



MCEETYA



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

2007



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**Ministerial Council on Education,
Employment, Training and Youth Affairs**



Ministerial Council on Education,
Employment, Training and Youth Affairs

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Civics and Citizenship
Years 6 and 10 Report 2007

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Review Committee Members

Listed below is the main review committee member for each jurisdiction and specialist area who participated in the Review Committee during the development and implementation of the National Assessment Program – Civics & Citizenship, 2007 sample assessment. The assistance of others who came to the Review Committee meetings is also acknowledged. The work of the committee made a valuable contribution to the success of the project.

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Foreword

This report presents the findings from the second National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship, conducted under the auspices of the national council of education ministers, the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA).

The National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship measures Year 6 and Year 10 students' understanding and appreciation of Australia's system of government and civic life.

The report compares results by State and Territory. It also compares the most recent achievements of students against those from the first national assessment of Civics and Citizenship, conducted in 2004.

I would like to thank principals, teachers and students at government, Catholic and independent schools around Australia who through their participation in the assessments provided valuable information about Civics and Citizenship education in schools.

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

I commend this report to teachers, educators, members of parliament and community members as it provides valuable information about young Australians' knowledge and views of our political and legal institutions, and appreciation of values such as freedom, tolerance, respect, and responsibility.

Rachel Hunter

Chair

Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce

Executive Summary

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

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

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

In 1999, the education ministers agreed to develop key measures to monitor and report on progress towards the achievement of goals on a nationally comparable basis.

In July 2001, MCEETYA, through its Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce (PMRT) commissioned the construction of two Key Performance Measures (KPMs) for civics and citizenship education: KPM1, which focused on civic knowledge and understanding; and KPM2, which addressed citizenship dispositions and skills for participation. The PMRT also commissioned a triennial National Sample Assessment Program in Civics and Citizenship. In October 2002, the PMRT commissioned a trial for this assessment and in October 2004 the first cycle of the inaugural triennial National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment of student performance in civics and citizenship was conducted. The report was published in December 2006.

National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship 2007

The second cycle of the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship was conducted in October 2007 with 7,059 Year 6 students from 349 schools

and 5,506 Year 10 students from 269 schools participating. At both year levels, a sample of schools was selected with a probability proportional to size and then a sample of one classroom was selected at random from those schools. The sample design and procedures, the high student response rates (92 per cent for Year 6 and 86 per cent for Year 10) and the low levels of exclusions ensured that there was very little bias in the sample.

The assessment was representative of the elements identified in the Assessment Domain. The items were developed in units that comprised one or more assessment items that related directly to single themes or stimuli. Various item types were used, including dual-choice, multiple-choice, closed and constructed response items. The number (148) and range of item types, and the rotated cluster design of the test booklets enabled coverage of the domain.

Student Performance on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

The test items for both years were scaled separately, and then equated to the 2004 scale. Student responses to the items were analysed, using the Rasch model, to establish and describe students' proficiency in civics and citizenship by providing a measure of the achievement of each student and an indication of the difficulty of each item.

To assist with interpretation of the scores, the 2007 Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale was equated to that constructed in the first cycle of the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship in 2004, which had been standardised to have a mean score of 400 and a standard deviation of 100 for the national Year 6 sample, and to which the Year 10 mean was anchored. The mean for the national 2007 Year 6 sample was 405.0 with a standard deviation of 107.7. The mean for the national 2007 Year 10 sample was 501.7, with a standard deviation of 120.6. These data indicate no significant change in the mean proficiency score of students between 2004 and 2007. Throughout the report results are reported either as scores on that scale (typically by the mean with the confidence interval for each group of students) or as percentages of students achieving defined proficiency levels on that scale.

