



*Leaders in social, political and civics
and citizenship education*

GLOBAL POLITICS

VCE Trial Exam
2021

This teachers' guide includes questions, marking advice and high-scoring sample responses. Marking advice for Section B incorporates a rubric, essay plan scaffold and sample prompts.

This trial exam is intended for practice purposes only. It is not to be delivered as an assessment. It does not reflect the opinions of Social Education Victoria but is developed by experienced teachers of the study and incorporates their viewpoints, experiences and insight.

SECTION A

Question 1 (3 marks)

Consider the information in the table below and identify the relevant category of key global actor. Answer in the table provided.

Marking advice

This question may seem simple, but it is intended to reinforce the language of the Study Design.

Identifies states as a relevant global actor	1 mark
Identifies intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) as a relevant global actor	1 mark
Identifies transnational corporations (TNCs) as a relevant global actor	1 mark

Sample response

State, intergovernmental organisation and transnational corporation.

Question 2 (3 marks)

Identify a non-state actor you have studied this year and outline ONE aim it seeks to achieve.

Marking advice

Correctly names one non-state actor	1 mark
Describes a relevant aim with evidence	2 marks

Sample response

The stated aim of the White Helmets (the Syrian Civil Defence) is to save the greatest number of lives in the shortest possible time and to minimise further injury to people and damage to property. A prominent example of their work is the rescue of Omran Daqneesh in 2016.

Question 3 (4 marks)

With reference to ONE of the impacts on state sovereignty listed below, provide an example and explain how this impact has challenged the sovereignty of a specific state:

- regional groupings
- contested borders
- issues that require multilateral resolutions.

Marking advice

Demonstrates a clear understanding of sovereignty, e.g. borders, population, ability to rule	1 mark
Provides a relevant example, with evidence	2 marks
Provides a clear explanation of the link between the example and the challenge to sovereignty	1 mark

Sample response

Iran's nuclear ambitions are an issue that requires multilateral resolution, as a nuclear Iran has the potential to destabilise the entire Middle East region. Iran's sovereignty has therefore been challenged through a range of sanctions from the USA, the EU and the UN. For example, these sanctions have made it harder for Iran to acquire weaponry or to access foreign funds, undermining the state's ability to defend itself or to use its financial resources freely. Further, the 2015 Iran nuclear deal forced Iran to reduce its nuclear program and to accept International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections in exchange for sanctions relief. This undermined the state's capacity to independently manage its own nuclear facilities and to forgo the ability to acquire a nuclear capability.

Question 4 (5 marks)

With reference to ONE of the key global actors listed below, discuss the extent to which the selected actor is able to successfully achieve ONE of its aims:

- the United Nations (UN)
- the International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- the International Criminal Court (ICC)
- a transnational corporation you have studied (TNC).

Marking advice

Outlines a specific aim with evidence that supports the example	3 marks
Measures the actor’s challenges in achieving its aim, using evidence	1 mark
Measures the actor’s successes in achieving its aim, using evidence	1 mark

Suggested examples

- the United Nations (UN) – pursuit of peace and security through United Nations Security Council resolutions, e.g. UNSC Resolution 2118 on Syrian chemical weapons
- the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – to make resources available to member states with balance-of-payment difficulties, e.g. loans to Papua New Guinea in the wake of COVID-19
- the International Criminal Court (ICC) – to ensure perpetrators of the worst crimes are held accountable, e.g. the trial and prosecution of Thomas Lubanga Dyilo.

Sample response

As one of the world’s richest technology companies, Facebook has been highly successful in achieving its aim of profit maximisation. With a value of roughly US\$270 billion, including its subsidiaries, it has effectively used user data to provide a product to advertisers worth \$103 billion alone. Such financial power has allowed this TNC to purchase Instagram and WhatsApp, adding value to the company while simultaneously reducing competition within the social media space. However, the Australian Government’s recent media bargaining legislation has seen the TNC forced to pay News Corp for content posted on its social media platforms. Despite restricting Australian news on its platforms in retaliation, Facebook reversed this decision within a week due to negative publicity. Such media bargaining codes have set a precedent that has the potential to restrict Facebook’s profits into the future.

