 1.6)[a]	0.2 (+/- 0.2)[a]

[a] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

As for the Civics and Citizenship Scale as a whole, there was some variation in achievement across the States and Territories at each of the levels. Overall, 87 per cent of students achieved Level 1 or above, half achieved Level 2 and 9 per cent achieved Level 3 or above. Only 0.2 per cent of Year 6 students achieved Level 4.

Table A3.8 shows the percentages of Year 10 students who achieved or exceeded each of the proficiency levels for KPM 2, with confidence intervals.

Table A3.8: Percentages of Year 10 Students At or Above Each Proficiency Level on the Skills and Values for Active Citizenship Participation Sub-scale (KPM2), by State and Territory

State / Territory	Proficiency Level				
	Level 1 or above	Level 2 or above	Level 3 or above	Level 4 or above	Level 5 or above
NSW	97.7 (+/- 1.2)[a]	85.6 (+/- 2.9)[a]	47.3 (+/- 4.7)[a]	7.3 (+/- 2.2)[a]	0.3 (+/- 0.3)[a]
VIC	94.9 (+/- 2.5)[a]	79.1 (+/- 5.3)[a]	39.4 (+/- 7.1)[a]	5.8 (+/- 2.7)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.2)[a]
QLD	93.1 (+/- 2.9)[a]	73.4 (+/- 6.0)[a]	30.5 (+/- 5.5)[a]	2.9 (+/- 1.4)[a]	0.0 (+/- 0.1)[a]
SA	92.5 (+/- 3.4)[a]	73.5 (+/- 5.3)[a]	30.8 (+/- 4.5)[a]	2.4 (+/- 1.3)[a]	0.0 (+/- 0.1)[a]
WA	94.0 (+/- 2.9)[a]	77.8 (+/- 4.6)[a]	35.8 (+/- 6.1)[a]	4.2 (+/- 2.0)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.2)[a]
TAS	95.3 (+/- 2.7)[a]	78.8 (+/- 6.2)[a]	37.2 (+/- 5.5)[a]	5.3 (+/- 2.4)[a]	0.1 (+/- 0.2)[a]
NT	94.9 (+/- 3.5)[a]	76.1 (+/- 9.2)[a]	37.3 (+/- 13.2)[a]	5.6 (+/- 4.5)[a]	0.3 (+/- 0.1)[a]
ACT	96.1 (+/- 2.5)[a]	83.8 (+/- 5.6)[a]	47.4 (+/- 8.5)[a]	9.0 (+/- 3.7)[a]	0.5 (+/- 0.8)[a]
AUST	95.3 (+/- 1.0)[a]	79.7 (+/- 2.2)[a]	39.4 (+/- 2.6)[a]	5.4 (+/- 1.0)[a]	0.2 (+/- 0.1)[a]

[a] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

As for the Civics and Citizenship Scale as a whole, there was some variation in achievement across the States and Territories at each of the levels. Overall, 95 per cent of students achieved Level 1 or above, 80 per cent achieved Level 2 and 39 per cent achieved Level 3 or above. Only 5 per cent achieved Level 4 or above, while 0.2 per cent achieved Level 5.

Years 6 and 10 differences by gender and sub-scale

Table A3.9 shows the differences in performance between Years 6 and 10 for the two sub-scales: civics knowledge and understanding of civic institutions and processes (KPM1) and citizenship dispositions and skills for participation (KPM 2).

Table A3.9: Differences in Mean Performance Between Years 6 and 10 on the Sub-scales, by Gender

Gender	Sub-scale	Mean/ standard deviation	Year 6	Year 10	Difference (Year 10- Year 6)	Effect size[b]
Male	KPM1	Mean	394.5 (+/- 7.9)[a]	484.3 (+/- 9.4)[a]	89.8	0.91
		Standard deviation	98.9	118.4		
	KPM2	Mean	385.6 (+/- 7.9)[a]	473.1 (+/- 9.4)[a]	87.5	0.81
		Standard deviation	107.8	121.9		
Female	KPM1	Mean	405.9 (+/- 7.5)[a]	507.1 (+/- 8.7)[a]	101.2	1.05
		Standard deviation	96.8	110.3		
	KPM2	Mean	412.2 (+/- 7.6)[a]	516.7 (+/- 8.2)[a]	104.5	1.00
		Standard deviation	104.2	110.5		
All	KPM1	Mean	400.3 (+/- 6.9)[a]	496.1 (+/- 6.9)[a]	95.8	0.98
		Standard deviation	98.0	114.8		
	KPM2	Mean	399.1 (+/- 7.1)[a]	495.7 (+/- 7.1)[a]	96.6	0.90
		Standard deviation	106.8	118.2		