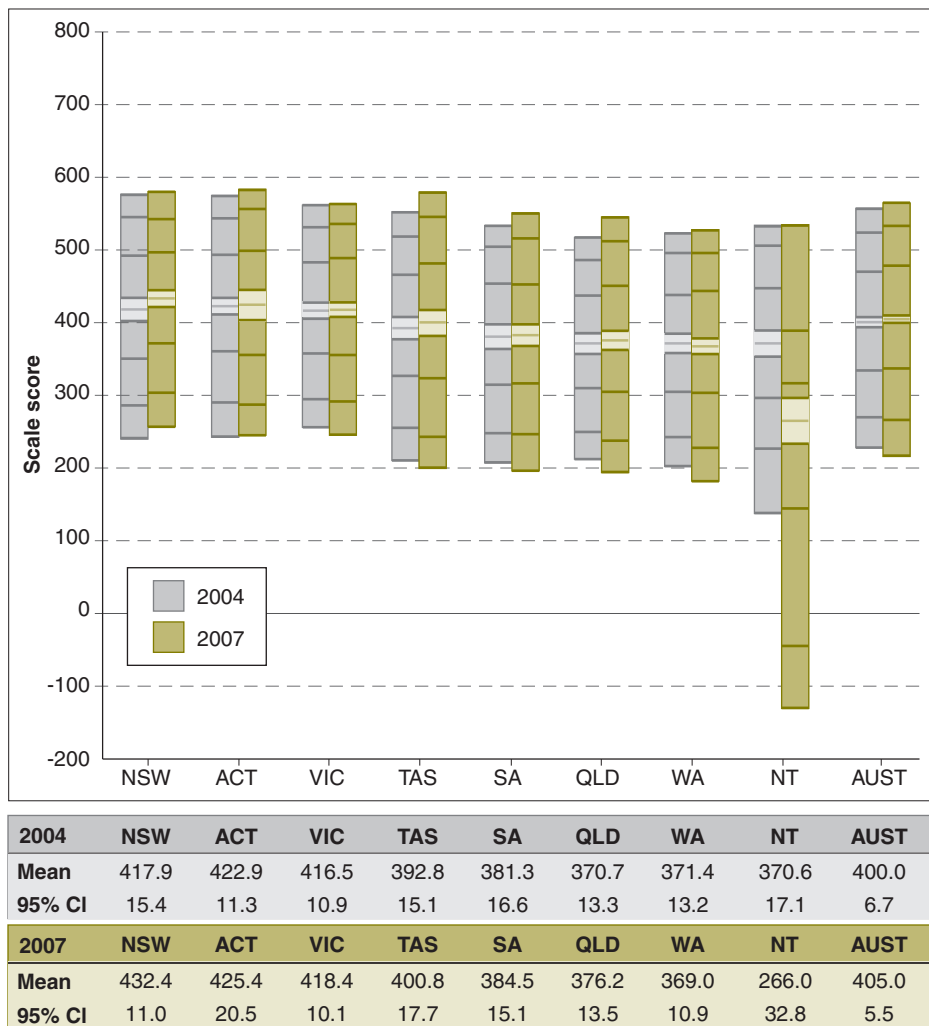
Figures ES 1 and ES 2 show the distribution of student performance by year level and by State and Territory for both assessment cycles (2004 and 2007). Data displayed below the figures show, for each State and Territory, the corresponding mean scores, with the associated 95 per cent confidence intervals. In each figure, the sequence of presentation is by descending means, with the Australian performance following the States and Territories.

A comparison of Figures ES 1 and ES 2 shows that the mean difference of performance between Year 6 and Year 10 students in 2007 was almost 100 scale points, mirroring the 2004 situation.

Year 6 performance by State and Territory

Figure ES 1 shows the distribution of Year 6 student performance by State and Territory and the Year 6 mean scores (with the associated confidence intervals) for both cycles of the assessment. (See Figure 4.1 and associated text for an explanation of a bar chart.)

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



It can be seen from Figure ES 1 that the range of 2007 Year 6 State and Territory means is 166 scale points, centred around the Australian mean score of 405 scale points. This compares with a range of 52 scale points, centred around the Australian mean of 400 for 2004.

The distributions of 2007 Year 6 performance across the States and Territories are largely overlapping. This is evidenced by the finding that the statistically significant differences in mean performance across States and Territories are between New South Wales (which has the highest mean score) and Tasmania, South Australia, Queensland, Western Australia and Northern Territory. The ACT and Victoria also have significantly higher mean scores than the aforementioned

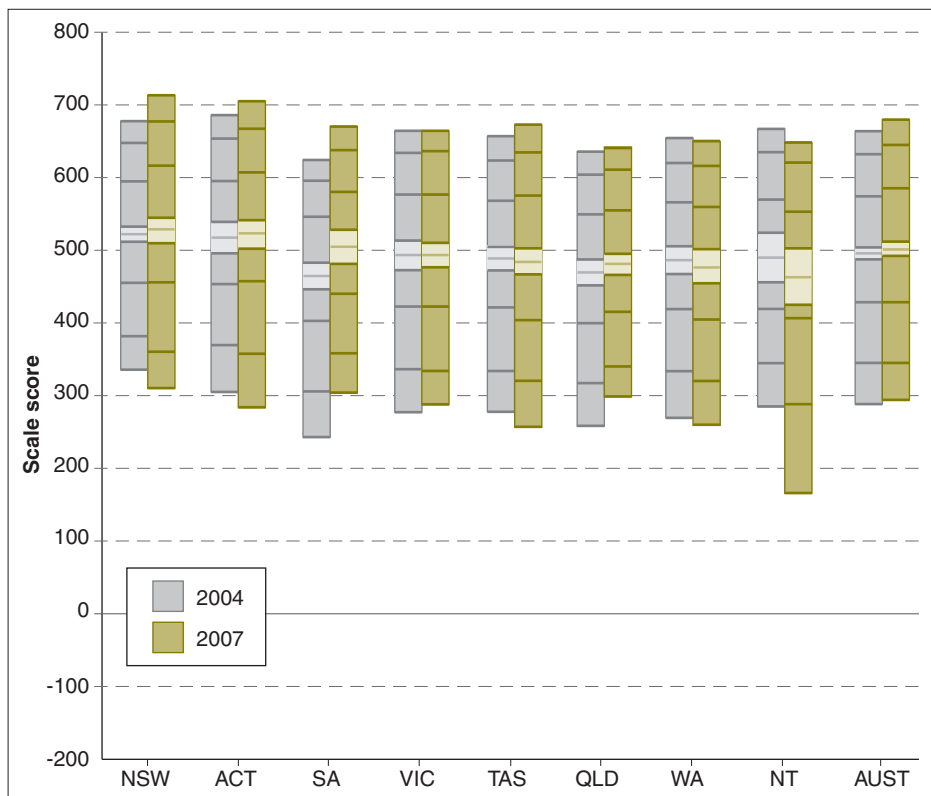
States and Territories, with the exception of Tasmania. The Northern Territory recorded a significantly lower mean score than all other states.

