

Mathematics Level 7

Chapter 3 — the society, values and identity spine

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Many faiths, many cultures: Australia's secular and pluralist society

Chapter 3 · Knowledge and Understanding · Citizenship, diversity and identity · Content descriptor VC2HC8K09 · draws on elaborations .E01, .E03 and .E04 · elaboration .E02 is excluded per the scope note at the front of this book and is not taught here.

Theory

Part 1 — The six key terms (.E01)

This section rests on six terms. Two of them — *secular* and *pluralist* — are used by the Victorian Curriculum but not defined there, and Australians do not always agree about them: some people use “secular” to mean that religion should have no part in public life at all, while others use it to mean that the government simply does not take sides between religions. This section therefore treats the six terms as follows, and it is the first meaning of “secular” below — the one that matches the words of the Constitution (Part 2) — that this section uses.

- **Secular** — describes a government or institution that does not belong to any religion and does not favour any religion. People and groups stay free to be religious in public life.
- **Pluralist** — describes a society where many different cultural and faith groups live together and all can take part in public life on equal terms.
- **Multi-faith** — including people of many different religions.
- **Culturally diverse** — made up of people with many different cultural backgrounds: ancestries, languages, traditions and beliefs.
- **Diverse society** — a society that is culturally diverse.
- **Western and Christian heritage** — the traditions, ideas and institutions that reached Australia mainly through Britain and Europe, shaped by Christianity and by older Greek and Roman ideas.

Six key terms of this section

The curriculum asks students to define these words and discuss their relevance to Australia today.

Term	Meaning used in this section
Secular	In this section: a government or institution that does not belong to any religion and does not favour any religion.
Pluralist	Describes a society where many different cultural and faith groups live together and all can take part in public life on equal terms.
Multi-faith	Including people of many different religions.
Culturally diverse	Made up of people with many different cultural backgrounds: ancestries, languages, traditions and beliefs.
Diverse society	A society that is culturally diverse.
Western and Christian heritage	Traditions, ideas and institutions that reached Australia mainly through Britain and Europe, shaped by Christianity and by older Greek and Roman ideas.

A table of the six key terms of this section — *secular*, *pluralist*, *multi-faith*, *culturally diverse*, *diverse society*, and *Western and Christian heritage* — with the meaning this section gives each term.

Figure 1. The six key terms, with the meanings this section gives them.

Part 2 — What “secular democracy” means in Australia

Australia is a **democracy**: voters elect the parliament, the parliament makes the laws, and the parliament chooses the government. It is a **secular** democracy: the government does not belong to any religion and does not favour any religion. An **institution** is an organisation or system with a settled place in how a country is run — the parliament and the courts are institutions, and so are the churches that run schools. The secular rule is written in section 116 (s 116) of the Australian Constitution, which sets four limits on the Commonwealth — that is, the federal — Parliament.

Section 116 of the Australian Constitution

The Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth.

Source: Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900 (UK), s 116. In force since Federation on 1 January 1901. The section limits the Commonwealth — that is, the federal — Parliament.

The exact words of section 116 of the Australian Constitution in a box, with the source: Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900 (UK), s 116, in force since Federation on 1 January 1901.

Figure 2. The exact words of s 116. In plain terms, the Commonwealth cannot: (1) set up an official religion; (2) force any religious practice on anyone; (3) ban the free practice of any religion; or (4) require a religious test for any Commonwealth public position.

Four points matter. First, Australia has **no state church**: no religion is the official religion of the country. Second, nobody can be forced by the Commonwealth to take part in a religious act. Third, the free practice of religion is protected — being secular does not mean being against religion. Fourth, no religious test can keep a person out of a Commonwealth public position.

A common mistake is to read “secular” as “the people are not religious”. That reading is wrong about Australia. *Secular* describes the government, not the people. As Part 3 shows, nearly half of all people counted in 2021 identified with a Christian denomination, and many more follow other faiths. The government does not take sides; the society is multi-faith.

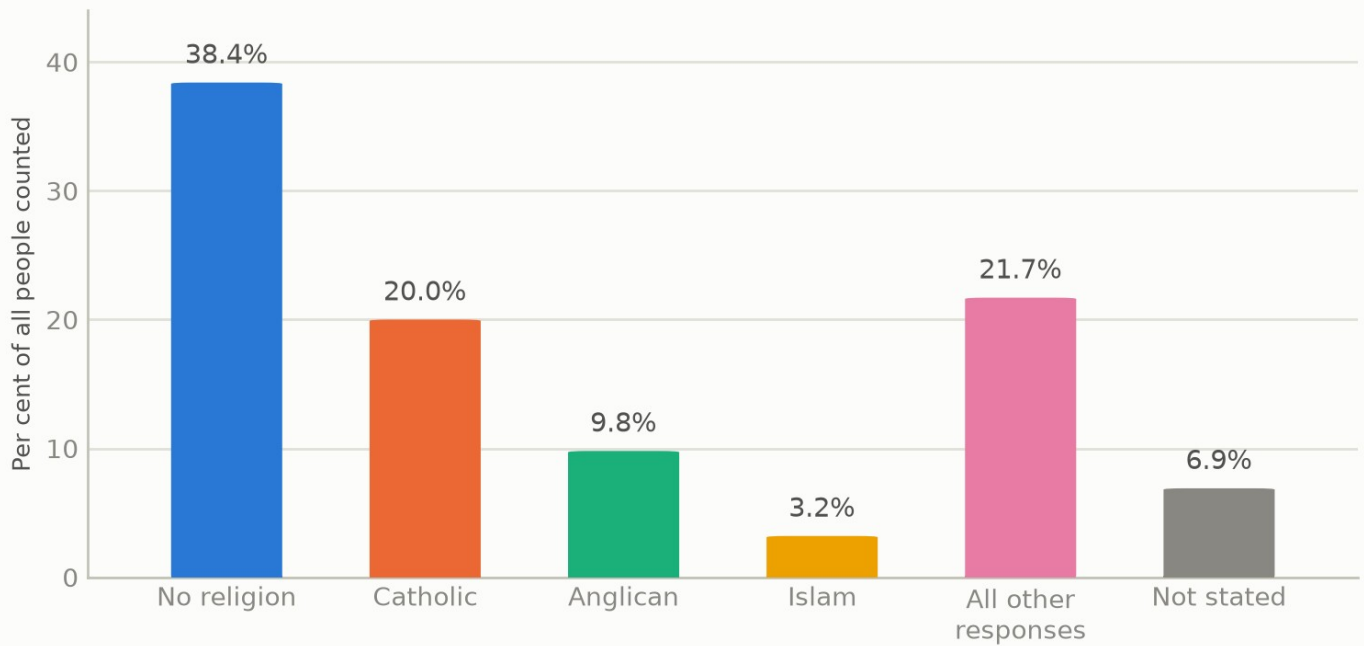
Because Australians disagree about “secular”, the other reading deserves a fair hearing: some argue that religion should stay private, with no place in public debate. That view is a reasonable part of Australian debate. This section uses the first reading because it is the one the words of s 116 support: s 116 limits what the Commonwealth may do by law, and it does not push faith out of public life.

Part 3 — A multi-faith and culturally diverse society (.E03)

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) runs the **Census**, the official count and survey of every person in Australia, usually every five years. The 2021 Census counted 25,422,788 people, and one question asks about religion. All census figures in this section come from the ABS 2021 and 2016 Census QuickStats for Australia, retrieved 26 August 2026.

Religion responses in the 2021 Census (Australia)

'All other responses' includes other Christian denominations, other religions and other answers.



Data: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021 Census All persons QuickStats (Australia), abs.gov.au, retrieved 26 August 2026.

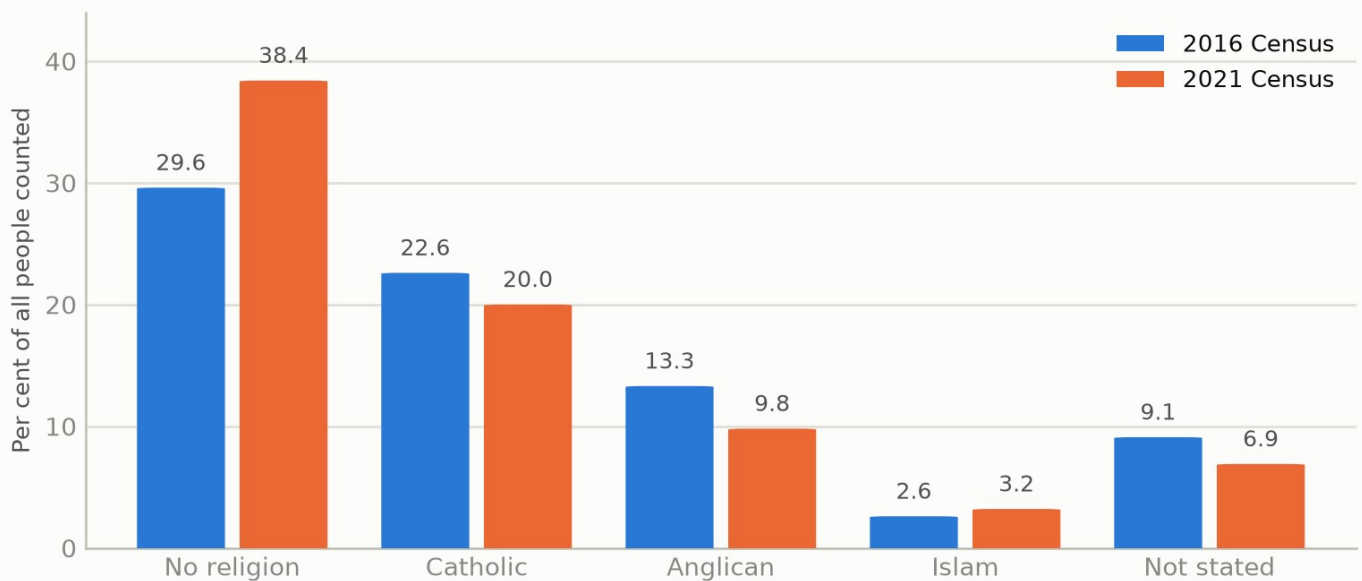
Bar chart of religion responses in the 2021 Census: No religion 38.4 per cent, Catholic 20.0, Anglican 9.8, Islam 3.2, all other responses 21.7, and not stated 6.9.

Figure 3. Religion responses in the 2021 Census, per cent of all people counted.

Read across Figure 3. The largest single response is **no religion** (38.4 per cent). The largest broad group is still **Christianity**: Catholic (20.0 per cent) and Anglican (9.8 per cent) are named, and the other Christian **denominations** — a denomination is an organised branch of a religion, such as the Uniting Church or the Greek Orthodox Church — sit inside “all other responses”; Christians of all denominations together made up 47.1 per cent of all people counted. **Islam** (3.2 per cent) is named on its own, and other religions — Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism among them — also sit inside “all other responses”. A society that includes people of many religions like this is a **multi-faith** society.

Religion responses in the 2016 and 2021 Censuses

Australia, per cent of all people counted.



Data: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021 Census All persons QuickStats (Australia), abs.gov.au, retrieved 26 August 2026.

Grouped bar chart comparing religion responses in the 2016 and 2021 Censuses: No religion rises from 29.6 to 38.4; Catholic falls from 22.6 to 20.0; Anglican falls from 13.3 to 9.8; Islam rises from 2.6 to 3.2; and not stated falls from 9.1 to 6.9.

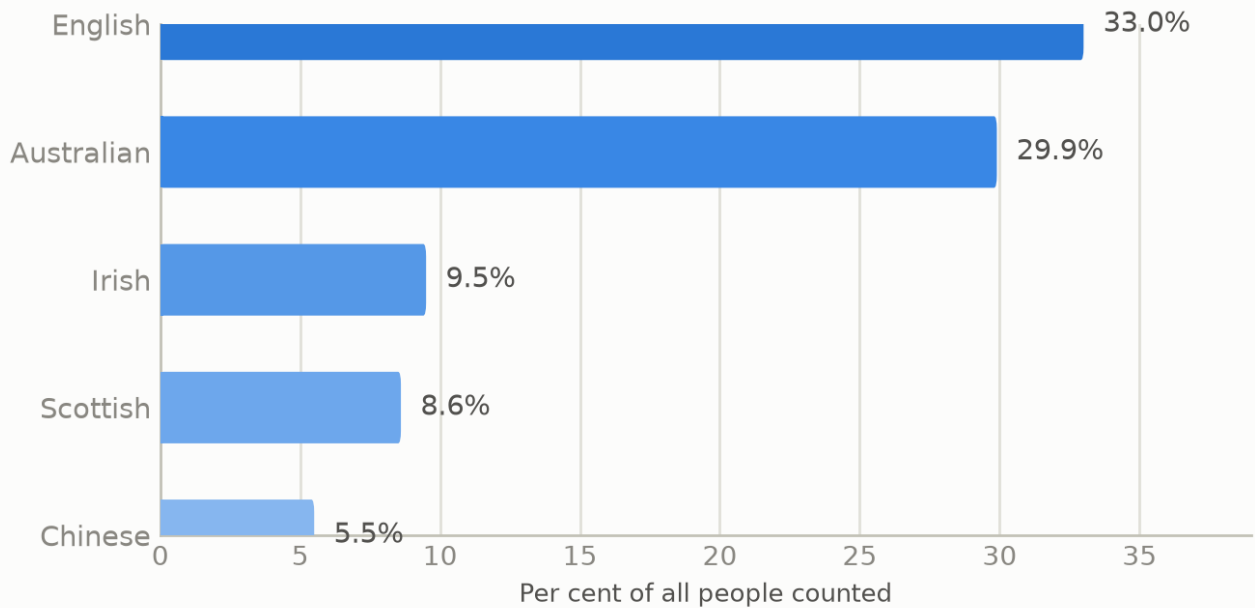
Figure 4. The same question five years apart. Changes are measured in **percentage points** — the simple difference between two percentages; for example, $38.4 - 29.6 = 8.8$ percentage points.

Figure 4 shows the **trends**. Between 2016 and 2021, “no religion” rose by 8.8 percentage points, the two largest Christian denominations shrank (Catholic -2.6 , Anglican -3.5), and Islam grew ($+0.6$). So Australia’s religious mix is changing: fewer people identify with the churches that were once the largest, more name no religion, and non-Christian faiths keep growing. Change in one direction does not mean change in every direction.