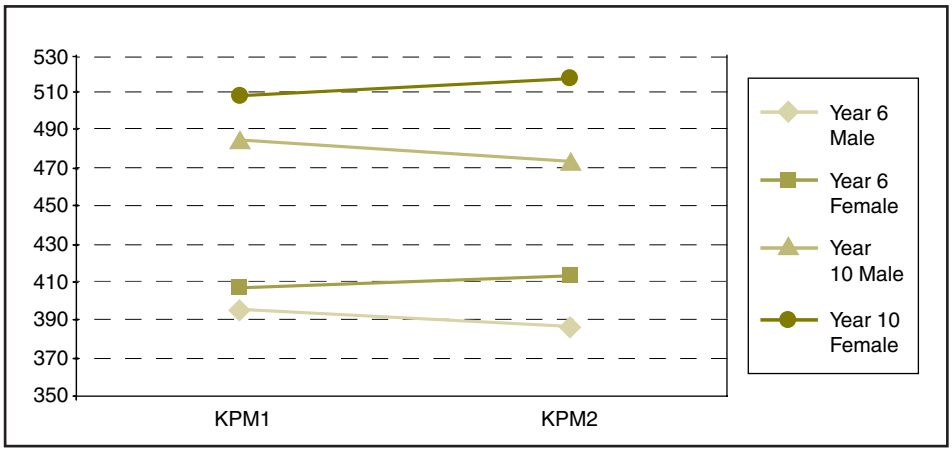
[a] 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

[b] The effect size is the difference between the means divided by the standard deviation of the reference group.

It has been shown when the results for all students were examined, that only minor differences were observed between their performances on the sub-scales. However, the data for males and females revealed slight differences in the growth between Year 6 and Year 10. The pattern was complicated by the differences in the spread of scores on each sub-scale. Although the absolute difference between the Year 10 and Year 6 performance was slightly greater for KPM 2 than for KPM 1, the effect size was slightly greater for KPM 1 than for KPM 2. This is because of the greater variation (expressed as standard deviation) in the performance of students on KPM 2 relative to KPM 1.

Very minor differences can also be seen as an interaction between achievement by sub-scale and gender. The difference in effect sizes between KPM 1 and KPM 2 was slightly higher for males than females. This is because for males in KPM 2, the difference in Year 10 and Year 6 mean achievement was the lowest of all the differences (87 units) and that the variation in Year 6 performance was the highest (standard deviation = 108 units).

Figure A3.1: Year 6 and 10 Male and Female Mean Performance on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Sub-scales



The pattern in Table A3.9 is illustrated in Figure A3.1, which shows that at both Year 6 and Year 10, female students performed better and male students worse on KPM 2 than on KPM 1. While females outperformed males at both year levels and on both KPM 1 and KPM 2, this difference was not significant for Year 6 students on KPM 1. It was, however, significant for Year 6 students on KPM 2 and Year 10 students on both KPM 1 and KPM 2.

Appendix 4
Percentage Correct by Score Code for Sample Items in Chapter 3

Table A4.1: Percentages of Year 6 Students Responding at Each Item Score Code for the Sample Items

Sample items	Figure code	Score code 0	Score code 1	Score code 2	Score code 3
Citizenship Pledge Q1	3.1(1)	31	69[1]		
Citizenship Pledge Q2	3.1(2) / 3.4 / 3.9	46	44[2]	9[4]	
Citizenship Pledge Q3	3.1(3) / 3.2	33	67[1]		
Citizenship Pledge Q4	3.1(4) / 3.5 / 3.12	55	41[2]	4[5]	1[5]
Littering Q4	3.3 / 3.7	18	15[1]	48[1]	19[3]
Bicycle Helmets Q2	3.6	61	20[2]	38[2]	
Australia Day Q1	3.10 (1)	84	16[4]		
Australia Day Q2	3.10 (2)	80	17[4]	3[5]	
Governor General's Responsibility	3.13	93	7[5]		