The majority of the 2007 distributions are very similar to those from 2004. With the exception of the Northern Territory, most 2007 distributions have a slightly higher mean score and a somewhat increased confidence interval, compared with the 2004 distributions. Figure ES1 shows that the 2007 Northern Territory distribution has a much lower mean score, and an immensely larger confidence interval compared to 2004. (This is not unexpected, given the inclusion of the larger number of remote schools participating in the assessment in 2007).

Year 10 performance by State and Territory

Figure ES 2 shows the distribution of Year 10 student performance by State and Territory and the Year 10 mean scores (with the associated confidence intervals) for both cycles of the assessment.

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



| 2004 | NSW | ACT | SA | VIC | TAS | QLD | WA | NT | AUST |
|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Mean | 521.4 | 518.1 | 465.0 | 493.7 | 488.8 | 469.4 | 486.1 | 490.4 | 495.8 |
| 95% CI | 10.6 | 21.5 | 16.2 | 19.0 | 16.6 | 17.6 | 17.5 | 33.2 | 7.0 |
| 2007 | NSW | ACT | SA | VIC | TAS | QLD | WA | NT | AUST |
| Mean | 529.0 | 523.2 | 504.8 | 493.8 | 484.5 | 480.8 | 477.6 | 463.7 | 501.7 |
| 95% CI | 17.0 | 19.6 | 23.4 | 17.1 | 16.0 | 13.9 | 22.6 | 38.1 | 8.6 |

It can be seen from Figure ES 2 that the range of Year 10 State and Territory performance means is approximately 65 scale points, centred around the Australian mean score of 502 scale points. This compares with a range of approximately 56 scale points, centred around the Australian mean of 496 for 2004.

The distributions of 2007 Year 10 performance across the States and Territories overlap a little more than those of the Year 6 data. This is evidenced also by the finding that the only statistically significant differences in mean performance across the States and Territories are between New South Wales (which has the highest mean score) and Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory, and between the ACT (which has the second highest mean score) and the aforementioned States and Territories, with the exception of Victoria.

Proficiency Levels and Standards on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

Although the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale was a continuum, scores were grouped into five proficiency levels ranging from '1' (containing the least difficult items) to '5' (containing the most difficult items), each representing an equal range of student ability/item difficulty on the scale. Necessity in the 2004 cycle of assessment and again in 2007 required the addition of the below Level 1 band, resulting in six bands in total. The profile has the bottom and top bands being unbounded.

In addition to deriving the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, Proficient Standards were established for each of Year 6 and Year 10. For the National Sample Assessment Program proficiency standards represent points on the proficiency scale that represent a 'challenging but reasonable' expectation for typical Year 6 and 10 students to have reached by the end of each of those years of study. Thus the students need to demonstrate more than minimal or elementary skills to be regarded as having reached the standard appropriate to their year level. A proficient standard is not the same as a minimum benchmark standard because the latter refers to the basic level needed to function at that year level whereas the former refers to what is expected of a student at that year level. The two Year 6 and Year 10 Civics and Citizenship Proficient Standards were set in 2004.

The Proficient Standard for Year 6 was set at Proficiency Level 2 (see Figure ES 3). With regard to those students achieving the Proficient Standard of Level 2 in 2007, the percentage of students from New South Wales, Victoria and the ACT achieving the standard was greater than the percentage at the national level. This mirrors the results of 2004. Because of differences in the distribution of scores, a pattern that is evident in the means may not necessarily be identical to a pattern in the percentage of students at or above the proficient standard.

The Proficient Standard for Year 10 was set at Proficiency Level 3 (see Figure ES 3). With regard to those Year 10 students achieving the Proficient Standard of Level 3, the

percentage of students from New South Wales, ACT, and South Australia achieving the standard was greater than the percentage at the national level. This is similar to the results of 2004, except Victoria had a percentage greater than the national average rather than South Australia. Because of differences in the distribution of scores, a pattern that is evident in the means may not necessarily be identical to a pattern in the percentage of students at or above the proficient standard.

Characteristics of Proficiency Level 2

Students who achieved at Proficiency Level 2 were able to demonstrate accurate responses to relatively simple civics and citizenship concepts or issues, with limited interpretation or reasoning. They could, for example, recognise the division of governmental responsibilities in a federation, that respecting the right of others to hold differing opinions is a democratic principle, and can identify a link between a change in Australia's identity and the national anthem.