The Census also asks about **ancestry** — the cultural or family background a person identifies with, such as Italian or Chinese. A person may give up to two ancestries, so the percentages in Figure 5 add to more than 100.

Five most commonly reported ancestries, 2021 Census

People could report up to two ancestries each.



Data: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021 Census All persons QuickStats (Australia), abs.gov.au, retrieved 26 August 2026.

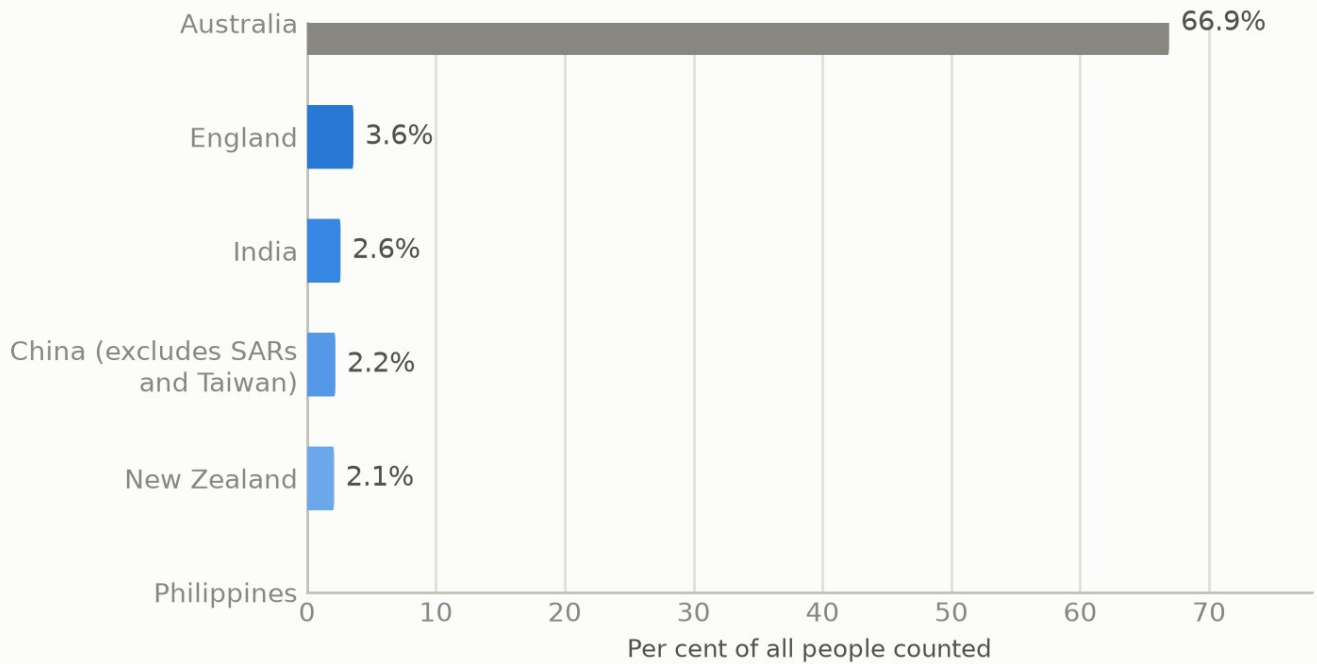
Horizontal bar chart of the five most common ancestries in the 2021 Census: English 33.0 per cent, Australian 29.9, Irish 9.5, Scottish 8.6, and Chinese 5.5.

Figure 5. The five most common ancestries, 2021 Census.

The top four ancestries — English, Australian, Irish and Scottish — show Australia’s British and Irish roots, part of its **Western heritage**; “Australian” is chosen by people of many backgrounds; and ancestries such as Chinese (5.5 per cent) show the other cultural origins that make Australia **culturally diverse**.

Six most common countries of birth, 2021 Census

Australia was the most common country of birth overall.



Data: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021 Census All persons QuickStats (Australia), abs.gov.au, retrieved 26 August 2026.

Horizontal bar chart of the six most common countries of birth in the 2021 Census: Australia 66.9 per cent, England 3.6, India 2.6, China 2.2, New Zealand 2.1, and Philippines 1.2.

Figure 6. The six most common countries of birth, 2021 Census.

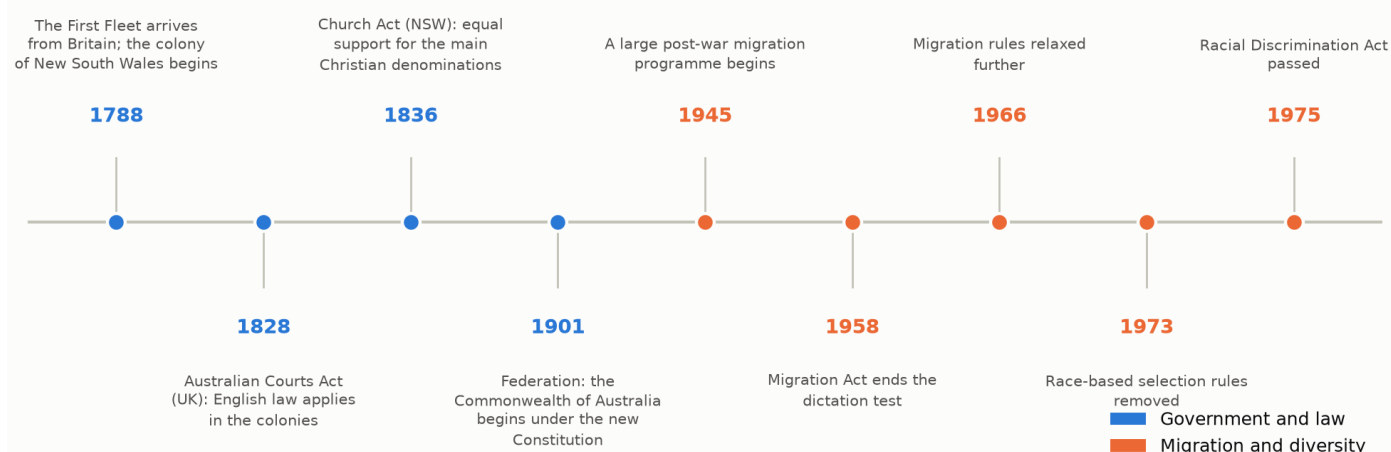
Figure 6 shows that about a third of the people counted were born overseas — most in England, but also in India, China, New Zealand and the Philippines, among many other countries. Many faiths, many ancestries, many birthplaces: Australia is a **diverse society**. And because all of these groups can take part in public life on equal terms — vote, stand for parliament, practise their faith — Australia is described as **pluralist**.

Part 4 — Diverse origins: the history behind the picture (.E04)

The society in Part 3 did not appear by chance. It was built by dated decisions. Figure 7 puts the key ones in order; every act named is a real law you can look up.

Key moments: from British colony to diverse society

Dates studied in this section, in order.



Timeline of nine dated events from 1788 to 1975. In blue, government and law: 1788 the First Fleet arrives and the colony of New South Wales begins; 1828 the Australian Courts Act (UK) applies English law in the colonies; 1836 the Church Act (NSW) gives equal support to the main Christian denominations; 1901 Federation begins the Commonwealth of Australia under the new Constitution. In orange, migration and diversity: 1945 a large post-war migration program begins; 1958 the Migration Act ends the dictation test; 1966 migration rules are relaxed further; 1973 race-based selection is removed; 1975 the Racial Discrimination Act is passed.

Figure 7. Key moments, 1788–1975.

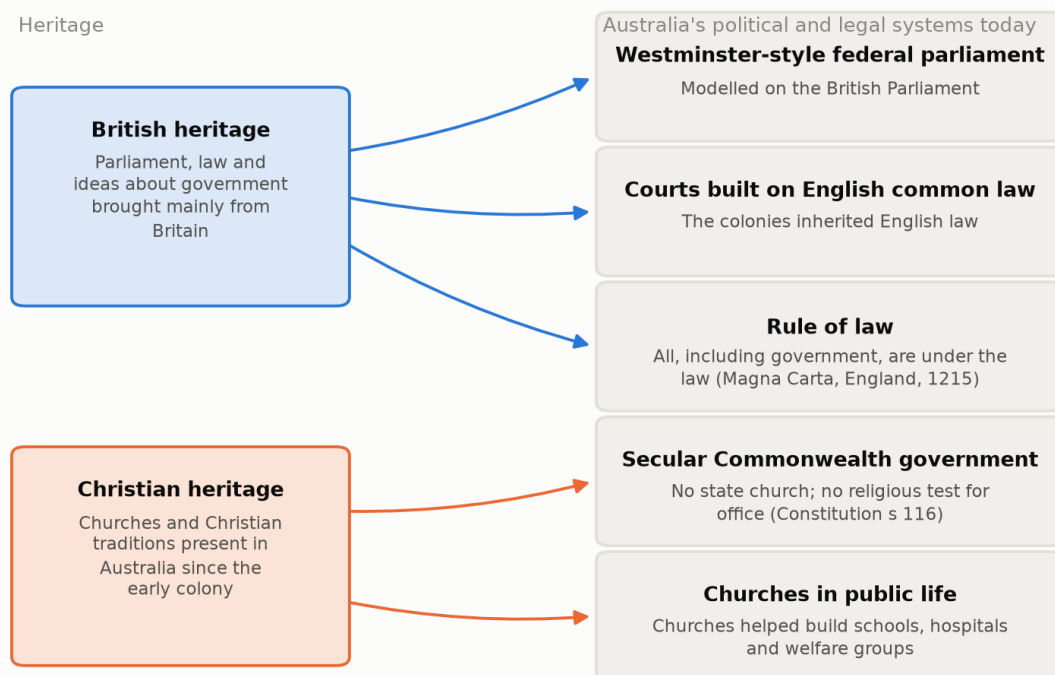
British heritage. The First Fleet of 1788 sailed from Britain, and British ideas of government came with it. The **Australian Courts Act 1828 (UK)** applied English law in the colonies, which is why Australian courts today still build on English **common law** — law made by judges through court decisions, as well as by parliament. From England too comes the **rule of law**, the principle that everyone, including the government, must obey the law; its famous early root is Magna Carta (England, 1215), which made the king answer to the law. Australia’s parliament is **Westminster-style** — that is, modelled on the British Parliament in London: an elected lower house that chooses the government, and an upper house that reviews laws.

Christian heritage. Churches and Christian traditions have been part of Australian life since the early colony. The **Church Act 1836 (NSW)** — drafted by John Plunkett for Governor Richard Bourke — gave equal public support to the main Christian denominations (the Church of England, the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church) instead of favouring one state church. That decision points two ways at once: it shows how deep Christian heritage runs in Australia’s story, and it was an early step towards a secular government that does not favour one religion. Churches also built many schools, hospitals and welfare organisations that still exist, and the Christian calendar gives Australia public holidays such as Christmas and Easter. At **Federation** — the joining of the colonies into the Commonwealth of Australia on 1 January 1901 — the new Constitution wrote the no-state-church decision into s 116.

Migration choices. In the same year as Federation, the new Parliament passed the **Immigration Restriction Act 1901**, which used a **dictation test** — an officer could ask a migrant to write out a passage read aloud, in a European language chosen to make them fail — to keep out people who were not white Europeans. After the Second World War the policy changed direction: from 1945 a large migration program began under the slogan “populate or perish”, driven by the first Minister for Immigration, Arthur Calwell, at first mainly from Europe. The **Migration Act 1958** ended the dictation test; rules were relaxed further in 1966; in 1973 race-based selection was removed; and the **Racial Discrimination Act 1975** made it unlawful to treat people unfairly because of their race. Each change widened the range of cultural origins — the ancestries and birthplaces measured in Part 3.

How British and Christian heritage shaped Australia's systems

Each arrow links a heritage to a feature it helped to shape.



Compiled from the dated events and documents listed in this section.

Labelled diagram linking British heritage to a Westminster-style federal parliament, to courts built on English common law, and to the rule of law; and linking Christian heritage to a secular Commonwealth government with no state church and no religious test for office (Constitution s 116), and to churches in public life.

Figure 8. How British and Christian heritage shaped today's political and legal systems.

Sources for Part 4: Australian Courts Act 1828 (UK); Church Act 1836 (NSW); Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900 (UK), s 116; Immigration Restriction Act 1901 (Commonwealth); Migration Act 1958 (Commonwealth); Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth); retrieved from official legislation registers 26 August 2026.

Part 5 — Pulling it together

Australia's secular democracy rests on British and Christian heritage: a Westminster parliament, common law courts, the rule of law, and a government that cannot set up or favour a church (s 116). The same country is a pluralist, multi-faith and culturally diverse society, built by migration choices from 1788 to today and measured by the Census. The heritage explains the shape of the system; the migration explains the mix of the society; and s 116 explains how a country with Christian roots keeps its government open to people of every faith and none. Section 3B continues this chapter's study of citizenship, diversity and identity in Australia.

Worked examples

Example 1 — scaffolded

Using Figures 3 and 4, evaluate the claim: "Australia is becoming less religious."

Working	Comment
"No religion": 29.6% (2016) → 38.4% (2021), a rise of 8.8 percentage points.	The strongest evidence for the claim: nearly nine more people in every hundred named no religion.

Working	Comment
Catholic 22.6 → 20.0; Anglican 13.3 → 9.8.	The two largest Christian denominations shrank, matching the rise in “no religion”.
Islam 2.6 → 3.2; and other faiths inside “all other responses” also grew.	Evidence against a simple reading: some religions grew, so “less religious” is not true for everyone.
Christians of all denominations were still 47.1% of people counted in 2021; and the Census asks what people identify as, not how often they practise or believe.	Weigh both sides, and note what the data cannot show, before judging.
<i>Model judgement:</i> The claim is supported in part. Fewer Australians identify with the churches that were once the largest, and more name no religion — but Australia remains a multi-faith society in which many people are still religious.	

Example 2 — unscaffolded

Trace two features of Australia’s political or legal systems to its British or Christian heritage.

Model response. One feature is Australia’s Westminster-style federal parliament, which traces to British heritage: the colonies were British, and at Federation the new Parliament was modelled on the British Parliament, with an elected lower house that chooses the government and an upper house that reviews laws. A second feature is the common law used in Australian courts, which also traces to Britain: the Australian Courts Act 1928 (UK) applied English law in the colonies, and Australian judges still build on that body of decisions handed down from England, together with the rule-of-law idea rooted in Magna Carta (1215). A third feature, tracing to Christian heritage, is the decision in s 116 that the Commonwealth cannot set up a state church — a choice growing out of colonial experience, such as the Church Act 1836 (NSW), of sharing support between denominations rather than favouring one church. (Two features were required; a strong answer names the feature, the heritage, and a dated link.)