[0] Item score code located below Level 1 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale
[1] Item score code located in Level 1 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale
[2] Item score code located in Level 2 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale
[3] Item score code located in Level 3 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale
[4] Item score code located in Level 4 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale
[5] Item score code located in Level 5 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale

Table A4.2: Percentages of Year 10 Students Responding at Each Item Score Code for the Sample Items

Sample items	Figure code	Score code 0	Score code 1	Score code 2	Score code 3
Citizenship Pledge Q1	3.1(1)	12	88[0]		
Citizenship Pledge Q2	3.1(2) / 3.4 / 3.9	26	42[2]	32[4]	
Citizenship Pledge Q3	3.1(3) / 3.2	19	81[1]		
Citizenship Pledge Q4	3.1(4) / 3.5 / 3.12	37	56[2]	5[5]	2[5]
Media Ownership	3.8	45	21[3]	34[3]	
Australia Day Q1	3.10 (1)	77	23[4]		
Australia Day Q2	3.10 (2)	65	27[4]	8[5]	
Sovereignty Q1	3.11 (1)	37	47[2]	16[4]	
Sovereignty Q2	3.11 (2)	77	10[4]	13[4]	
Governor General's Responsibility	3.13	77	23[4]		

[0] *Item score code located below Level 1 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale*
[1] *Item score code located in Level 1 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale*
[2] *Item score code located in Level 2 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale*
[3] *Item score code located in Level 3 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale*
[4] *Item score code located in Level 4 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale*
[5] *Item score code located in Level 5 of the Civics and Citizenship Scale*

Appendix 5
Example School Reports and Explanatory Material

Figure A5.1: School Report Explanatory material

Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs

ACER

Civics and Citizenship National Sample Assessment

Interpreting the Student Reports

Each Year 6 and Year 10 student completed one of the four different year-level test forms. The student reports provide information about each student's achievement on the particular test form that they completed.

Each test form report includes the following information:

1. The school name.
2. The Year level and number of the test form described by the report.
3. The question number as it appeared on the test form.
4. A unique item code used to reference each question.
5. A description of the properties of a high quality response to the item.
6. The maximum possible score for each item.
7. The percentage of students in the school who achieved the maximum score for each item.
8. The percentage of students in the National Assessment who achieved the maximum score on each item.
9. The name of each student who completed that test form and whose result is being reported.
10. A key for the different student response types.
11. The achievement of each student on each item on the form.

Below is part of a sample report form with some key information explained.