Characteristics of Proficiency Level 3

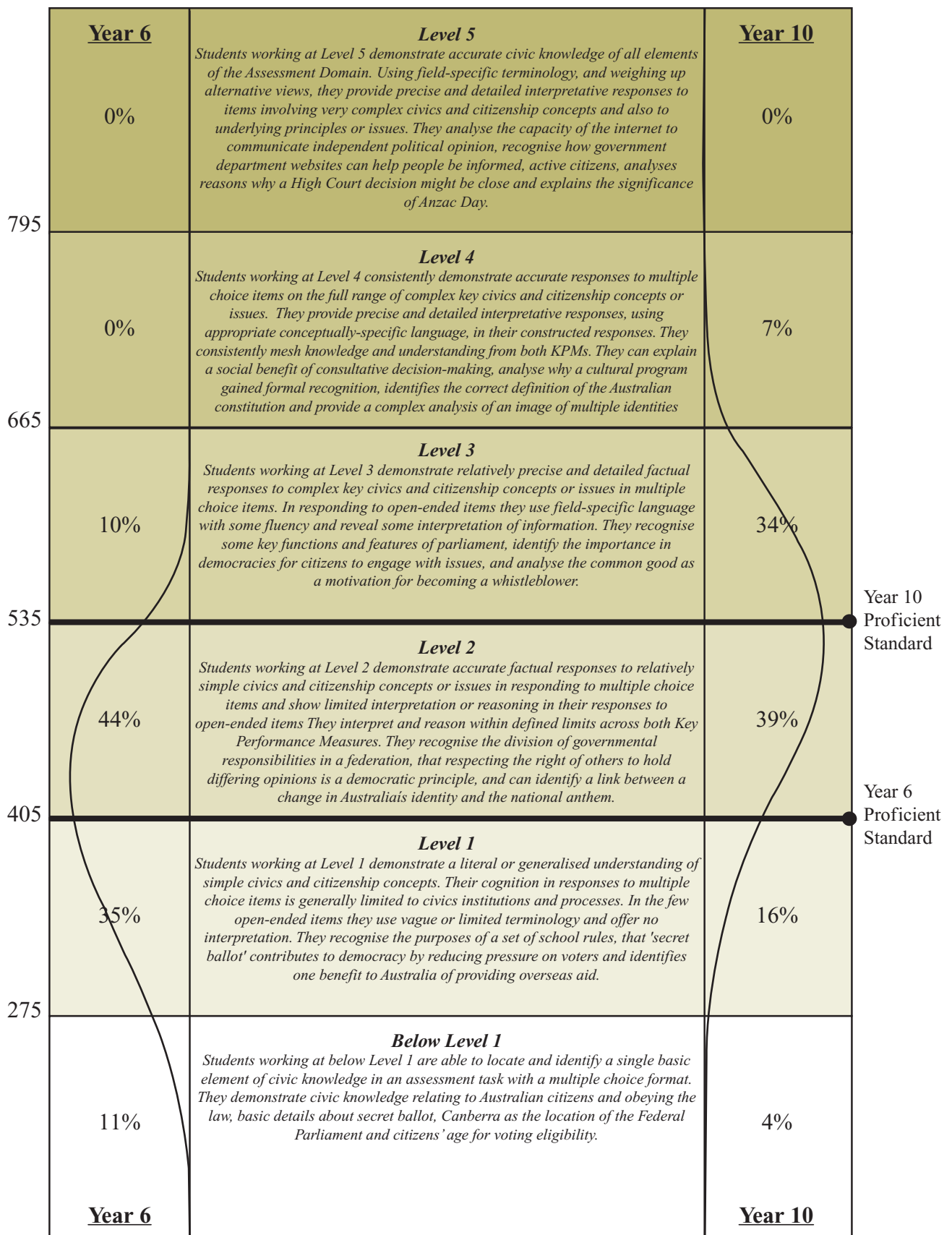
Students who achieved at Proficiency Level 3 were able to demonstrate relatively precise and detailed factual responses to complex civics and citizenship concepts or issues, and some interpretation of information. They could, for example, recognise some key functions and features of parliament, identify the importance in democracies for citizens to engage with issues, and analyse the common good as a motivation for becoming a whistleblower.

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

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

Figure ES 3 shows that 54 per cent of Year 6 students achieved the Year 6 Proficient Standard of Level 2 (and above) and 41 per cent of Year 10 students achieved the Year 10 Proficient Standard of Level 3 (and above). Figure ES 3 also reveals considerable overlap in proficiency between the Year 6 and Year 10 populations: for example, 34 per cent of the latter achieved at the same level as the top 10 per cent of Year 6 students.

Figure ES 3: Civics and Citizenship Literacy Profile for Years 6 and 10



Note: The percentages for this figure have been rounded.

Performance of Students by Background

Performance by gender

Table ES 1 shows the percentages and confidence intervals of Year 6 and 10 students attaining each proficiency level by gender. At both Year 6 and Year 10 a higher percentage of females than males attained levels 2 and 3. There was no difference between males and females attaining Level 4 for Year 6 and Level 5 for Year 10. In Year 6, 57 per cent of females, compared to 50 per cent of males, achieved at or above the Proficient Standard of Level 2. In Year 10, 45 per cent of females, compared with 38 per cent of males, achieved at or above the Proficient Standard of Level 3.

Table ES 1: Percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 Students, by Proficiency Level, at or above the Proficient Standard, by Gender

| Proficiency level | Year 6 | | | | Year 10 | | | |
|---|--------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|
| | Males | | Females | | Males | | Females | |
| | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI |
| Level 5 | – | – | – | – | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 0.3 |
| Level 4 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 5.4 | 1.7 | 8.3 | 2.1 |
| Level 3 | 8.7 | 1.6 | 10.7 | 1.6 | 32.2 | 3.0 | 36.6 | 2.9 |
| Level 2 | 40.9 | 3.1 | 46.3 | 3.1 | 38.8 | 3.1 | 39.0 | 3.7 |
| Level 1 | 36.4 | 2.6 | 34.0 | 3.1 | 18.5 | 2.8 | 13.2 | 2.5 |
| Under Level 1 | 13.7 | 1.9 | 8.8 | 1.6 | 4.9 | 1.8 | 2.7 | 1.3 |
| At or above the Proficient Standards 2007 | 49.9 | 3.3 | 57.2 | 3.4 | 37.9 | 3.7 | 45.1 | 3.4 |

Performance by parental occupation group

Table ES2 shows the mean performance scores for Year 10 students by parental occupation group for both assessment cycles. It shows that in both assessment cycles the Year 10 mean scores increase across the parental occupation groups in a manner congruent to what is usually expected on the basis of underlying socioeconomic differences as they typically present in national assessments and surveys.