Question 5 (2 marks)

Focus on ONE of the following Asia Pacific states in your response to this question: Australia, China, Indonesia, Japan or the United States of America.

- a. identify ONE specific example of your selected state’s use of a foreign policy instrument. (1 mark)
- b. identify the aim of this use of a foreign policy instrument. (1 mark)

Marking advice

Provides an appropriate example of a foreign policy instrument	1 mark
Identifies the intended outcome	1 mark

Suggested examples

- Australia – aid funding for the Solomon Islands cable project
- China – military, through naval exercises in the South China Sea
- USA – trade, through its trade war with China.

Sample response

Australia has used aid in the form of funding for Fiji’s Blackrock military base.

The intention of this use of aid was to end Fiji’s Look North (to China) policy, returning the state to Australia’s sphere of influence.

Question 6 (3 marks)

With reference to an Asia Pacific state you have studied this year, explain a factor that has shaped this state's pursuit of economic prosperity within the last 10 years.

Marking advice

Identifies a relevant factor	1 mark
Demonstrates an understanding of how this factor has been influential	1 mark
Provides specific evidence	1 mark

Suggested examples

- Australia – growth in the size of the Chinese economy
- China – One China Policy
- USA – trade war with China.

Sample response

A factor that has shaped Australia's pursuit of economic prosperity is the growth of the Chinese economy from \$7 trillion in 2010 to \$14 trillion in 2020. As a result, Australia has sought greater trade with China. China has now become Australia's largest trading partner with the China–Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA) entering into force in 2015. With the generous access it allows to Australian companies and the wide reductions in tariffs on goods and services, it has been described as a 'historic agreement' by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

Question 7 (4 marks)

With reference to an Asia Pacific state you have studied this year, identify ONE foreign policy action taken by this state within the last 10 years and explain how this action was guided by pragmatic considerations.

Marking advice

Shows an understanding of the concept of pragmatism (either through a definition, or a coherently structured response)	1 mark
Identifies a relevant foreign policy action	1 mark
Describes why this action was pragmatic	1 mark
Uses specific evidence	1 mark

Suggested examples

- Australia – its decision to use aid to win projects in Solomon Islands
- China – its suspension of economic dialogue with Australia over the Australian ban of Huawei
- USA – its decision to leave Afghanistan.

Sample response

To think pragmatically is to consider what is practical and likely to work in a given scenario. Australia's decision to ignore calls from the United States to sail Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPS) within 12 nautical miles of Chinese artificial islands in the South China Sea is therefore a pragmatic one. Australia's support for the United States in these operations would antagonise China and place Australia's economic and security interests at risk, and so the decision to avoid participation was based on a practical assessment of the risks and benefits to Australia's national interest.

Question 8 (6 marks)

With reference to an Asia Pacific state you have studied this year, contrast TWO opposing interpretations regarding your selected state's pursuit of national security or regional relationships.

Marking advice

For each perspective:

Outlines a viewpoint	1 mark
Identifies the group/s that hold/s the viewpoint	1 mark
Explains why the group/s hold/s that viewpoint, using specific evidence	1 mark

Suggested examples

- Australia – Paul Keating's view that national security would be best served by greater independence from the United States, versus the current Australian Government's position that security is best achieved through a close relationship with the United States
- China – national security and the hard-line position of actors such as Xi Jinping versus the reformist position of elements of the CCP
- USA – Republican and Democrat debates over the importance of international alliances, e.g. NATO.