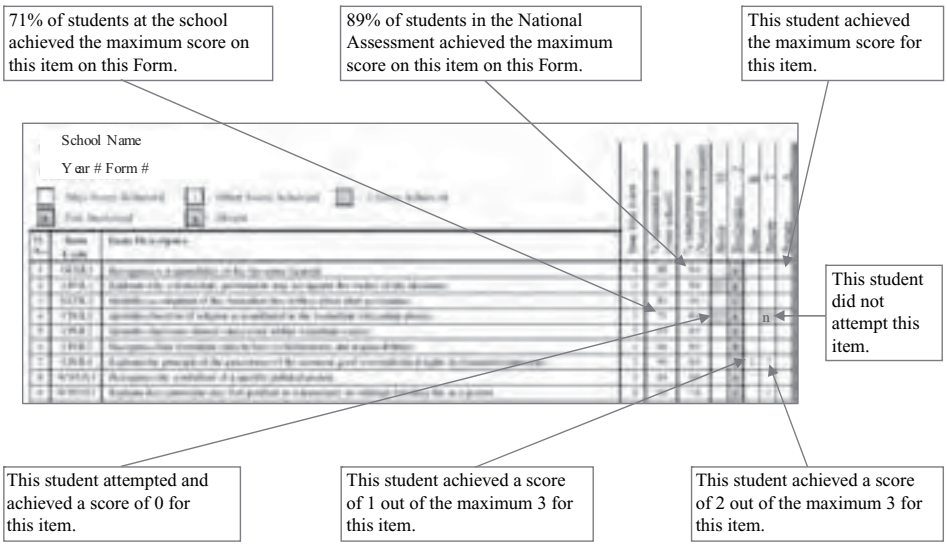


Figure A5.2: Example Year 6 School Report

Capital Primary School

Year 6 Form 1

[ ] - Max Score Achieved [1] - Other Score Achieved [ ] - 0 Score Achieved

[n] - Not Answered [a] - Absent

Q. No	Item Code	Item Descriptor	Item Max Score	% maximum score (your school)	% maximum score (National Assessment)	Student 1	Student 5	Student 9	Student 13	Student 17
1	ECOL1	Identifies a complaint of the Australian free settlers about their governance.	1	50	31	a				
2	PDOL1	Explains a benefit of differences of opinion within a democracy.	2	25	11	a	n		1	
3	HBO61	Infers cultural inclusivity represented by a government's actions.	2	25	25	a	n		1	
4	HBO62	Recognises the difficulty of balancing inclusivity and unmanageable precedent.	2	0	1	a	n	1		
5-9	REO61-5	Identifies some legal responsibilities of Australian citizens.	2	50	79	a	1			1
10	FNO61	Recognises the division of governmental responsibilities in a federation.	1	50	50	a				
11	FLO1	States the meaning of the Union Jack as a symbol on the Australian national flag.	3	25	8	a			2	1
11	FLO2	States the meaning of the Southern Cross as a symbol on the Australian national flag.	1	50	28	a				
11	FLO3	States the meaning of the Federation Star as a symbol on the Australian national flag.	1	50	44	a				
12	FLO4	Infers a reason for the government inviting citizens to design a national flag.	1	25	31	a	n			
13	FLO5	States the meaning of the black colour as a symbol on the Australian Aboriginal flag.	1	50	38	a				
13	FLO6	States the meaning of the red colour as a symbol on the Australian Aboriginal flag.	1	75	63	a				
14	FLO7	Generalises about the symbolism of burning a national flag in protest.	2	0	16	a	n	1	1	
15	FLO8	Recognises a reason why people may object to flag burning in protest.	1	50	72	a				
16	SEO61	Explains a difference between rules and laws in a familiar school context.	2	25	45	a	n		1	1
17	SEO62	Recognises the social value of rules in a familiar school context.	1	50	44	a	n			
18	UPOL1	Explains why a democratic government may act against the wishes of the electorate.	1	25	32	a	n			
19	CPOL1	Identifies freedom of religion as manifested in the Australian citizenship pledge.	1	75	67	a				
20	CPOL2	Identifies that some shared values exist within Australian society.	2	0	9	a		1	1	
21	CPOL3	Recognises that Australian citizens have both freedoms and responsibilities.	1	50	66	a				
22	CPOL4	Explains the principle of the precedence of the common good over individual rights in Australia's democracy.	3	0	1	a	n	2	1	1
23	BAO61	Infers the motivation behind a public protest.	1	50	33	a				
24	BAO62	States two feasible ways of supporting a change in the law.	2	0	15	a		1	1	
25	BAO63	Explains, in a simple context, how community standards may affect the law.	1	25	13	a	n			n
26	CCO61	Identifies two democratic features of an electoral process.	2	25	34	a			1	1
27	CCO62	Identifies two undemocratic features of an electoral process.	2	25	24	a			1	1
28	GGOL1	Recognises a responsibility of the Governor General.	1	25	6	a			n	
29-32	LWO61-4	Identifies some features of Australian laws.	2	25	83	a			n	1
33	AIOL1	Identifies the historical event remembered on Australia day.	1	25	15	a	n		n	
34	AIOL2	Explains the significance for some that the British colonisation of Australia was without treaty.	2	0	3	a	n	1	n	
35	MPO61	Recognises the process required for election to Australian parliament.	1	75	62	a			n	
36	NEO61	Recognises the minimum frequency of Australian Federal elections.	1	50	68	a			n	
37	ICOL1	Explains how understanding civic process can support civic participation.	2	0	7	a	n	1	n	