Table ES 2: 2004 and 2007 Mean Scores for Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Parental Occupation Group

| Occupational group | 2004 | | 2007 | |
|---|------------|------|------------|------|
| | Mean Score | CI | Mean Score | CI |
| 1. Senior Managers and professionals | 540.5 | 10.0 | 557.3 | 12.5 |
| 2. Other managers and associate professionals | 521.6 | 8.6 | 514.9 | 8.4 |
| 3. Tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff | 482.1 | 7.9 | 478.0 | 10.8 |
| 4. Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff | 462.7 | 9.3 | 451.0 | 14.7 |
| 5. Not in paid work in the last 12 months | 424.8 | 24.7 | 348.5 | 92.2 |

The differences between mean scores across adjacent groups in 2007 range between 27 and 103 score points and are greatest between occupation groups 4 and 5. All differences between adjacent groups were statistically significant. The difference between 2007 mean scores for children of parents who have not been in paid work for the last 12 months and senior managers and professionals is 209 score points for Year 10. This is greater than in 2004 when the comparable difference was only 116 score points. The improvement in achievement from 2004 to 2007 of the highest level of occupation group was statistically significant. The large decline of the lowest group (not in paid work) is not significant due to the large confidence interval.

Performance by language background

At Year 10, the mean scores of students who spoke languages other than English at home is slightly lower than students who spoke only English at home but the difference was not statistically significant. This finding is consistent with that of 2004.

Performance by school geographic location

The mean performance of Year 6 students in metropolitan schools is approximately 24 scale points higher than the mean performance of Year 6 students in provincial schools. This difference was statistically significant. The mean performance of Year 6 students in remote schools is approximately 84 scale points lower than the mean performance of Year 6 students in provincial schools. This difference was statistically significant.

The mean performance of Year 10 students in remote schools was 67 and 89 score points lower than that of students in provincial and metropolitan schools respectively. The mean performance of Year 10 students in metropolitan schools is similar to the mean performance of Year 10 students in provincial schools.

Performance by Indigenous status

At Year 10, Indigenous students did not perform as well as non-Indigenous students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. At Year 10, the non-Indigenous mean performance is approximately 90 scale points above the mean performance of Indigenous students. This difference was statistically significant. This figure compares with the 71 point difference between non-Indigenous and Indigenous students in 2004. It should also be noted that these Indigenous data are very small and predominantly derive from regional and remote locations, which typically present in national assessments and surveys, and in this assessment, with lower means than other locations.

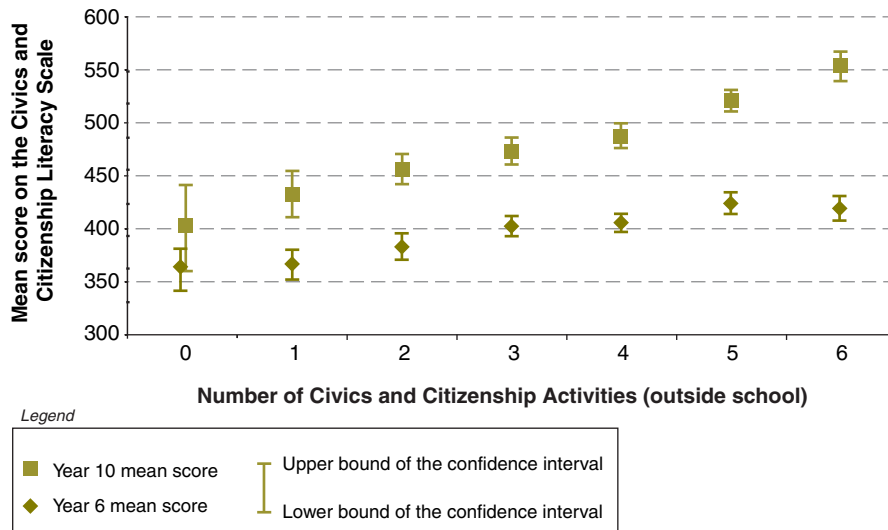
Other factors associated with student achievement in civics and citizenship literacy performance

Participation in civics and citizenship related activities was found to be related to student achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, particularly at Year 10. Specifically the main findings were that:

- schools that provided more opportunities for participation in either school governance or in more general civics-related activities had higher average achievement than schools that provided less of these opportunities;
- individual students who participated in a greater number of the school governance activities or the more general civics related activities had higher achievement than those that participated in less of these activities; and
- students that participated more frequently in civics-related activities outside school were found to have higher achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale.

Figure ES4 presents the mean scaled scores according to number of civics-related activities participated in outside school, and the associated confidence intervals. A linear trend is shown, with higher achievement associated with a greater number of activities participated in. Tests of the significance of the differences support this finding. In particular, at Year 10, each additional activity above one is associated with a significant increase in achievement.