Sample response

Regarding Australia's pursuit of national security, Peter Hartcher and David Brophy disagree about how Australia should respond to the challenge of China as a rising superpower. Hartcher sees China as a 'hostile state' and an 'existential threat' that ought to be met with increased investment in the military. This view would seem to have been endorsed by Australia's pursuit of the 2020 Defence Strategic Update and the commitment to spend US\$270 billion on defence. In contrast, Brophy emphasises the benefits of Australia pursuing a more internationalist response to any acts of Chinese aggression, such as an invasion of Taiwan. Brophy says a coordinated international diplomatic response, such as strikes and demonstrations, would be more appropriate than threats coming from further military investment. It's important to note the title of Brophy's book here, as 'China Panic' seeks to counsel against overly aggressive responses by pointing out that great powers have always acted in such ways.

Question 9 (2 marks)

Identify two different international laws, each related to a different global ethical issue studied. The names of the laws must be written in full.

Marking advice

a. Correctly names an ethical issue and a relevant law	1 mark
b. Correctly names an ethical issue and a relevant law	1 mark

Suggested examples

- United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- The Arms Trade Treaty.

Sample response

a. Ethical issue: people movement

International Law: The 1951 Refugee Convention (Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees 1951)

b. Ethical issue: arms control

International Law: 1970 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Question 10 (5 marks)

With reference to ONE of the international laws you identified above in Question 9a or 9b, outline how a relevant global actor has responded to this law and explain why that response should be considered an example of cosmopolitanism.

Marking advice

Identifies relevant global actor	1 mark
Describes a response, with evidence	2 marks
Coherently links the response to the concept of cosmopolitanism	2 marks

Suggested examples

- The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees 1951; Germany's acceptance of refugees in 2015–16
- The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling, and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction; the UN response through the creation of the Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) to investigate the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

Sample response

The United Nations' creation and defence of the 1970 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons can be understood as an example of cosmopolitanism due to an emphasis on harm minimisation and collaboration. As the premier forum for international diplomacy in pursuit of peace and security, the UN has sought to avoid the catastrophic potential of nuclear war through a widely supported international agreement to control the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The creation of international law is a cosmopolitan act as it is inherently cooperative, seeking broad agreement on standards of behaviour by states. The UN's defence of the NPT through sanctioning states such as North Korea and Iran for their illegal nuclear programs has united the Security Council behind the idea that all states have an obligation to protect all human life.

Question 11 (8 marks)

Discuss the opposing realist and cosmopolitan positions within ONE of the ethical debates listed below. Note, the debate you select must be in relation to a different ethical issue to the one you focused on in Question 10:

- human rights – state sovereignty versus the Responsibility to Protect
- people movement – differing approaches regarding refugee resettlement
- development – economic growth versus sustainable development
- arms control – arms control versus disarmament.

Marking advice

Shows a detailed understanding of realism in relation to specified global actor(s)	3 marks
Shows a detailed understanding of cosmopolitanism in relation to specified global actor(s)	3 marks
Contextualises opposing positions in a relevant case study, using evidence	2 marks

Suggested examples

- human rights: state sovereignty (Syria 2012–) versus Responsibility to Protect (Libya 2011)
- people movement: obligations to asylum seekers and other refugees (UNHCR and Jordan) versus national interests (Australia’s Operation Sovereign Borders and Hungary’s border fence)
- development: overseas development assistance versus the self-interest of states (China and Taiwan)
- arms control: arms control (the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and Iran) versus disarmament (the Chemical Weapons Convention and Syria).