Practice questions

Scaffolded

- Q1.** In your own words, define *secular* as this section uses the term. (.E01)
- Q2.** Name two things s 116 stops the Commonwealth Parliament from doing. (.E01, .E04)
- Q3.** Figure 3 names one non-Christian religion. Name it, then name two more religions that sit inside “all other responses” in Australia today. (.E03)
- Q4.** Using Figure 4, state what happened between 2016 and 2021 to (a) the “no religion” response and (b) the Anglican response. (.E03)
- Q5.** Complete the sentence: Australia’s federal parliament is _____-style, modelled on the parliament of _____; Australian courts build on English _____ law. (.E04)
- Q6.** Give one example of Christian heritage still visible in Australian public life today. (.E04)

Unscaffolded

- Q7.** Explain the difference between *multi-faith* and *pluralist* as this section uses the terms. (.E01)
- Q8.** Evaluate the claim: “*A secular democracy means Australians are not religious.*” Use at least two figures in your answer. (.E01, .E03)
- Q9.** Choose one dated decision from Figure 7 and explain one way it still shapes Australia today. (.E04)
- Q10.** Explain how British heritage shows up in (a) the Australian Parliament and (b) Australian courts. (.E04)

Q11 — source-based inquiry. Study Source A (Figure 9).

Source A — Religion responses, 2016 and 2021 Censuses

Per cent of all people counted; other responses not shown. Change shown in percentage points (pp).

Response	2016 (%)	2021 (%)	Change (pp)
No religion	29.6	38.4	+8.8
Catholic	22.6	20.0	−2.6
Anglican	13.3	9.8	−3.5
Islam	2.6	3.2	+0.6
Not stated	9.1	6.9	−2.2

Data: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021 Census All persons QuickStats (Australia), abs.gov.au, retrieved 26 August 2026.

A table titled Source A showing religion responses in the 2016 and 2021 Censuses with the change in percentage points: No religion 29.6 to 38.4 (+8.8); Catholic 22.6 to 20.0 (−2.6); Anglican 13.3 to 9.8 (−3.5); Islam 2.6 to 3.2 (+0.6); not stated 9.1 to 6.9 (−2.2).

Figure 9. Source A — Religion responses, 2016 and 2021 Censuses.

- Describe the trend shown by the “no religion” row and the Catholic row.
- Source A is drawn from the ABS Census. Give one reason that makes it reliable evidence about how Australians answered the religion question.
- Pose one follow-up question Source A cannot answer, and name one other source you could use to answer it.

Answers

- Q1.** Secular describes a government or institution that does not belong to any religion and does not favour any religion, while people and groups stay free to be religious in public life.
- Q2.** Any two of: set up an official religion; force any religious practice on anyone; ban the free practice of any religion; require a religious test for a Commonwealth public position.
- Q3.** Islam is named in Figure 3; two more from Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism.
- Q4.** (a) It rose from 29.6 to 38.4 per cent (+8.8 percentage points). (b) It fell from 13.3 to 9.8 per cent (−3.5 percentage points).
- Q5.** Westminster; Britain; common.
- Q6.** Any one: church-run schools or hospitals; the Christmas and Easter public holidays; church welfare and charity organisations.
- Q7.** *Multi-faith* means including people of many religions. *Pluralist* adds that all cultural and faith groups live together and can take part in public life on equal terms — a society can be multi-faith without being pluralist if some groups are shut out of public life.
- Q8.** The claim confuses the government with the people. Section 116 makes the Commonwealth secular, while Figures 3 and 4 show a society in which 47.1 per cent of people counted identified as Christian in 2021 and many faiths are present — a secular government over a multi-faith society.
- Q9.** Example: the Australian Courts Act 1828 (UK) applied English law in the colonies, so Australian courts today still build on English common law. (Any dated choice with a real link accepted.)
- Q10.** (a) The Parliament is Westminster-style, modelled on the British Parliament: an elected lower house chooses the government and an upper house reviews laws. (b) The courts apply common law inherited from England (Australian Courts Act 1828), under the rule of law rooted in Magna Carta.
- Q11.** (a) “No religion” rose from 29.6 to 38.4 (+8.8 pp) while Catholic fell from 22.6 to 20.0 (−2.6 pp): identification is moving away from the largest Christian denomination. (b) The Census is run by the ABS, Australia’s official statistics office, and counts every household — a complete count, not a small voluntary poll. (c) Example: “Does the fall in Anglican identification show up equally in every age group?” — answerable from detailed ABS census tables or an ABS article on religion by age.
-

Fully-worked solutions

Q8. *Step 1 — what “secular” actually describes.* “Secular” describes the government, not the people: s 116 stops the Commonwealth setting up a religion, forcing religious practice, banning the free practice of religion, or requiring a religious test for public positions. So the claim takes a word about institutions and applies it to 25 million people. *Step 2 — test against the data.* Figure 3 shows 47.1 per cent of people counted identified as Christian in 2021, 3.2 per cent as Muslim, and more faiths inside “all other responses”; Figure 4 shows the mix changing, not religion disappearing — “no religion” rose to 38.4 per cent, which is large but is not a majority. *Step 3 — judgement.* The claim is not supported: Australia is a secular democracy *and* a society in which many people are religious. The two facts sit side by side; that is exactly what “secular, multi-faith” means.

Q9. *Choice:* the Church Act 1836 (NSW). *Link to today:* instead of keeping one state church, the colony chose to share public support between the main Christian denominations — an early step towards a government that does not favour one religion. That choice was later written into the Commonwealth at Federation as s 116, which still stops the federal Parliament setting up an official religion today. So a decision made in 1836 helps explain why Australia has no state church now. (Other dated choices work the same way: name the decision, then one line of effect that is still visible.)

Q10. (a) *Parliament:* Australia’s federal parliament is Westminster-style — modelled on the British Parliament, with an elected lower house that chooses the government and an upper house that reviews laws, and with customs such as

question time copied from London. This traces straight back to the British colonies begun in 1788. (b) *Courts*: the Australian Courts Act 1828 (UK) applied English law in the colonies, so Australian courts still build on English common law — judge-made law from court decisions — and on the rule of law, the idea that everyone including the government must obey the law, with an early root in Magna Carta (England, 1215).

Q11. (a) The “no religion” row rises from 29.6 to 38.4 per cent (+8.8 percentage points) while the Catholic row falls from 22.6 to 20.0 (−2.6): over the five years, fewer people identified with the largest Christian denomination and more named no religion. (b) The source is reliable because of its origin: the ABS is Australia’s official statistics office, and the Census counts every household in the country, so the figures are a complete official count rather than a small voluntary poll that could be skewed by who bothers to answer. (c) A follow-up question Source A cannot answer: “Is the rise in ‘no religion’ stronger in younger or older Australians?” Source A only gives national totals for two years. A second source to answer it: the detailed ABS Census tables of religion by age group (or an ABS article built from those tables).

Values that hold society together and keep democracy strong

Curriculum link — code: VC2HC8K10 (Levels 7 and 8 band; this book teaches the whole band). Linkage keys for the question bank and coverage: .E01 .E02 .E03 .E04 — these are illustrations, not a teaching order.

In this section you will

- define the section's key terms, including the ones people argue about, and say which definition you are using;
- examine nine values the curriculum names as Australian values, and judge how far society reflects them;
- see how shared values are expressed through customs and protocols, using the national anthem and its changes;
- explain how social cohesion and a democracy that lasts support each other;
- investigate why migrants and refugees choose Australia and why many become citizens.

Theory

1. What is a value — and what kind of word is it?

A **value** is an idea that a person or a community holds to be important and worth defending — a standard for judging what is good. Australia's civic values are ideas about how people should treat each other, and how the country should treat its people.

Word check — values are contested concepts. Words such as *freedom*, *fairness* and *justice* are **contested concepts**: sensible people disagree about exactly what they mean. The Victorian Curriculum names them without defining them. This section therefore uses the working definitions given here — shaped by the Australian Values Statement (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs) and by everyday Australian usage — and every question is answerable on those definitions alone. Other definitions exist and are not interchangeable with these. That is not weakness; it is stating the frame before reasoning inside it.

2. The four values named in the content description

The content description for this section names four values: **freedom, fairness, respect and equality of opportunity**. The same four appear in the **Australian Values Statement**, the short statement a person applying for Australian citizenship must sign. Figure 1 gives the working definition this section uses for each.

The four values named in this section's content description

Value	The working definition used in this section	Where you meet it
Freedom	You can think, speak, worship and live as you choose, within the law, without being harmed or silenced by others or by government without good legal reason.	The content description for this section; the Australian Values Statement.
Respect	Treating others as having worth: listening to them, disagreeing without putting them down, and treating their rights as seriously as your own.	The content description for this section; everyday life, from the classroom to parliament.
Fairness	Rules and decisions apply to people in the same way, and no one is treated badly because of who they are.	The content description for this section; courts, sport, school rules.
Equality of opportunity	Everyone has a real chance to do well in life — in education, work and health care — no matter where they start.	The content description for this section; the Australian Values Statement.

Sources: Victorian Curriculum 2.0, VC2HC8K10; Australian Values Statement, Australian Government Department of Home Affairs. The curriculum names these values without defining them; definitions written for this book.

Table giving a working definition and an example of where each of the four values is met

Notice the pattern: each value is about how people are treated, and each can be checked against real institutions — laws, courts, schools, hospitals. A value that can be checked is a value that can be argued about with evidence, which is exactly what this section practises.

3. Australian values in everyday life

The curriculum names nine further values often described as Australian values (VC2HC8K10.E01). Figure 2 shows each one, what it means here, and a form it takes in practice.

Nine Australian values named in the curriculum (VC2HC8K10.E01)

Value	What it means	What it can look like in practice
Patriotism	Love for your country and care for what it stands for — without treating other countries as lesser.	Singing the anthem; voting when you can; serving the community.
Inclusion	Making sure people can belong and take part, whoever they are.	Welcoming new arrivals; laws against treating people badly because of who they are.
Civility	Being polite and respectful, including towards people you disagree with.	Listening in class; respectful debate in parliament.
Personal and collective responsibility	Owning your own actions, and working together for the good of all — including caring for shared places and the environment.	Following laws you had a say in; volunteering; saving energy and water at school.
Compassion	Caring about other people's suffering and wanting to help.	Donating to disaster appeals; supporting a neighbour in hard times.
Freedom	Being able to think, speak, worship and live as you choose, within the law.	Freedom of speech; freedom of religion (Section 1B, 1C).
Equality	Everyone counts the same, including before the law.	One vote, one value; anti-discrimination laws.
Justice	Fair treatment under the law; people are not punished or advantaged without proper reason.	Courts; the rule of law (Section 2A).
A 'fair go'	The idea that everyone deserves a fair chance, and that no one should be unfairly ahead or behind.	Medicare; helping people get back on their feet.

Source: Victorian Curriculum 2.0, VC2HC8K10, elaboration E01, which names these values. Definitions and examples written for this book.

Table of nine Australian values with meanings and everyday examples

Two of the rows are worth comparing. **Equality** says everyone counts the same. A **'fair go'** says everyone deserves a real chance — which sometimes means extra help for someone who starts behind, so the race is actually fair. And **personal and collective responsibility** reaches beyond people: it includes caring for shared places and the environment, because a country's parks, rivers and air are things its people share and look after together.

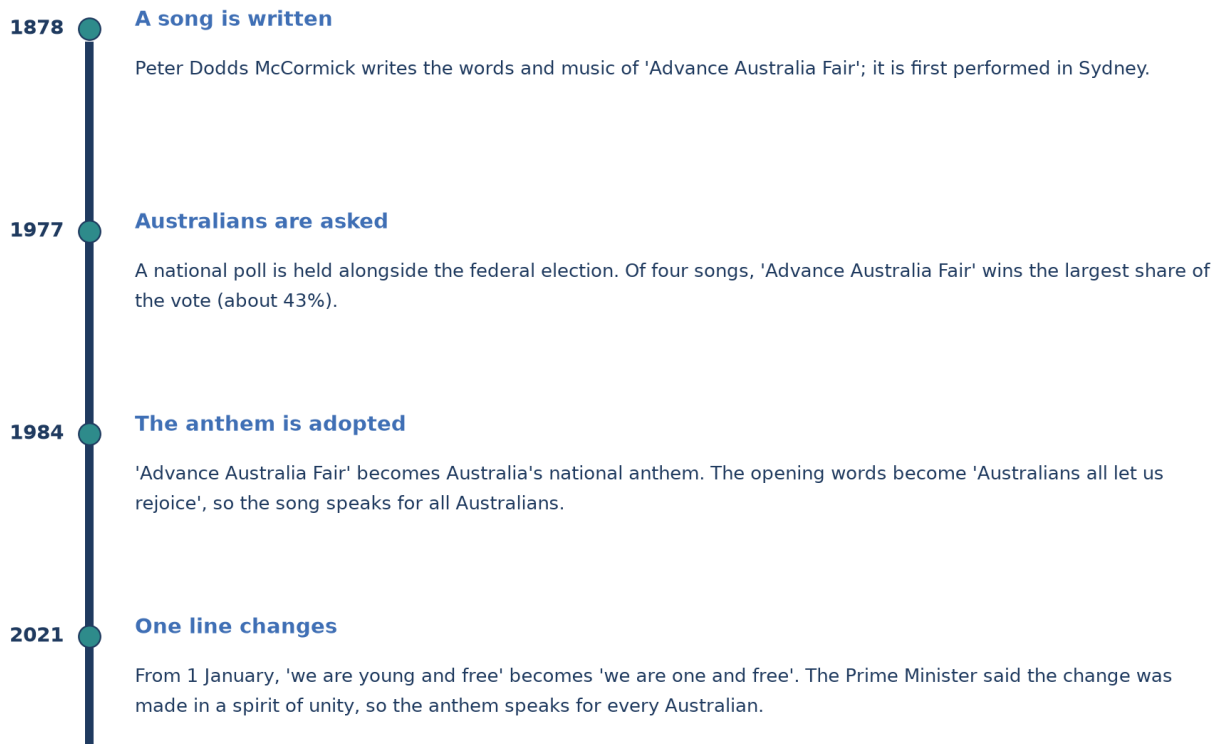
4. "To what extent?" — how to judge a society against its values

Values are ideals, and no society reaches its ideals perfectly. So the curriculum asks you to evaluate *the extent to which* Australian society reflects its values. As in Section 1B, before you choose a point on the four-point scale — **strongly reflects, mostly reflects, reflects in part, weakly reflects** — you must collect evidence *for* and *against*. Worked Example 1 shows the method.