Figure ES 4: Mean Scaled Scores of Year 6 and 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Number of Civics and Citizenship-related Activities Participated In Outside School



According to a regression analysis (see Appendix 7), participation in civics and citizenship activities (both at school and outside of school) explained a substantial amount of the variation in achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. Although participation in individual citizenship activities had varied, but mainly small effects on student performance, it appears that the influence of these activities is of a compounding nature, in that participating in more than one activity has an influence greater than the simple addition of the influence of each activity.

Participation in family discussions of current events by Year 10 students had the largest individual effect on student performance. Other things being equal, the difference in achievement scores between a Year 10 student who never or hardly ever engages in these discussions and a Year 10 student who does so more than three times a week, was over 60 points

Participation in school governance activities also had a significant effect on Year 10 student achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. Other things being equal, Year 10 students who had voted for class representatives performed better than students who have not done so, and so too did students who felt they had contributed to school decision-making outside of the student council.

Concluding Comments

Student achievement in the second cycle of the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship 2007, at or above the levels of their respective Proficient Standards, was 54 per cent for Year 6 and 41 per cent for Year 10 students. This represents a minimal improvement from the achievement reported following the first cycle of the 2004 assessment of 3 per cent for Year 6 students and 2 per cent for Year 10 students.

In the report on the first cycle of the National Assessment – Civics and Citizenship, 2004, the hope was expressed that the National Assessment Program and the potential implementation of the National Statements of Learning may lead to positive changes in civics and citizenship curriculum delivery and student performance at the school level by 2007. However, the schools context for the 2007 cycle of the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship proved to be not greatly different to that which applied at the time of the 2004 national assessment. By 2007 civics and citizenship education had a more prominent place and an agreed focus in curriculum policies in Australian states and territories than was the case in 2004, but not in such a way as to impact at the school or classroom level.

It must be presumed that given the impetus of the National Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship, schools will begin implementing Civics and Citizenship curricula in appropriately sequenced programs on a broader scale. In addition to providing such instruction, given the demonstrated positive effect on achievement of talking with families about Civics and Citizenship issues and participation in civic activities outside schools, it may be wondered what schools can do to improve achievement of their students in Civics and Citizenship literacy. This report has provided indicators of what kinds of opportunities and activities schools should seek to provide. Its findings provide the clearest direction to schools that one way to improve student performance on the assessment tasks that relate to civic activities is to provide students with opportunity to participate in Civics and Citizenship activities and also in school governance activities such as voting and in decision-making at school. If schools do not wish to provide a detailed or conventional civics and citizenship curriculum to all their students, thereby adding to the students' civic knowledge, they can provide a governance model which allows decision-making by students in the school.

Perhaps the requirement to implement the National Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship will encourage schools to develop relevant programs; some of them knowledge-based and others experiential in orientation. It is essential that schools grasp the other major finding from this assessment, reiterated from 2004, that the students who can achieve comparatively better than their fellow year-level students are those who demonstrate knowledge and understanding of both Key Performance Measures. These findings are congruent with both the National Goals for Schooling and the National Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship. All 3 sources indicate that students need to be taught explicit civic knowledge about how democracy works, and also be provided with opportunities to practise those competencies, if they are to develop complex concepts about how they might act as engaged and effective citizens.

Chapter 1

Introduction to the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship 2007

Background

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

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

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

In addressing the area of civics and citizenship, Goal 1.4 of the Adelaide Declaration referred specifically to the intention that students:

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

Moreover, in reference to the characteristics that students, as citizens, should possess, Goal 1.3 asserted that they should:

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

In 1999, the education ministers established the National Education Performance Monitoring Taskforce (NEPMT) to develop key performance measures to monitor and report on progress towards the achievement of the goals on a nationally comparable basis. They noted the need to develop indicators of performance for Civics and Citizenship literacy.

As a first step, the NEPMT commissioned a project in 2001 to investigate and develop key performance measures in Civics and Citizenship literacy. The outcome of this process was a report to the NEPMT entitled *Key Performance Measures in Civics and Citizenship Education* (Print & Hughes, 2001). In July 2001, all outstanding work of the NEPMT was transferred to the new Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce (PMRT).

The following six recommendations from the NEPMT report were endorsed by the PMRT:

- That there be two Key Performance measures (KPMs) for Civics and Citizenship literacy, the first to focus on civic knowledge and understanding and the second on citizenship participation skills and civic values.
- That the KPMs be applied to both primary and secondary schooling and be set at Year 6 and Year 10 respectively.
- That national student assessments be designed for Year 6 and Year 10 derived from the KPMs.
- That a trial assessment be conducted in 2003 as a preliminary to a national sample survey assessment.
- That the assessment survey consist of three parts: (1), an assessment of civics knowledge and understanding (KPM1); (2), an assessment of skills and values for active citizenship participation (KPM2); and (3), an indication of opportunities for and examples of citizenship participation by students, together with relevant contextual information.
- That the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment of student knowledge, understanding, values and citizenship participation skills occur first in 2004. Subsequent testing will occur in 2007 and thereafter every three years.

First Cycle of National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment

In October 2002, the PMRT commissioned a trial assessment instrument for nationally comparable measurement and reporting in the government, independent and Catholic sectors. A further tender was let in February 2003 for

the conduct of the first cycle of National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment in October 2004. The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) was the successful tenderer in both cases.