Sample response

The debate over approaches to refugee resettlement concerns how states should deal with refugees within their care. The cosmopolitan side of the debate focuses on a holistic strategy that seeks a whole-of-government response to providing refugees with the best possible care within the state. In alignment with international laws like the 1951 Refugee Convention, governments are supposed to offer refugees services such as housing, education and the right to seek employment, until they have been fully integrated both socially and economically. Ultimately, refugees are to be offered the same rights as citizens of the state. Germany’s response to the 2015 European refugee crisis is an example of a state offering a new start within its society to those found to be refugees. The one million plus refugees taken in between 2015 and 2016 and the 5500 additional places offered to Syrians in Turkey as part of the 2020 EU Resettlement Programme are examples of this approach. Condemnation by Human Rights Watch of Australia’s resettlement deals with Cambodia, Nauru and Papua New Guinea is also an example of a global actor promoting cosmopolitan resettlement obligations borne by states. However, the realist side of this debate has seen states establish strict refugee quotas and place emphasis on orderly ‘queues’ processed through UNHCR camps around the world. These approaches are often coupled with harsh border protection measures, such as Australia’s Operation Sovereign Borders (OSB). OSB has seen refugees who travelled to Australia detained for many years and offered resettlement in such states as Nauru and Cambodia – the latter a state with a poor human rights record. A 2019 Senate inquiry even recommended a lifetime ban for any asylum seeker who attempted to enter Australia by boat. Such a response runs counter to the more cosmopolitan obligations approach to the ethical issue of people movement.

Question 12 (5 marks)

a. Outline ONE key aspect associated with a global crisis you have studied this year. (2 marks)

Marking advice

When explaining the cause of a global crisis students are permitted to study both long- and short-term causes. Therefore, explanations of their selected cause in relation to a particular crisis may extend beyond the 10-year time frame.

Identifies one relevant aspect of the specified global crisis	1 mark
Provides a clear and relevant point highlighting how the identified aspect is a distinguishing feature of the specified crisis	1 mark

Suggested examples

- Climate change: resource exploitation
- Armed conflict: intervention
- Terrorism: non-state terrorism
- Economic instability: globalisation

Sample response

One key aspect of the crisis of armed conflict is the prosecution of war crimes in international law. Intergovernmental organisations like the International Criminal Court seek to prosecute those who commit crimes, as justice is vital to effectively addressing armed conflict. Justice can be hard to achieve as, for example, multiple attempts by the ICC to prosecute crimes committed by the Assad regime have been vetoed by Russia since the war began.

Question 12 (continued)

b. With reference to the global crisis you outlined in Question 12a, explain ONE cause for this particular crisis. (3 marks)

Marking advice

Identifies a cause of the specified global crisis	1 mark
Demonstrates how the identified cause serves as a contributing/exacerbating factor of the specified crisis, using a relevant example	2 marks

Suggested examples

- Climate change: burning of fossil fuels
- Armed conflict: Arab Spring demonstrations across the Middle East leading to violent responses
- Terrorism: the north/south socio-economic divide in Nigeria
- Economic instability: inflation.

Sample response

One cause of the armed conflict in Syria was the influence and example of the Arab Spring. Following the fall of authoritarian regimes in Tunisia and Egypt, demonstrations occurred in Syria from 2011, with protesters seeking greater democratic freedoms. These demonstrations added to the pressure facing the Assad regime and it responded with violence as protests spread throughout the country. Rather than quashing the demonstrations, the Assad regime only further antagonised many Syrians, which led to a national uprising and ultimately the outbreak of a full-scale civil war as opposition groups began to organise and arm themselves into a militant opposition, encouraged by a belief that success had been achieved across the Middle East.

Question 13 (10 marks)

With reference to a global crisis you have studied this year, analyse TWO challenges to achieving an effective resolution of this crisis. Note, you must choose a different global crisis to the one used to answer Question 12.

Marking advice

Identifies two challenges to achieving an effective resolution to the specified global crisis	2 mark
Uses specific evidence to describe both challenges	4 marks
Explains how the examples present challenges to an effective resolution of the specified global crisis	4 marks

Suggested examples

- climate change – the national interest of states, e.g. the United States withdrawing from the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change
- armed conflict – a lack of international cooperation, e.g. rival diplomacy between the UN and Russia/Turkey
- terrorism – the inability to address causes of terrorism, e.g. Nigeria, the UN and the Multinational Joint Taskforce (MNJTF) have not effectively addressed the socio-economic issues that create extremism in the Lake Chad region
- economic instability – protectionism from states, e.g. policies that restrict trade such as the US–China trade war.