5. Shared values in customs and protocols: the national anthem

Values are not only written in statements. They are also shown in **customs** — things a community has done for a long time — and **protocols**, the agreed ways of doing them (standing when the anthem is played at a ceremony is a protocol). Australia's best-known custom of this kind is singing *Advance Australia Fair*, and its history shows how a custom can carry a shared value and still change as society changes (Figure 3).

A shared custom that changed over time: the national anthem

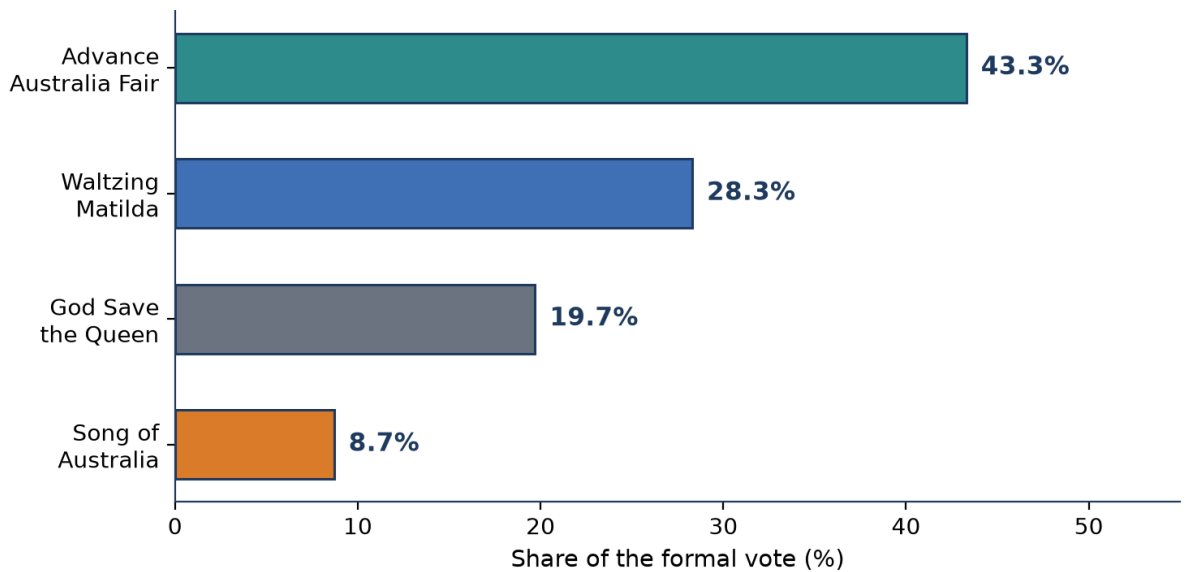


Sources: Australian Government, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 'Australian National Anthem'; Australian Electoral Commission, national song poll, 21 May 1977. Retrieved 26 August 2026.

Timeline of the Australian national anthem from 1878 to 2021

In 1977, Australians were asked to choose their anthem the democratic way — by voting. Figure 4 shows the result of that national poll.

The national song poll, 21 May 1977



Voters chose one of four songs at a national poll held alongside the 1977 federal election. Shares rounded to one decimal place.

Source: Australian Electoral Commission, national song poll, 21 May 1977. Retrieved 26 August 2026.

Bar chart of the four songs in the 1977 national song poll and their share of the vote

The words Australians sing today are in Figure 5. Read them twice: once as a song, once as a statement of values.

Source: the first verse of 'Advance Australia Fair' today

Australians all let us rejoice,
For we are one and free;
 We've golden soil and wealth for toil,
 Our home is girt by sea;
 Our land abounds in Nature's gifts
 Of beauty rich and rare;
 In history's page, let every stage
 Advance Australia fair!
 With joyful hearts then let us say,
 Advance Australia fair!

The highlighted line was 'For we are young and free' until 1 January 2021. ('Girt by sea' means 'surrounded by sea'.)

Source: 'Advance Australia Fair', national anthem of Australia, official words as published by the Australian Government (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet). Retrieved 26 August 2026.

The first verse of Advance Australia Fair with the line changed in 2021 highlighted

Two views — should a custom change? View 1: a national anthem should stay exactly as it is, because its job is tradition: the same words, sung the same way, connect one generation to the next, and changing them

breaks that link. *View 2*: a national anthem should speak for the whole country as it is now; when a word no longer includes everyone, updating one line keeps the custom alive and honest. Both are serious positions held by people who care about the country. This section asks you to state each view at its strongest and then test it with evidence — for example, what the words actually say, and who the song is meant to include.

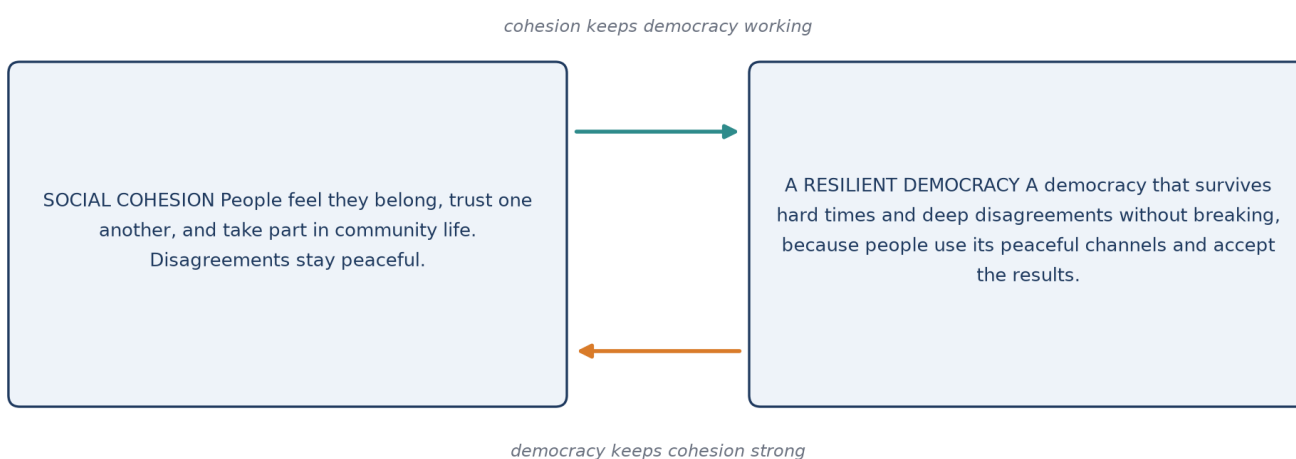
6. How cohesion and a resilient democracy support each other

Definitions used in this section. *Social cohesion*: the Victorian Curriculum uses this term without defining it; this section treats it as the bonds that hold a society together — people feel they belong, trust one another, and take part in community life, even while they disagree. *Resilient democracy*: also not defined by the curriculum; here it means a democracy that survives hard times and deep disagreement without breaking, because people use its peaceful channels and accept the results. Every question is answerable on these definitions alone; other definitions exist.

Why do values matter for cohesion? Because values are the *content* of the bond. A society whose members share ideas about freedom, fairness, respect and equality of opportunity has something to belong to. People who disagree about almost everything can still be one society if they share the rules for disagreeing — civility, justice, and the rule of law (Section 2A). That is why the curriculum joins values to cohesion, and cohesion to a resilient democracy (Figure 6).

Social cohesion and resilient democracy support each other

When people trust each other and feel they belong, they vote, volunteer, debate respectfully and accept election results.



Fair rules, equal voting, the rule of law and a real voice make people feel included, heard and treated fairly.

Each side supports the other — and each can weaken if the other breaks down.

A model created for this book, built from VC2HC8K10, elaboration E03.

Diagram showing social cohesion and resilient democracy supporting each other in a two-way cycle

Cohesion also shows in shared habits of caring for common places — a community clean-up day, or saving water during a drought. That is the sustainability side of collective responsibility: the things a society shares are part of what holds it together.

Cohesion is **not** the same as agreement. A cohesive society still argues — about tax, sport, borders and school rules. The test is *how* it argues: peacefully, with respect, and with a willingness to accept a result you did not want. Cohesion weakens when groups stop trusting each other or when some people feel shut out. Figure 7 gives signs to look for in both directions.

What social cohesion looks like when it is strong — and when it weakens

Signs cohesion is strong	Signs cohesion is weakening
Most people vote and trust that elections are honest (turnout at federal elections is usually above 90%).	People stop voting or stop trusting elections and institutions.
People volunteer, donate and help neighbours, including after disasters such as bushfires and floods.	Groups stop mixing, and people see other groups as enemies.
People disagree strongly but stay peaceful, and accept results they did not want.	Disagreement turns into insults, threats or violence, and losing side refuses to accept the results.
People from different backgrounds feel they belong and can take part.	Some groups feel shut out, unheard or treated as outsiders.
People follow rules because they see them as fair.	People follow rules only out of fear, or ignore them when they can.

Created for this book as a thinking scaffold; turnout figure: Australian Electoral Commission, federal election results. Retrieved 26 August 2026.

Table comparing signs that social cohesion is strong with signs that it is weakening

7. Migrants, refugees and citizenship

Australia is a migrant society. At the 2021 Census, 29.1 per cent of people counted were born overseas, and more than 300 ancestries were named (Australian Bureau of Statistics; reading trends like this one is practised in Section 3A). The curriculum's question is: why do people come, and why do many then choose citizenship?

A **migrant** is a person who moves to another country to live. A **refugee** is a person who has had to flee their own country because of war or **persecution** — being harmed or targeted for who they are or what they believe. Australia's **Humanitarian Program** offers refugees a safe new home, in line with the promise of the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention, which Australia formally agreed to in 1954. Most other migrants arrive through the Skill and Family streams of the migration program, run by the Department of Home Affairs. Figure 8 matches the reasons people come to the streams they arrive through — and to the values of this section.

Why people choose Australia: reasons and the migration streams they arrive through

Reason people come	Who this often applies to	Values it connects to
Safety and protection from war or persecution	Refugees and others needing protection, resettled through the Humanitarian Program	Compassion; protection
Joining family members already in Australia	Family stream migrants	Belonging; family
Work, and the chance to use their skills	Skilled stream migrants	A 'fair go'; personal responsibility
Freedom and rights that are not protected at home	Migrants from countries with fewer freedoms	Freedom; respect
A fair chance at a better life for their children	Many migrants and refugees	Fairness; equality of opportunity

Sources: Department of Home Affairs, Australian migration streams (Skill, Family and Humanitarian programs); Australia formally agreed to the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention in 1954. Reasons summarised for this book. Retrieved 26 August 2026.

Table matching reasons people come to Australia with migration streams and values

Nearly every reason connects back to a value: safety (compassion), family (belonging), work (a fair go), rights (freedom), a chance for children (equality of opportunity). That connection answers the second half of the question: people choose citizenship when they judge the values worth pledging to.

Two views — how many? *View 1:* Australia should take more refugees and migrants, because lives are saved, families are reunited, and new workers and new ideas strengthen the country; compassion and a fair

go point that way. *View 2:* Australia should keep numbers lower or grow them slowly, because housing, hospitals, schools and jobs feel the pressure, and a program the public sees as manageable keeps public support. Both views can be held by people who value compassion *and* fairness — they weigh the same values in different ways. Good civics argues about the weighing, not about the person.

Citizenship is the legal bond between a person and a country: rights on one side, responsibilities on the other. Figure 9 lists what Australian citizenship adds, and Figure 10 shows the pledge new citizens make at a citizenship ceremony — loyalty, democratic beliefs, rights and liberties, and obedience to the law, in four lines. Since 2007, applicants also sit a citizenship test about Australia and its values; Section 3D examines what the test’s questions reflect.

Why become an Australian citizen? What citizenship adds

What citizenship adds	Why it matters
Vote in federal and state elections	You have a direct say in who governs.
Stand for parliament (once you are 18)	You can represent others, not only choose who does.
Many roles in the Defence Force and in government service require citizenship	Full access to work that serves the country.
Travel on an Australian passport and get help from Australian officials if you are in trouble overseas	Support and protection while travelling.
A secure right to remain: visas can be cancelled, but citizenship is secure	A permanent home in Australia.
Take part in a citizenship ceremony and make the pledge	A public moment of belonging and commitment.

Sources: Australian Citizenship Act 2007 (Cth); Department of Home Affairs, Australian citizenship. Retrieved 26 August 2026.

Table of what Australian citizenship adds and why each part matters

Source: the pledge new citizens make at a citizenship ceremony

*From this time forward,
I pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people,
democratic beliefs, and rights and liberties,
and to uphold and obey the laws of Australia.*

ldge, a new citizen promises loyalty, support for democratic beliefs, respect for rights and liberties, and obedience to the law — the values of this section

(The Act also provides optional words of faith that some citizens choose to include.)

Source: Australian Citizenship Act 2007 (Cth), Schedule 2 — the pledge of commitment. Retrieved 26 August 2026.

The pledge of commitment made by new Australian citizens at a citizenship ceremony

Worked examples

Example 1 — scaffolded

Question: Evaluate the extent to which Australian society reflects the value of a “fair go”. Use evidence. The evidence board is Figure 11.

Worked Example 1: does Australian society reflect a 'fair go'?



Sources: Medicare commenced 1 February 1984 (Australian Government); compulsory voting at federal elections since 1924, Australian Electoral Commission. The four-point scale is from Section 1B. Retrieved 26 August 2026.

Worked example evidence board: value, test case, evidence for, evidence against, weighing, conclusion

Working	Comment
1. Choose a value and a test case. Value: a fair go. Test case: Medicare, the national health scheme that began in 1984.	A test case must be a real institution or event, not a feeling. Medicare was built on purpose to give health care regardless of wealth.
2. Collect evidence FOR. Medicare gives free treatment as a public patient in a public hospital and low-cost doctor visits. Voting has been compulsory at federal elections since 1924, so every enrolled voter’s voice counts the same.	Evidence for must be the strongest case you can find — steelman it.
3. Collect evidence AGAINST. People in rural and remote areas have fewer doctors and hospitals nearby.	Evidence against must also be steelmanned — real gaps, not nitpicks.