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

The Review Committee's members were nominated by the jurisdictions, school sectors and interest groups. They played a significant role in the development of the Assessment Domain, bringing to that task their expertise and knowledge of civics curriculum documentation in their respective States and Territories.

The Assessment Domain

The Assessment Domain comprised the domain descriptors for the two Key Performance Measures (KPMs) and a professional elaboration. An analysis of the Assessment Domain is entailed in Chapter 3 of this report, where the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale is described, and it is also exemplified by a selection of items from the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship 2007, an examination of the content and difficulty of the items and the establishment of links between the items and the domain.

2007 Curriculum Context in the States and Territories

As in 2004 the curriculum context for the assessment of Civics and Citizenship literacy was still strikingly different from that prevailing for other national assessments in 2007.

At the time of the assessment in 2004, Civics and Citizenship was not a key learning area in any Australian jurisdiction. The definitions associated with certain key concepts were matters of debate across the jurisdictions and the levels of explicitness in the formal curricula documentation conveyed considerable local variation. This situation has been somewhat ameliorated between 2004 and 2007, but not in such a way as to have a significant impact on the student achievement outcomes in 2007 assessment.

National Statements of Learning in Civics and Citizenship

In 2006 MCEETYA decided to develop National Statements of Learning in Civics and Citizenship and they have provided curriculum developers with more specificity in both key Civics and Citizenship education concepts and appropriate illustrative areas of content. Through the National Statements of Learning, the 1999 National Goals for Schooling now firmly frame curriculum frameworks in all Australian States and Territories. Not intended as a curriculum, the National

Statements, with their four junction year levels (3, 5, 7 and 9), provide, for the first time, a comprehensive set of directions in Civics and Citizenship education for the compulsory years of schooling. To facilitate the implementation of them at a classroom level, during 2007 all State and Territory education authorities have incorporated them into amended curriculum frameworks. All sectors have agreed to implement them in all school programs by January 2008.

By the time of the 2007 assessment, Civics and Citizenship education had a more prominent place and an agreed focus in curriculum policies in Australian States and Territories than was the case in 2004. However, this is unlikely to have had an impact at the school or classroom level. This is because schools across Australia will not have consistently and uniformly incorporated Civics and Citizenship Education (CCE) programs, using the amended curriculum frameworks, into their schools. So school programming and curriculum delivery in Civics and Citizenship remain a challenge, as does clarity associated with defining key Civics and Citizenship concepts and the considerable local differences in delivery.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that while schools overwhelmingly see Civics and Citizenship education as a very important area of learning for ALL students, the practicalities of incorporating it into the curriculum remains a challenge. Despite the adoption of the National Statements of Learning – Civics and Citizenship, most state curriculum frameworks do not include Civics and Citizenship education as a separate subject. Rather it is seen in more holistic terms as a whole school issue and while a number of research studies indicate that this approach is more likely to actively engage students, the practical outcome has been a great deal of confusion about ‘ownership’ of delivery, inhibiting implementation at a classroom level. The issues of how much time is to be spent on the teaching of Civics and Citizenship and within which key learning areas remain matters for debate and will have an on-going influence on what students are taught and can learn at school in this area.

In summary, the picture at the point of the 2007 assessment program was one of greatly enhanced awareness among teachers and schools of Civics and Citizenship compared with 2004. The provision of professional development in the area was also variable within and across jurisdictions and sectors. It is clear from program evaluations and other reports by professional development providers, that some schools have well developed Civics and Citizenship education programs, while many other schools were still not even conceptualising the area. By the end of 2007 all jurisdictions had provided schools with a series of well articulated Civics and Citizenship education policy documents, but there was understandable slippage between policy and classroom practice. Given this context it is to be expected that there would be wide variations between schools in student understandings and dispositions.

The Broader Conceptualisation of Civics and Citizenship Education

A significant new direction of Civics and Citizenship education since 2004

has been the broadening social acceptance of the conceptual understanding of what constitutes a 'good or competent citizen'. There is a generally accepted recognition that to be such a person one needs to be well informed, but the debate has now greatly broadened about what areas of understanding constitutes being well informed. The recent federal initiative in the area of consumer and financial literacy as a component to citizenship is an example of this trend. It should not come as a surprise that notions of 'the good citizen' should be in a constant state of flux, debate and contestability. A healthy democracy needs such a debate, indeed it is defined by such a stance, and the National Assessment Program in Civics and Citizenship needs to connect with current debates and issues.

The goal of encouraging an active and informed citizenry, as proposed by the Adelaide Declaration, is evident in recent policy documentation and curricula changes, and remained a focus of the key performance measures in the 2007 assessment.

Discovering Democracy

The Australian Government's *Discovering Democracy* program supported the delivery of CCE programs in schools with curriculum resources and professional development for teachers. Funding for *Discovering Democracy* ended in 2004. The replacement *Civics and Citizenship Education* program funded a continued national *Civics and Citizenship Education* website and some key national activities. Teachers report that the hard copy *Discovering Democracy* resources are not much used in schools these days. There is now a much wider range of CCE resources available to teachers in all states and territories, including online materials available free from the Curriculum Corporation website. Continued support for Civics and Citizenship teachers will be needed to ensure effective curriculum delivery.

Stages in the 2007 Assessment

The Assessment Domain remained unchanged from 2004 to the 2007 assessment. Secure items from the 2004 assessment were retained and new items developed for the 2007 assessment. The coverage of the whole item set of the domain was monitored closely. Draft and revised versions of the items were shared with the Review Committee before and after trialling.