Sample response

Global crisis: terrorism

Challenge 1: The approach of the Nigerian state

In response to the threat posed by Boko Haram, the Nigerian government has pursued a range of ineffective measures. The state has repeatedly paid ransoms to the group and returned militants in exchange for the release of hostages, so as to avoid domestic and international scrutiny. Famously, this has included exchanges of militants and \$2 million for the release of 82 of the Chibok girls kidnapped in 2014. This response serves to encourage further attacks; the state has struggled with kidnappings into 2021. Furthermore, the state has not adequately supported the military, as corruption has seen \$15 billion lost to fraudulent arms contracts. Soldiers on the front line of the struggle against Boko Haram have complained of being ill-equipped and therefore unable to address the crisis. Finally, the approach of the Nigerian military has failed to respect human rights. Arbitrary arrests, deaths in detention and extrajudicial killings have led to distrust of government forces in the north. Such approaches also made procuring weapons from the United States more difficult under Barack Obama.

Challenge 2: The use of asymmetric warfare

Asymmetric warfare is a key aspect of terrorism and a central challenge to resolving the crisis. The unconventional tactics employed by Boko Haram against the more conventional military threat of Nigeria and regional states have meant the group has been difficult to predict and to eradicate. The

2011 bombing of the UN headquarters in the capital, Abuja, caught the state and the UN by surprise, as have the numerous kidnappings of schoolgirls, most famously the 276 schoolgirls from Chibok in 2014 and the 110 girls from Dapchi in 2018. Furthermore, the use of women and people feigning disability to carry out suicide bombings in marketplaces appears to occur at random and adds to the terror incited by the group amongst Nigerians. Nigerian forces, already hampered by poor training and a lack of equipment, have found it impossible to keep up with these tactics. Alice Friend, then the Pentagon's Principal Director for Africa, said in 2014 that: 'In the face of a new and more sophisticated threat than it has faced before, [Nigerian] security forces have been slow to adapt with new strategies and targets.' This struggle is behind the state's human rights abuses and have contributed to the problem rather than effectively addressing it.

SECTION B

Question 1 (20 marks)

‘And what that means is not that the age of the State is over. The State still matters. But the stage is crowded. The State’s not alone, There are many, many actors.’—Joseph S Nye, ‘Global power shifts’, TED (2010)

Evaluate the extent to which at least THREE different global actors are able to challenge state sovereignty.

Marking advice

Students should:

- discuss at least three global actors
- identify the ways that these actors challenge state sovereignty
- make a judgement, supported by evidence, of how successful these global actors are at achieving their aim.

Suggested contention

While the stage is certainly more crowded, the ability of a range of global actors to challenge state sovereignty in the twenty-first century is uneven.’

Question 2 (20 marks)

‘[T]he ... effectiveness of different types of power and foreign policy instruments in pursuit of a state’s national interests vary considerably, and there is often a marked difference between the intentions and results.’—extract from the VCE Australian and Global Politics 2018–2023 Study Design

Evaluate the effectiveness of at least THREE different types of power used by your selected state in pursuit of its national security interests :

- Australia
- China
- Indonesia
- Japan
- United States of America.

Marking advice

Students should:

- identify the distinct types of power they are discussing
- demonstrate an understanding of national security
- discuss the selected state’s national interests’ aims
- explain why these different types of power are used
- make a judgement, supported by evidence, of how effective the state is in achieving its aims.

Suggested contention

While military power remains vital to the pursuit of national security, strategic use of economic and cultural power has become increasingly important in assisting states to pursue their security in a globalised world.

Question 3 (20 marks)

‘International law has no real effect on governing the actions of states.’

To what extent do you agree with the statement above? Answer with reference to at least TWO international laws you have studied this year, in relation to one global ethical issue.