Working	Comment
Some costs are not covered, and money can still buy faster or extra care.	
4. Weigh the evidence. A strong, lasting institution built on the value; real gaps in access that depend on where people live and what they can pay.	Weighing means comparing strength and size of the two sides, not counting them.
5. Decide on the scale, with reasons: mostly reflects — the value is built into a major national institution, but it is not fully achieved while access depends on location and money.	The point on the scale must follow from steps 2–4, and the reasons must be stated.

Example 2 — scaffolded

Question: Explain how the 2021 anthem change shows a custom expressing a shared value.

Working	Comment
1. Name the custom and its occasion: singing <i>Advance Australia Fair</i> at schools, citizenship ceremonies and sport.	Customs live in repeated, shared action.
2. Name the value the words carry: inclusion and belonging — “Australians all” (since 1984) says the song is for everyone; “we are one and free” (since 2021) says Australians are one people.	A custom expresses a value when its words and actions say what the society believes about itself.
3. Name what changed and why: one line, “young” to “one”, changed from 1 January 2021 in a stated spirit of unity, so the anthem speaks for every Australian.	Societies update customs when their view of who counts changes.
4. Name what stayed the same: the same song, the same tune, the same occasions, the same act of singing together.	Change in a custom is not the end of the custom; the shared act carries on.
5. Conclude: the change shows a society using a shared custom to restate a shared value — belonging — in words that include more of its people.	The conclusion joins custom, value and change in one claim.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. Complete each definition with a term from this section: *social cohesion, resilient democracy, patriotism, civility*.

(a) Being polite and respectful, including towards people you disagree with: _____. (b) The bonds that hold a society together — belonging, trust, and taking part: _____. (c) Love for your country and care for what it stands for: _____. (d) A democracy that survives hard times and deep disagreement without breaking: _____.

Q2. Using Figure 2, choose **compassion** and **inclusion**. For each, write one sentence giving a real example of that value in Australian life (it may be something you have seen or done).

Q3. Using Figure 4: (a) which song won the largest share of the vote? (b) By roughly how many percentage points did it beat the second song? (c) What does holding a national poll show about *how* Australians chose their anthem?

Q4. Using Figure 6, complete the cycle with your own examples: (a) one way people at your school show trust and belonging (cohesion supporting democracy in miniature); (b) one school rule that feels fair because everyone had a chance to be heard (democracy supporting cohesion).

Q5. Match each person to the stream they most likely arrive through (Skill, Family or Humanitarian) and name the value from Figure 8 that their story connects to. (a) A nurse with ten years’ experience is offered work in a Melbourne hospital. (b) A boy and his mother escape a war and are offered a safe new home. (c) A woman moves to join her husband, who already lives in Brisbane.

Q6. Personal and collective responsibility includes caring for shared places and the environment. Give one example of your school community showing this responsibility, and say which *other* value from Figure 2 it also shows.

Un scaffolded

Q7. Choose one value from Figure 2. Evaluate the extent to which it is reflected in your school or local community. Follow the five steps of Worked Example 1, including evidence for and evidence against, and finish with a point on the four-point scale and your reasons.

Q8. “A national anthem should be updated when society changes” and “A national anthem should stay the same” are both live views. Give the **strongest** argument for each view, then name one piece of evidence that would test each argument.

Q9. Explain, using the anthem changes of 1984 and 2021, how a shared custom can express a shared value and still change over time.

Q10. A friend says, “Social cohesion means everyone agreeing about everything.” Identify the assumption hidden in that claim, and explain what is wrong with it using this section’s definition of social cohesion.

Source inquiry task

Read the pledge of commitment (Figure 10), then answer.

Q11. (a) List the four things a new citizen pledges. (b) Match each pledge line to one value from this section, with a one-line reason. (c) Who makes this pledge, where, and why is the setting a public ceremony rather than a private form? (d) The pledge says “democratic beliefs”. What is one piece of evidence from this book that Australia acts on that belief? (e) Identify one assumption the pledge makes about the relationship between a citizen and the law, and say whether you agree with it, with reasons. (Marking is on the quality of your reasoning, not the conclusion you reach.)

Answers and marking guide

Scaffolded.

Q1. (a) civility. (b) social cohesion. (c) patriotism. (d) resilient democracy.

Q2. Example for compassion: people donating to bushfire or flood appeals. Example for inclusion: a school welcoming a student who has just arrived in Australia and helping them join in. Any real, matching example earns the mark; the example must show the value, not just name it.

Q3. (a) *Advance Australia Fair*. (b) About 15 percentage points (43.3% against 28.3%). (c) Australians chose it by voting — a democratic method — rather than having it imposed; and the result gave it wide, though not total, support.

Q4. Accept any real examples that genuinely fit: (a) must show trust, belonging or taking part; (b) must show a rule that feels fair because people were heard.

Q5. (a) Skill — a fair go / contribution. (b) Humanitarian — compassion / protection. (c) Family — belonging / family.

Q6. Accept a real example (e.g. a waste-sorting or water-saving program, a working bee to repair a garden). The second value must genuinely follow from the example (e.g. collective responsibility plus compassion for future generations, or fairness in sharing the work).

Unscaffolded and inquiry — marking guide. Full marks require the reasoning steps, and two students reaching opposite conclusions can both score full marks: (i) terms defined or the section's definition used; (ii) assumptions surfaced where the question asks; (iii) both sides of a debate given in their strongest form where the question asks; (iv) evidence cited that is real, or clearly named as the student's own observation; (v) a limitation or test acknowledged. **Q7** must show evidence for AND against and end on the four-point scale with reasons. **Q8** must steelman both views and name a testable piece of evidence for each. **Q9** must name both changes and link each to a value, and must note what stayed the same. **Q10** must identify the assumption (cohesion requires agreement) and answer with the section's definition (cohesion is about *how* a society disagrees, not whether it does). **Q11** answers: (a) loyalty to Australia and its people; democratic beliefs; rights and liberties; upholding and obeying the laws. (b) any matching with reasons. (c) new citizens, at a citizenship ceremony; public because belonging is witnessed and shared. (d) accept evidence such as compulsory voting, the 1977 national poll, or elections generally. (e) reasoned answers in either direction; the assumption is that citizens owe the law obedience, and that the law deserves it because it is made democratically.

How groups show their identity — and how that shapes what others think

Chapter 3 — Citizenship, diversity and identity · Section 3C · Sub-strand: Citizenship, diversity and identity · Book: Civics and Citizenship 8

Curriculum trace. Owns VC2HC8K11 (Levels 7 and 8). Draws on VC2HC8K11 .E01, VC2HC8K11 .E02 and VC2HC8K11 .E03. This section builds on Section 3A (Australia’s diverse cultural and religious origins) and Section 3B (values and social cohesion), and it hands Section 3D the idea of national identity.

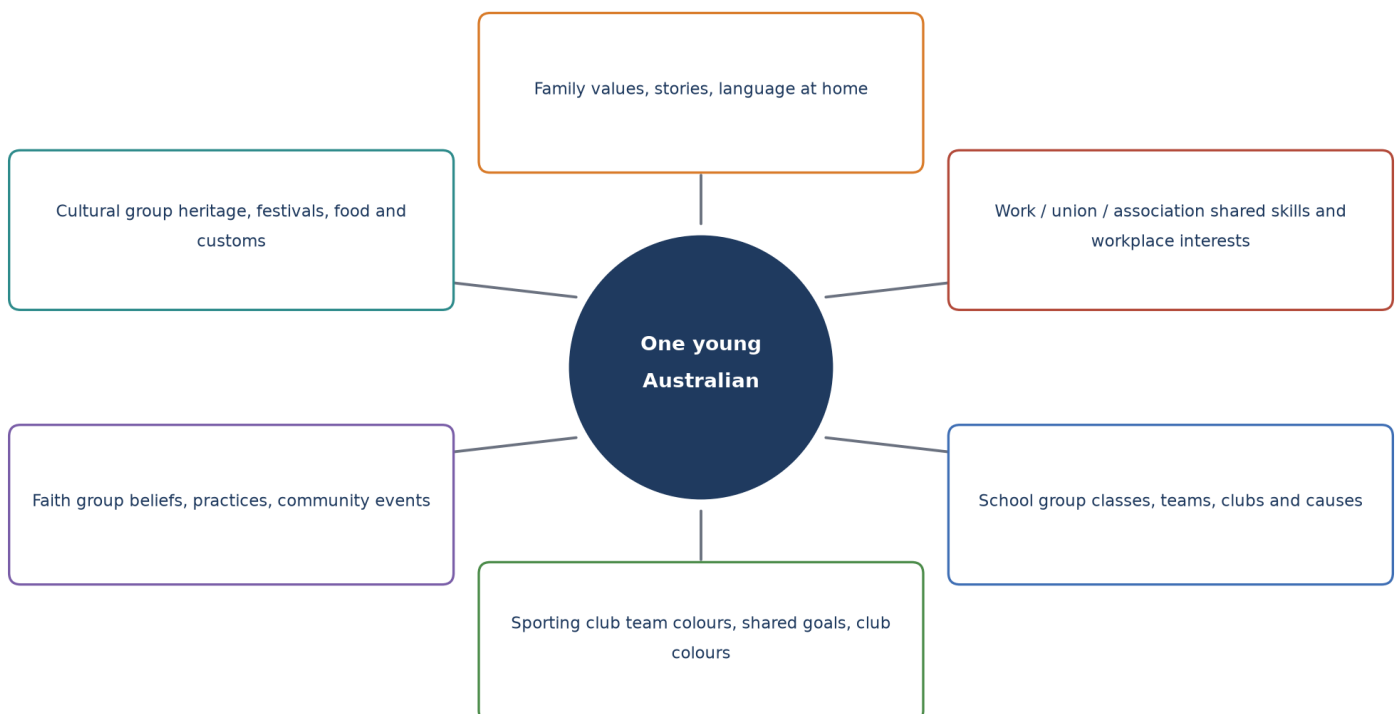
Learn together

Words in this section. Your **identity** is your sense of who you are. A **group identity** (or collective identity) is the shared sense of who *we* are that a group of people hold together. A **perception** is the way someone sees, understands or makes sense of a person or group. A **stereotype** is a fixed, over-simple idea about a whole group, applied to every member whether it is true or not. **Representation** is how a group is shown or described — in the media, in art, on stamps, in public life. The Victorian Curriculum uses these words without spelling them out; this section uses them the way defined here.

Step 1 — Identity has several parts.

No person is only one thing. You might be a daughter or son, a member of a faith group, a fan of a club, a student, and a worker — all at once. Each group you belong to gives you part of your identity. The curriculum names these groups as cultural groups, faith groups, sporting and social clubs, professional associations and trade unions.

One person, many communities: identity has several parts



Community types named in VC2HC8K11.E01: cultural groups, faith groups, sporting and social clubs, professional associations and trade unions. Created for this book.

Hub-and-spoke diagram of one young Australian in the centre, joined to six community boxes: family, cultural group, faith group, sporting club, school group, and work, union or association

Because people belong to several groups at once, they can **express** (show) different parts of their identity in different places. At a festival you may show your cultural identity; at training you show your club identity; at a place of worship you show your faith identity.

Step 2 — How groups express identity.

Groups express identity in many visible ways: festivals and public events, dress and symbols, language and food, art and media, and good works such as volunteering and fundraising. Often one act shows both identity *and* citizenship at the same time — giving back to the wider community.

How different groups express identity — and citizenship

Type of group	How the group expresses its identity	An expression of citizenship (real example)
Faith group	Eid al-Fitr celebrations at the end of Ramadan; churches, mosques, temples and gurdwaras open their doors to visitors.	Australia Post issued its first Eid al-Fitr stamps in 2022 — a national institution marking a faith group's festival.
Sporting and social club	Relay For Life teams walk for up to 12 hours, taking turns so the track is never empty.	Money raised supports the Cancer Council — supporting people experiencing health concerns.
Schools and community groups	Collections, events and broadcasts on Good Friday.	The Good Friday Appeal has raised money for the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne since 1931.
Professional association	The Australian Medical Association puts expert health views into public debate.	Expert knowledge shared for the public good.
Trade union	Members campaign together for pay, safety and fair conditions at work.	A shared workplace voice, protected by Australian law.
Cultural group	Festivals, dance, music and food shared during Harmony Week.	Sharing culture builds belonging across communities.

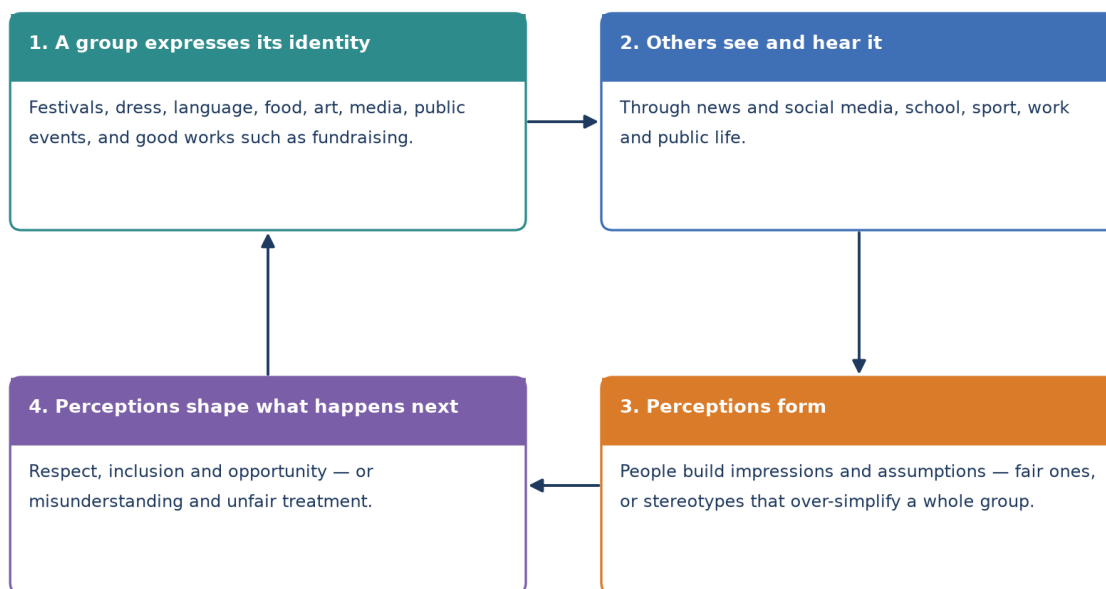
Sources: Australia Post stamp issues (2022); Relay For Life, Cancer Council Victoria; Good Friday Appeal, Royal Children's Hospital Foundation (since 1931); Australian Medical Association; Australian Council of Trade Unions; Harmony Week, Department of Home Affairs. Retrieved 26 August 2026.