Marking advice

Students should:

- respond with reference to at least two international laws
- clearly outline the obligations of states under these international laws
- evaluate the impact of international law on the actions of states
- consider the cosmopolitan/realist framework
- clearly explain and use key terms such as ‘justice’ and ‘ethics’
- make a clear overall evaluative statement about the effectiveness of international law in defining states’ obligations and enforcing their compliance.

High-scoring students will also meaningfully examine one or more of the ethical debates from the Study Design.

Suggested contention

‘While the structure and enforcement of international law are often compromised by realist thinking, many of these laws have successfully established norms of behaviour that show their influence on the actions of states.’

Essay plan scaffold

Paragraph 1:

In an attempt to inspire collaboration in pursuit of cosmopolitan goals, the creation of international law often includes structural weaknesses to encourage states to sign.

- The lack of an enforcement mechanism within the 1951 Refugee Convention
- Reservations within other laws, such as the 2004 Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air.

Paragraph 2:

International laws have been inconsistently enforced, partly due to the non-signatory status of some states, but also as a result of the prioritisation of the national interest of some states.

- Non-signatory states are an issue (various examples for all laws)
- Russian support for Assad facilitating the use of chemical weapons
- War crimes committed by Syria in defence of sovereignty.

Paragraph 3:

Despite setbacks, the broad support for and adherence to international law has delivered a safer and more just world.

- Positive signatory status of a number of international laws (e.g. Chemical Weapons Convention 1997)
- Broad adherence or at least partial adherence to international law (CWC, NPT, Refugee Convention), this suggests a desire for collaboration in an increasingly globalised world.

Question 4 (20 marks)

‘Global actors are both a blessing and a curse for global crises, at times contributing to solutions, and at others exacerbating a crisis and making the situation worse.’

Discuss the accuracy of the statement above with reference to at least THREE responses by relevant global actors you have studied this year, in relation to ONE global crisis.

Marking advice

Students should:

- reference at least three distinct responses from three different global actors to one global crisis
- analyse the impact of responses on the selected global crisis and discuss their effectiveness
- include reference to responses that have both assisted and exacerbated the selected crisis
- integrate the quote in the prompt in the discussion of responses.

High-scoring students will also make reference to one or more of the ‘key aspects’ for the given crisis and explain the impact each has on effective international cooperation.

Suggested contention

When motivated by a desire to work collaboratively, global actors like the United Nations have shown a capacity to effectively address global crises; however, the national interest of states frequently serves to exacerbate these crises rather than resolve them.

Extended-response marking advice

The essay in Section B will be assessed against the following criteria:

- development of a coherent and relevant argument that addresses the specific demands of the essay question
- demonstration of political knowledge that is accurate and appropriate for the essay question
- accurate use of key political terms and concepts
- use of contemporary examples and case studies to support explanations, points of view and arguments

18-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds to the full complexity of the prompt • Utilises a range of specific evidence to support a clear, precise and challenging contention • Sustains a high level of argument throughout • Expertly engages with the language and concepts of the Study Design, and demonstrates an understanding of broader international relations theory
15-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a clear understanding of, and response to, the prompt • Argues a clear and consistent contention • Utilises a range of specific evidence to support relevant arguments • Engages with the key terms and concepts of the Study Design in some detail
11-14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some understanding of the requirements of the prompt demonstrated • A clear contention provided, but not fully supported • Uses broad evidence, or the evidence provided does not fully support the arguments presented • Satisfactory engagement with the terms and concepts within the Study Design
7-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited, or inconsistent, understanding of the prompt • An imprecise or under-supported contention and line of argument presented • Lacks supporting evidence • Displays limited engagement with the material in the Study Design
4-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not clearly respond to the prompt, but may show some evidence of engagement with the Study Design
1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some attempt made, but essay unfinished or largely irrelevant
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No valid attempt made