Table linking six types of group to how each expresses its identity and a real example of citizenship expression, such as the Good Friday Appeal and Relay For Life

Step 3 — Expression shapes perception.

When a group expresses its identity, other people see and hear it. From what they see, they form perceptions — ideas about what the group is like. Those perceptions can be fair, or they can become stereotypes. And those perceptions change what happens next: respect and inclusion, or misunderstanding and unfair treatment. Then the group itself responds, which starts the loop again.

Expression shapes perception — and perception feeds back



Then the group responds — changing how, where and how proudly it expresses its identity.

Created for this book as a model of how identity expression and perception interact.

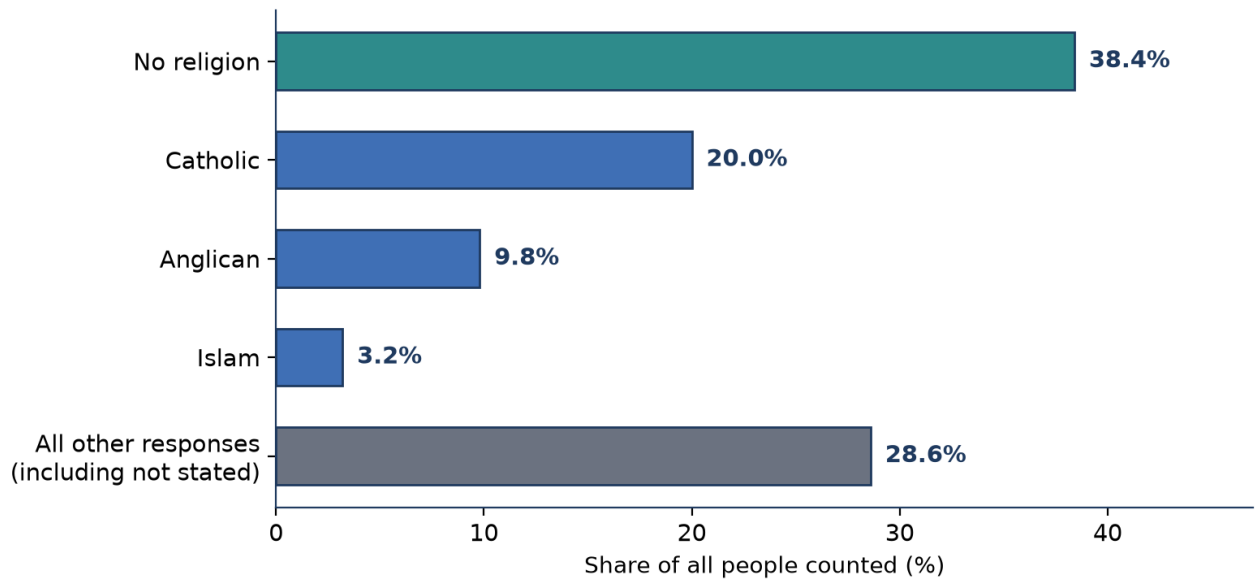
Four-step loop: a group expresses its identity; others see and hear it; perceptions form; perceptions shape what happens next, then the loop feeds back

This loop is why representation matters. If a group is only ever shown one way — say, as a problem, or as a joke — people's perceptions narrow. If a group is shown in full, as people, perceptions can widen.

Step 4 — Collective identities in a culturally diverse society.

Australia is culturally and religiously diverse, and the census shows it. In the 2021 Census, no single answer about religion held a majority. That diversity means many group identities live side by side — and each is represented and perceived in different ways.

What Australians said about religion, 2021 Census



Shares of ALL people counted; 'all other responses' combines every other answer and answers not stated.

Source: ABS, 2021 Census of Population and Housing, QuickStats for Australia. Retrieved 26 August 2026.

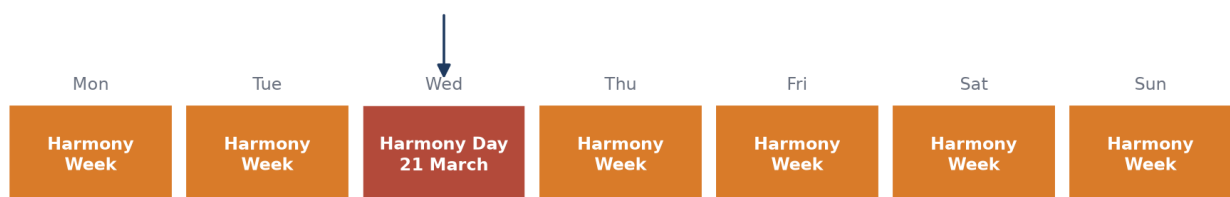
Bar chart of 2021 Census responses to the religion question: no religion 38.4 per cent, Catholic 20.0, Anglican 9.8, Islam 3.2, all other responses 28.6

Step 5 — A real example of expression: Harmony Week.

Each March, Australia holds **Harmony Week**. Harmony Day, 21 March, falls on the United Nations' International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. It is one way the country makes cultural and religious diversity visible, and invites people to see each other's groups more fully.

Harmony Week: one week in March, one day within it

Harmony Day falls on the United Nations' International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination



Since 1999	Who runs it	What it is for
Started as Harmony Day; renamed Harmony Week for its 20th anniversary in 2019.	The Australian Government's Department of Home Affairs leads national events.	Events across Australia that say everyone belongs, whatever their background.

Source: Australian Government Harmony Week, Department of Home Affairs. Retrieved 26 August 2026.

Calendar strip for one week in March with every day marked Harmony Week and Wednesday highlighted as Harmony Day, 21 March

Two reasonable views exist about public events like this, and both deserve a fair hearing. **View A:** making diversity visible builds understanding, so perceptions soften and belonging grows. **View B:** a one-week event is symbolic and, on its own, changes little about day-to-day unfair treatment. Neither view is a cheat. The test of a good answer is not which side you pick, but whether you can state each view in its strongest form and back your own with evidence.

Step 6 — Three kinds of citizenship.

The same person can be spoken about in three ways, and it helps to keep them separate.

Three ways of talking about citizenship

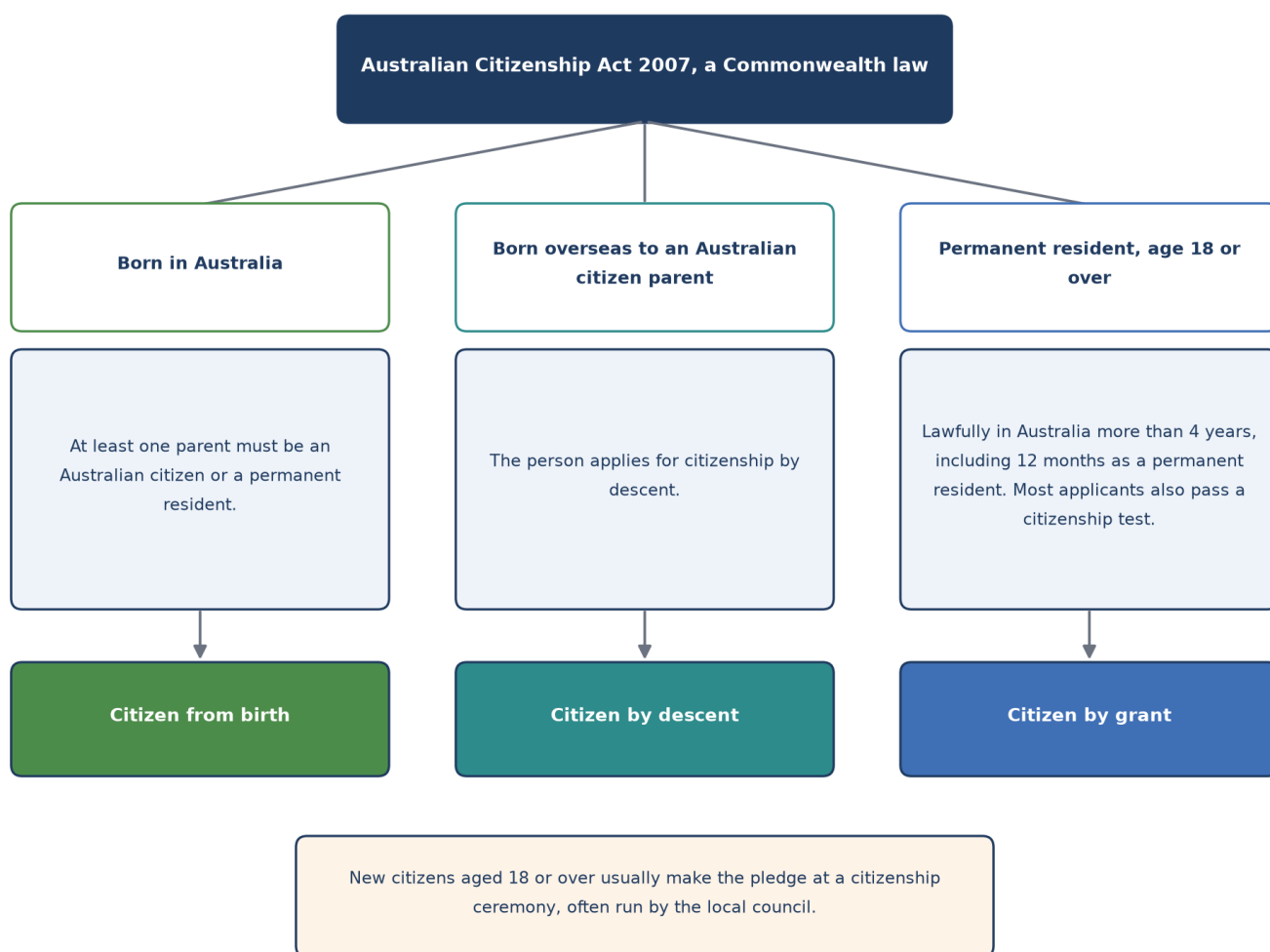
	Legal citizenship	Active citizenship	Global citizenship
What kind of thing is it?	A formal legal status, set out in the Australian Citizenship Act 2007.	A way of acting, not a legal status. The curriculum uses the term but does not give one fixed meaning.	A sense of belonging to a wider, world-wide community. It is contested: people define it in different ways.
How do you get it?	By birth in Australia (with at least one parent who is a citizen or permanent resident), by descent, or by grant after applying.	By taking part: volunteering, joining in, speaking up, campaigning.	No document grants it. People build it through learning about and acting on world issues.
How is it expressed?	A passport, voting once 18, the pledge at a citizenship ceremony.	Time, money and voice given to community life — for instance, fundraising for local services.	Acting on issues that cross borders, for example through Amnesty International or the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (2015).

Sources: Australian Citizenship Act 2007, a Commonwealth law; Department of Home Affairs, Australian citizenship pages; VC2HC8K11.E03 (curriculum wording). Retrieved 26 August 2026.

Comparison table of legal, active and global citizenship across what it is, how you get it, and how it is expressed

Legal citizenship is the formal status set out in the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007*, a Commonwealth law. Most people get it one of three ways.

Three common paths to legal Australian citizenship



Source: Australian Citizenship Act 2007, a Commonwealth law; Department of Home Affairs, 'Become a citizen' and 'Citizenship ceremonies' pages. Retrieved 26 August 2026.

Flow diagram of three paths to legal citizenship under the Australian Citizenship Act 2007: born in Australia, born overseas to an Australian citizen parent, and permanent resident aged 18 or over

At a citizenship ceremony, new citizens aged 18 or over make a pledge. It is a good source to read closely, because it states, in a few lines, what legal membership of Australia is taken to mean.

Source: the pledge made by new Australian citizens



A pledge is a serious public promise. It is one way legal citizenship is expressed out loud.

Source: pledge of commitment, Schedule 2 of the Australian Citizenship Act 2007, a Commonwealth law, as shown by the Department of Home Affairs. Retrieved 26 August 2026.

Styled card reproducing the Australian citizenship pledge from Schedule 2 of the Australian Citizenship Act 2007

Active citizenship is not a legal status; it is the habit of taking part — volunteering, fundraising, joining in, speaking up. **Global citizenship** is a sense of belonging to a wider, world-wide community and acting on issues that cross borders, for example through Amnesty International or the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. The last two are not granted by any document; they are shown by what people do.

Worked examples

Example 1 — scaffolded (VC2HC8K11.E01)

Fundraising for community services and supporting people experiencing health concerns are named in the curriculum as expressions of citizenship. Two long-running Victorian examples show how group identity and citizenship join up.

Working	Why
The Good Friday Appeal raises money for the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, and has run since 1931.	A community-wide act: schools, clubs and families give, and the money supports a community health service.
Relay For Life teams walk for up to 12 hours, taking turns so the track is never empty, raising money for the Cancer Council.	A sporting-and-social form (a relay) used to support people experiencing health concerns.
In both, the group's identity (its values of care and community) is expressed <i>through</i> an act of citizenship.	This is the point of E01: membership shows up as giving back, not just belonging.

Source: Good Friday Appeal (Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, since 1931); Relay For Life, Cancer Council Victoria. Retrieved 26 August 2026.

Example 2 — scaffolded (VC2HC8K11.E02)

The Matildas — Australia's women's national football team — are a collective identity that was represented and perceived in a new way in 2023.

Working	Why
At the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, hosted in Australia, the Matildas reached the semi-final.	A shared, public moment for a group identity (the team, and women's football).
The semi-final drew about 11.15 million Australian TV viewers — reported as the most-watched broadcast in Australian ratings history.	Representation at scale: the group was seen, in full, by almost half the country at once.
Afterwards, girls' football sign-ups rose and public talk about women's sport changed.	The loop closed: expression and representation shifted perception, and perception changed what happened next.

Source: FIFA Women's World Cup 2023, Australia v England semi-final, 16 August 2023; audience as reported by OzTAM and Seven Network ratings. Retrieved 26 August 2026.

Practice questions

With help

- Q1.** Use the identity map figure (Step 1). List three communities from the figure that a single young Australian might belong to at the same time.
- Q2.** Use the expressions table (Step 2). Match each type of group to one way it expresses identity: (a) faith group, (b) trade union, (c) cultural group.
- Q3.** Use the perception loop (Step 3). Put these in order: perceptions form; a group expresses its identity; perceptions shape what happens next; others see and hear it.
- Q4.** Use the census chart (Step 4). (a) Which single response was the largest in 2021? (b) Add the Catholic and Anglican shares. Is that total larger or smaller than the largest single response?
- Q5.** Use the three-citizenships table (Step 6). Label each as *legal*, *active* or *global*: (a) holding an Australian passport, (b) volunteering at a community event, (c) acting on a world issue through Amnesty International.
- Q6.** Read the pledge figure. Name the three things new citizens promise about Australia's people.

On your own

- Q7.** Draw your own identity map with at least four communities you belong to. For two of them, write one sentence each on how you would *express* that part of your identity in public.
- Q8.** A stereotype is a fixed, over-simple idea about a whole group. Explain, using the perception loop, one way a stereotype could form, and one way it could be corrected.
- Q9.** Give the strongest form of **View A** and **View B** from Step 5, then state your own reasoned position. You will be marked on the quality of your reasoning — how fair you are in stating each side and how well you support your own — not on which side you choose.
- Q10.** Choose one real group from the expressions table (for example a faith group, a sporting club or a union). Describe how it expresses its identity, and explain how that expression could shape (i) how others see the group and (ii) how members see themselves.

Source task

- Q11.** Read the pledge figure as a source. (a) Who makes this pledge, and when? (b) Which kind of citizenship does the pledge belong to — legal, active or global — and why? (c) Does saying the pledge make someone an *active* citizen? Give a reason for your answer either way.

Answers

Q1. Any three, for example: family, cultural group, faith group, sporting club, school group, work/union/association.

Q2. (a) Faith group — Eid al-Fitr celebrations and open-door events. (b) Trade union — members campaign together for pay, safety and fair conditions. (c) Cultural group — festivals, dance, music and food shared during Harmony Week.

Q3. A group expresses its identity → others see and hear it → perceptions form → perceptions shape what happens next (then the loop feeds back).

Q4. (a) No religion (38.4 per cent). (b) $20.0 + 9.8 = 29.8$ per cent, which is smaller than 38.4 per cent.

Q5. (a) Legal. (b) Active. (c) Global.

Q6. They promise to share Australia's democratic beliefs, respect the rights and liberties of its people, and uphold and obey its laws (and to pledge loyalty to Australia and its people).

Q7. Answers will vary. Check: at least four communities, and two clear public expressions.

Q8. Answers will vary. A stereotype can form when others see a group only through one narrow representation, so perceptions narrow. It can be corrected when the group is represented in full — for example through public events, media coverage or direct contact — so perceptions widen.

Q9. Answers will vary. Marking guide: each view is stated in its strongest form; the student's own position is stated and supported with evidence or reasons; a limitation is acknowledged. Either conclusion can earn full marks.

Q10. Answers will vary. Check: one named real group; one identity expression; an effect on (i) others' perception and (ii) members' self-perception.

Q11. (a) New citizens aged 18 or over make the pledge at a citizenship ceremony. (b) Legal — it is part of becoming a citizen under the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007*. (c) Reasoned either way. Example: no — saying the words is a legal step, and active citizenship is shown by taking part over time; or yes, if the pledge is treated as a promise the person then acts on. What earns marks is the reason, not the side.

National identity and citizenship from different points of view

Chapter 3 — Citizenship, diversity and identity · Section 3D · Sub-strand: Citizenship, diversity and identity · Book: Civics and Citizenship 8

Curriculum trace. Owns VC2HC8K12 (Levels 7 and 8). Under the scope decision recorded in this book’s plan (D3), the description’s clause on First Nations content is excluded and is not taught here; this section teaches the remainder of the description through migrant groups and other neutral perspectives. **Draws on** VC2HC8K12.E01, VC2HC8K12.E02 (kept to neutral referents under the same decision), VC2HC8K12.E03 and VC2HC8K12.E04. This section builds on Section 3A (diverse cultural origins), Section 3B (values and cohesion) and Section 3C (group identities and the three kinds of citizenship), and it hands Section 4D the idea of formal national citizenship.

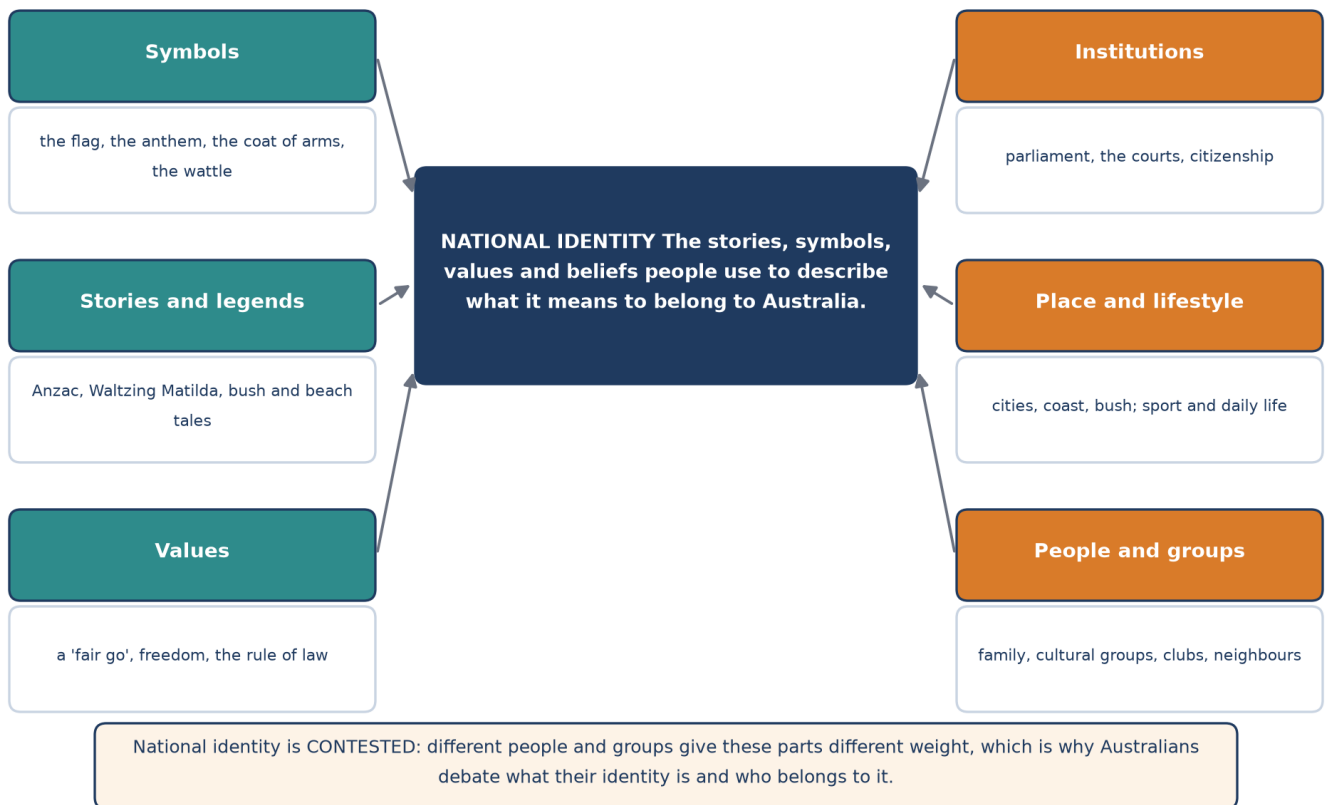
Learn together

Words in this section. Your **national identity** is the stories, symbols, values and beliefs people use to describe what it means to belong to Australia. A **perspective** is one person’s or one group’s point of view on something. A **representation** is the way something is shown or pictured — in stories, art, media or public events. A word or idea is **contested** when people disagree about what it really means, and the disagreement matters. A **permanent resident** is someone who has permission to live in Australia for good but is not yet a citizen. **Conferral** is the pathway where a permanent resident applies to become a citizen, meets the legal requirements, and is granted citizenship. **Civic** means to do with being a citizen and taking part in the community. A **globalised world** is a world in which people, goods, money, media and ideas move across borders more than ever before. The Victorian Curriculum uses several of these words without spelling them out; this section uses them the way defined here.

Step 1 — National identity is made of several parts.

When people say what it means to be Australian, they reach for different things. Some point to **symbols** — the flag, the anthem, the coat of arms. Some point to **stories and legends** — Anzac, *Waltzing Matilda*, tales of the bush and the beach. Others point to **values** — a “fair go”, freedom, the rule of law — or to **institutions** — parliament, the courts, citizenship itself. Place and lifestyle matter too, and so do the people and groups around us: family, cultural groups, clubs, neighbours.

What national identity is made of



Created for this book as a thinking scaffold. The parts listed follow VC2HC8K12 and its elaborations.

Hub diagram with national identity in the middle, joined to six parts: symbols, stories and legends, values, institutions, place and lifestyle, and people and groups, with a note that national identity is contested

Notice the note at the bottom of the figure: national identity is **contested**. Two people can both feel strongly Australian and still give these parts very different weight. That is why Australians keep debating what their national identity is and who belongs to it. The debate is not a flaw — it is how a shared idea works when people see it from different perspectives.

Step 2 — What being an Australian citizen means.

Section 3C looked at three kinds of citizenship: legal, active and global. This section is about the **legal** side — the formal standing set out in the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007*, a Commonwealth law — and at how people experience becoming a citizen.

There are three pathways into Australian citizenship.

Three ways to become an Australian citizen

Pathway	Who it is for	How it works
By birth	Born in Australia with at least one parent who is an Australian citizen or a permanent resident.	Citizenship comes automatically under the law.
By descent	Born overseas to at least one parent who was an Australian citizen at the time.	The person applies to have their citizenship registered.
By conferral	A permanent resident (for example, a migrant or refugee who has settled here) applies to become a citizen.	The applicant meets residence and character requirements; most applicants over 18 and under 60 sit the citizenship test; at a ceremony they make the pledge of commitment.

Source: Australian Citizenship Act 2007 (Cth), No. 20 of 2007 (legislation.gov.au). Pathways summarised for this book; retrieved 26 August 2026.

Table of the three ways to become an Australian citizen — by birth, by descent and by conferral — showing who each pathway is for and how each works

Citizenship is two-way. It brings rights — voting in elections, standing for parliament, holding an Australian passport, and help from Australian officials when overseas. It also brings responsibilities — obeying the law, enrolling to vote, and serving on a jury if called.

Step 3 — The conferral journey.

Most new citizens come through the third pathway, conferral. For many families, the journey itself — arriving, settling, applying, sitting the test, standing up at a ceremony — is a big part of their experience of being Australian.

The conferral journey: how a permanent resident becomes a citizen



Sources: Australian Citizenship Act 2007 (Cth); ceremony and pledge practice as recorded in Wikipedia, 'Australian nationality law', retrieved 26 August 2026.

Six-step flow of the conferral journey: become a permanent resident, meet the residence requirement, apply and show good character, sit the citizenship test, attend a citizenship ceremony, make the pledge and become a citizen

At the ceremony, new citizens make the **pledge** of commitment — a serious public promise, read aloud. It is a short text worth reading closely.

SOURCE: the pledge of commitment

Pledge of commitment as a citizen of the Commonwealth of Australia

*"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."*

Made by new citizens at citizenship ceremonies.

Source: Schedule 1, Australian Citizenship Act 2007 (Cth) (Form of pledge no. 1; a second form omits the words 'under God', which may be included or left out). Wording as recorded in Wikipedia, 'Oath of citizenship', retrieved 26 August 2026.

Styled card reproducing the pledge of commitment from Schedule 1 of the Australian Citizenship Act 2007, with a note that new citizens make it at citizenship ceremonies

Notice what the pledge names: shared democratic beliefs, rights and liberties to respect, and laws to uphold and obey. In a few lines, it states what legal membership of Australia is taken to mean.

Step 4 — The citizenship test, and what it reflects.

Since 1 October 2007, most applicants aged 18 to 59 must sit the citizenship test before they are approved. The figure below sets out the test's basic features.

The Australian citizenship test at a glance

Feature	Detail
When it started	1 October 2007, under the Australian Citizenship Act 2007 (Cth).
Format	Computer-based, 45 minutes, in English.
Questions	20 multiple-choice questions, drawn at random from a pool of 200 confidential questions.
Pass mark	At least 15 out of 20 correct (75%).
Australian values	Five of the questions are about Australian values — and all five must be answered correctly.
Study resource	'Australian Citizenship: Our Common Bond', the official booklet produced by the Australian Government.

Source: Wikipedia, 'Australian citizenship test', retrieved 26 August 2026 (reporting the test run by the Department of Home Affairs).

Table of the Australian citizenship test's features: started 1 October 2007, computer-based in English, 20 multiple-choice questions from a pool of 200, pass mark 15 out of 20, all five Australian values questions must be correct, and the official study resource

The questions are not random trivia. They fall into themes, and each theme says something about what Australia treats as part of belonging.

What the citizenship test asks about — and what that reflects

Theme	Kinds of questions	What it reflects about identity
Australian values	Questions on values Australians share, such as freedom of speech, equality before the law and a 'fair go'.	Identity rests on shared values, not just birthplace.
Government and the law	Questions on parliament, voting, the courts and the rule of law.	Being Australian includes knowing how the democracy works.
Rights and responsibilities	Questions on voting, jury service, obeying the law and the rights citizens hold.	Citizenship is two-way: rights come with duties.
Australia and its people	Questions on Australia's history, symbols and national days.	Identity is tied to shared stories, symbols and place.

Source: themes of the official resource 'Australian Citizenship: Our Common Bond' (Department of Home Affairs). Table created for this book; retrieved 26 August 2026.

Table of the four themes of the citizenship test — Australian values, government and the law, rights and responsibilities, and Australia and its people — with what each theme reflects about national identity

Reasonable people disagree about one part of the test in particular: the five Australian values questions, which must all be answered correctly. Should a test focus on values at all? Both sides of that debate have a strong form.

Steelman both sides: should the citizenship test focus on values?

Position	Its strongest form
Strongest case FOR values questions	A country is held together by shared commitments. New citizens should know and accept core values — freedom of speech, equality before the law, a 'fair go' — so the community stays strong and those values are passed on. A test makes the commitment clear.
Strongest case AGAINST values questions	Values are lived, not memorised. A multiple-choice quiz measures facts, not character. A long-term resident who works, volunteers and obeys the law may fail a written test about values they already practise, while someone can pass the test without holding the values.

Created for this book. Apply the SAME standard to both sides. Marking rewards the quality of your reasoning, not the conclusion you reach.

Two-column steelman table: the strongest case for values questions in the citizenship test, and the strongest case against

Step 5 — How migration has shaped Australia, and its idea of itself.

Representations of Australian identity have changed across time, and migration is one of the main reasons. The timeline below runs from Federation in 1901 to the 2021 Census. Read it as a story about two things changing together: who lives in Australia, and what Australia says about itself.

A century of migration and citizenship in Australia



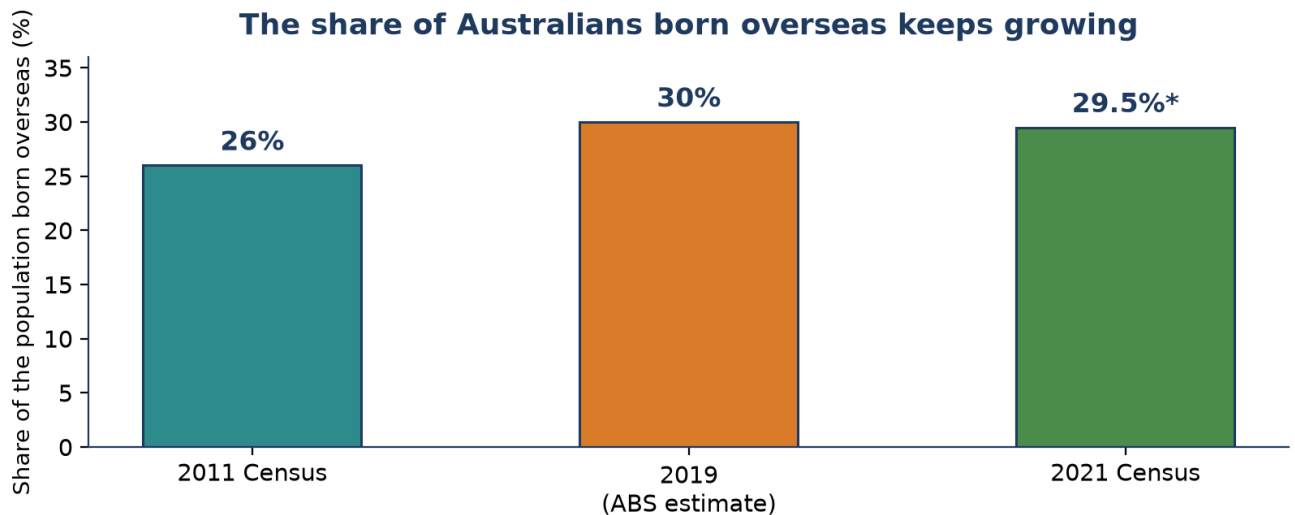
Sources as listed in this section (Australian Citizenship Act 2007; Wikipedia articles 'White Australia policy', 'Ten Pound Pom', 'Snowy Mountains Scheme', '1956 Summer Olympics', 'Australian nationality law', '2021 Australian census'), all retrieved 26 August 2026.

Timeline of eleven events from 1901 to 2021: the Immigration Restriction Act, post-war mass migration, the creation of Australian citizenship in 1949, the Snowy Mountains Scheme, the 1956 Melbourne Olympics, the end of the White Australia policy in 1973, the Racial Discrimination Act 1975, the first multicultural policies in 1978, dual citizenship in 2002, the citizenship test in 2007, and the 2021 Census count of people born overseas

Some of this history is hard to read now. For most of the twentieth century, Australian law picked migrants by race, through the White Australia policy. That policy was brought to a full legal end in 1973, and the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* made racial discrimination unlawful. Since then, Australia's migration program has drawn people from every part of the world — and the representations of Australian identity have widened with it.

Step 6 — The picture today, in a globalised world.

The 2021 Census counted 7,502,450 people born overseas — about 29.5 per cent of the people counted. That share has kept growing.



*The 2021 figure is worked out from the census counts: 7,502,450 people born overseas out of 25,422,788 people counted.

The three figures come from different sources: the 2011 and 2021 censuses, and a 2019 ABS population estimate (7,529,570 people).

Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics, as recorded in Wikipedia ('Multiculturalism in Australia', 'Demographics of Australia') and the ABS 2021 Census, retrieved 26 August 2026.

Bar chart of the share of Australians born overseas: 26 per cent in the 2011 Census, 30 per cent in a 2019 ABS estimate, and 29.5 per cent in the 2021 Census, with a note that the three bars come from different sources

Notice the footnote on the chart: the three bars come from different sources — two censuses and one ABS estimate. Good readers of data check that before they read a trend.

In a globalised world, belonging gets more layered. Since 4 April 2002, Australians have been allowed to hold another citizenship at the same time (dual citizenship). Many Australians live overseas for a time, or keep close family ties with another country. Even so, national identity still carries real legal weight: citizenship decides who can vote, who holds an Australian passport and who can stand for parliament. And in daily life, shared symbols, teams and stories still give many people a sense of belonging to the same place.

Step 7 — Three factors shape the debates: place, immigration, standard of living.

The curriculum names three factors that shape debates about Australian identity: **immigration**, **place** and **standard of living** (how well people can live — secure work, a place to live, and services such as schools and hospitals).

Start with place. Most Australians live in cities near the coast — yet many classic images of Australia show the bush, the outback and the beach. The gap between where Australians actually live and how Australia is pictured is itself one of the identity debates.

Where Australians live — and where the classic images come from

How most Australians live (the numbers)

- About 89% live in urban areas.
- Most live close to the coastlines.
- Population density: 3.4 people per square km (June 2022) — very spread out.
- Population: about 28 million (June 2026 estimate).

But many classic images show ...

- the bush and the outback
- the beach and surf
- farming land and small towns
- mateship in hard country

The gap between where Australians actually live and how Australia is pictured is one of the debates about national identity (the factor VCAA calls PLACE).

Sources: Wikipedia, 'Demographics of Australia' and 'Australia' (reporting ABS data), retrieved 26 August 2026.

Two-panel figure comparing how most Australians live (about 89 per cent in urban areas, mostly near the coast) with the classic images of Australia (the bush and outback, the beach and surf, farming land and small towns, mateship in hard country)

Immigration raises different questions. Migration keeps bringing new people, languages and traditions. Some Australians see that as making the country richer; others say change is happening too fast. Both sides point to the census numbers from Step 6 as evidence.

Standard of living matters too. When people feel they are missing out on a good life, being told to feel proud of the country can ring hollow. When life feels secure and fair, a shared identity is easier to hold.

The figure below sets out three debates that these factors drive, with questions you can ask about each.

Three debates about Australian identity

Debate	What it is about	Factors at work	Questions to ask
What makes someone 'Australian'?	Is it shared values and participation (a civic view), or heritage, ancestry and tradition (a cultural view)?	Immigration; standard of living	Who belongs under each view? What does each view imply about new citizens?
Which Australia is the 'real' one?	Most Australians live in coastal cities, yet many images of Australia show the bush and outback.	Place	Whose lives do our symbols show? Whose do they leave out?
How should migration shape us?	Migration brings new people, languages and traditions. Some see new food, festivals and ideas making the country richer; others say change is happening too fast.	Immigration; standard of living	What evidence would show people feel they belong together? What do the census numbers show?

Created for this book, using the factors named in VC2HC8K12.E03 (immigration, place and standard of living).

Table of three debates about Australian identity — what makes someone Australian, which Australia is the real one, and how migration should shape the country — listing the factors at work in each and questions to ask

There is no single official answer to “what is Australian identity?”. The goal of this section is that you can now reason about it: what identity is made of, how citizenship works in law, what the citizenship test reflects, and which factors keep the debates moving. Those debates are **civic** questions — they are about who belongs, and how the members of a community live together.

Worked examples

Example 1 — scaffolded (VC2HC8K12.E02, VC2HC8K12.E03)

The Snowy Mountains Scheme shows how migration reshaped Australia’s idea of itself.

Working	Why
Between 1949 and 1974, the Snowy Mountains Scheme built dams, tunnels and power stations in the Snowy Mountains of New South Wales.	A real national project, dated and checkable (E02 needs real representations, not invented ones).
More than 100,000 people worked on it, from more than 32 countries, and about two in three were born overseas.	Immigration as a shaping factor (E03): new arrivals did the work of building the country.
The Scheme is still remembered as a story about a changing Australia — people from many countries working side by side.	That memory is a historical representation of Australian identity: a story Australia tells about who built it (E02).

Source: Wikipedia, ‘Snowy Mountains Scheme’, retrieved 26 August 2026.

Example 2 — scaffolded (VC2HC8K12.E04)

What the citizenship test says about national identity.

Working	Why
The test has 20 questions across four themes: Australian values, government and the law, rights and responsibilities, and Australia and its people.	The themes are the evidence for what the test treats as part of belonging.
To pass, an applicant needs at least 15 correct — and all five Australian values questions must be correct.	The pass rules show what the law treats as the parts that matter most.
Together, the questions treat being Australian as something a person can learn — about institutions, values and shared stories — not only something they are born into.	This is what the test questions reflect about identity, which is exactly what E04 asks about.
The test is also contested: some people say it sets out common ground for new citizens; others say values are lived, not tested.	Honest reasoning keeps both views in play — see the steelman figure in Step 4.

Source: Wikipedia, ‘Australian citizenship test’, retrieved 26 August 2026 (reporting the test run by the Department of Home Affairs).

Practice questions

With help

Q1. Use the identity map figure (Step 1). Choose three of the six parts of national identity and give one example of each from the figure.

Q2. Use the pathways table (Step 2). Match each pathway — birth, descent, conferral — to each person: (a) Mia, born in Melbourne to two Australian citizen parents; (b) Arun, born overseas to a mother who was an Australian citizen at the time; (c) Chen, a permanent resident who arrived from overseas four years ago and has now applied to become a citizen.

Q3. Use the conferral journey figure (Step 3). (a) How much lawful residence is needed before a person can apply? (b) What happens at step 4? (c) What do new citizens do at the ceremony?

Q4. Use the citizenship test figure (Step 4). (a) What is the pass mark? (b) What is the special rule for the five Australian values questions?

Q5. Use the timeline figure (Step 5). (a) In what year was Australian citizenship created? (b) In what year was the White Australia policy brought to a full legal end?

Q6. Use the place figure (Step 7). (a) About what share of Australians live in urban areas? (b) Give two classic images of Australia that do not match how most Australians live.

On your own

Q7. National identity is contested. Using two parts from the identity map figure, explain how two Australians could both feel strongly Australian while giving the parts different weight.

Q8. Choose one factor — place, immigration or standard of living. Explain one way it shapes debates about Australian identity, and give one example from this section.

Q9. Give the strongest form of the case FOR values questions in the citizenship test, and the strongest form of the case AGAINST, then state your own reasoned position. You will be marked on the quality of your reasoning — how fair you are in stating each side and how well you support your own — not on which side you choose.

Q10. Choose one historical representation of Australian identity from the timeline figure and one current fact from the born-overseas chart. Explain what each suggests about what it means to be Australian.

Source task

Q11. Read the born-overseas chart (Step 6) as a source. (a) Describe the pattern the chart shows. (b) The chart's note says the three bars come from different sources. Why does that matter when you read the pattern? (c) What other evidence could you look for to check the claim that more Australians now have family origins overseas?

Answers

Q1. Any three, with matching examples from the figure. Symbols: the flag, the anthem, the coat of arms, the wattle. Stories and legends: Anzac, *Waltzing Matilda*, bush and beach tales. Values: a “fair go”, freedom, the rule of law. Institutions: parliament, the courts, citizenship. Place and lifestyle: cities, coast, bush; sport and daily life. People and groups: family, cultural groups, clubs, neighbours.

Q2. (a) Birth. (b) Descent. (c) Conferral.

Q3. (a) Four years of lawful residence immediately before applying, including 12 months as a permanent resident. (b) The applicant sits the citizenship test: 20 questions in 45 minutes, with a pass of 15 out of 20 including all five Australian values questions. (c) They make the pledge of commitment and receive their citizenship certificate.

Q4. (a) At least 15 out of 20 correct (75 per cent). (b) All five Australian values questions must be answered correctly.

Q5. (a) 1949 — the *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948* came into force on 26 January 1949. (b) 1973.

Q6. (a) About 89 per cent. (b) Any two of: the bush and the outback; the beach and surf; farming land and small towns; mateship in hard country.

Q7. Answers will vary. Check: two parts named from the figure, and a clear explanation of how both people can feel strongly Australian while giving the parts different weight (for example, one weights the anthem and national days highly, the other weights their local community and daily life highly).

Q8. Answers will vary. Check: one factor chosen; one clear way it shapes a debate; one example from the section (place: the gap between city living and bush images; immigration: debate about how fast the country is changing; standard of living: whether everyone shares in a good life).

Q9. Answers will vary. Marking guide: each side is stated in its strongest form; the student’s own position is stated and supported with reasons or evidence; a limit of their own view is acknowledged. Either conclusion can earn full marks.

Q10. Answers will vary. Check: one timeline item (for example the Snowy Mountains Scheme, the end of the White Australia policy, or dual citizenship from 2002) and one current fact (for example about 29.5 per cent of people counted in the 2021 Census were born overseas), each linked to a claim about what being Australian means.

Q11. (a) The share of Australians born overseas has grown over time: 26 per cent at the 2011 Census, 30 per cent at the 2019 estimate, and 29.5 per cent at the 2021 Census. (b) Because the three bars come from different sources (two censuses and one ABS estimate), small differences between them — such as 30 per cent followed by 29.5 per cent — may reflect how the numbers were collected rather than a real fall. (c) Reasonable examples include: census answers about languages spoken at home or family origins, records of citizenship ceremonies, or the number of Australians taking up dual citizenship since 2002.