In March 2007, a representative random sample of 74 schools from all three school sectors in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland participated in the trial. The response rate from sampled trial schools was 99 per cent. The trial data were analysed and shared with the Review Committee.

A more comprehensive rotation of items through the test booklets was in place for 2007 than had been implemented in 2004. There were 7 test booklets at both year levels. (For details see the Technical Report.)

Administration of 2007 Assessment, data analysis and reporting

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

The first stage involved informing schools that they had been selected to participate.

Liaison officers in each of the States and Territories facilitated contact with schools. Information about classes in Year 6 and Year 10 was collected in the initial dealings with schools.

The second stage was that of class selection and it is described in the sampling section of Chapter 2 and in more detail in the Technical Report. Comprehensive administration manuals were sent to the designated school contacts, with notification of the classes selected to participate. Schools were then required to send back the names or student identification numbers of the students in those classes to enable the efficient and accurate processing of the assessment booklets and the subsequent school reports. Data on some elements of the Year 6 students' background details were collected from schools via the Online Student Registration System (OSRS). Parallel data were collected from the Year 10 students via responses to the Student Background Survey as part of the assessment booklets.

The third stage was the administration of the assessment in the schools. This took place during a three week period from mid-October 2007, with each State and Territory having a fortnight's testing window. Each school received a package of assessment materials that included test booklets with students' names pre-printed on them and the Assessment Administration manual, which provided a script to be followed during the assessment. Five per cent of schools were visited by Quality Monitors, who observed the conduct of the assessment in order to ensure that it was being administered consistently across schools. Follow-up test sessions were held when less than 85 per cent of students presented for the first testing session.

The fourth stage was post testing. It involved the online marking of all constructed responses, the collation of all student data, the preparation and delivery of school reports based on summary data. Data analysis in preparation for this report was begun in late 2007 and undertaken mostly during the first half of 2008. In 2007, the analysis included equating between cycles (that is between 2004 and 2007) as well as equating between year levels. This work enables an investigation into change in achievement over time in addition to comparison between year levels. Tests of significance are used to determine whether differences between years and groups of students are statistically significant. These tests require calculating the sampling, measurement and equating errors. Student achievement in Civics and Citizenship literacy is most commonly presented in this report by reference to scaled scores, also referred to as achievement or test scores. Reference is also

made to the Proficiency Standards and proficiency levels. A detailed description of how the equating and subsequent tests of significance were conducted is presented in the Technical Report. Reference to the outcomes of the equating analyses is made in several chapters.

Structure of this Report

This report constitutes the final stage in the assessment project. Chapter 2 describes the development and substance of the assessment instrument and parts of the Student Background Survey and the administration of the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship. It describes the achieved participation rates, as well as the personal characteristics of Year 6 and Year 10 student population, using data collected by the Student Background Survey.

Chapter 3 provides a more detailed analysis of the Assessment Domain, through the description of the achievement scale, and an analysis of examples of many of the items used to construct it. The items analysed and used to describe and illustrate student achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale are all release items. (The School Release Materials, a suite of documentation developed for schools, comprise an outcome of this assessment program and will be available from the MCEETYA website on the release of this report.) A profile of student achievement at Year 6 and Year 10, as represented by the proficiency levels which form the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, is developed. Some comparisons of 2007 with 2004 data and findings are also provided.

Chapter 4 examines the relationship between students' performance in the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship (NAP-CC) and their personal and family backgrounds and civic experiences.

Chapter 5 explores the findings, including the relationships between the personal student background variables and student participation in civics and citizenship activities introduced in Chapter 2, and the achievement data described in Chapters 3.

Chapter 6 discusses some implications of the findings.

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

Chapter 2

Assessing Civics and Citizenship Literacy

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

Assessment Domain for Civics and Citizenship Literacy

The Assessment Domain was refined by ACER, in conjunction with the NAP–CC Review Committee and PMRT, prior to the first cycle of the National Assessment Program in Civics and Citizenship, held in 2004. Prior to the 2007 cycle, a review of the Assessment Domain in relation to recent changes to State and Territory curriculum, as well as the National Statements of Learning for Civics and Citizenship, was undertaken but no changes were considered necessary.

The Assessment Domain comprised the domain descriptors for the two Key Performance Measures (KPMs) and a professional elaboration. An analysis of the content of the Assessment Domain is achieved in Chapter 3 through the description and analysis of the content and difficulty of items across all the levels in the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale.

The Assessment Domain is provided as Appendix 1 to this report.

Civics and Citizenship Assessment Instruments

Assessment items and response types

The items were developed in units that comprised one or more assessment items that related directly to single themes or stimuli. In its simplest form, a unit was a single, self-contained item, and, in its most complex a piece of stimulus material with a set of assessment items related directly to it. Each assessment item was referenced to a single descriptor in the Assessment Domain, so units comprising more than one assessment item were frequently referenced to more than one descriptor within and across the two Key Performance Measures (KPM1 and KPM2). Item-response types included dual-choice (true/false), multiple-choice, closed and constructed response. The scores allocated to items varied: dual and multiple-choice items had a maximum score of one point, while closed and constructed response items were each allocated between one and three points. The assessment was conducted using a total of 148 items, with 66 of them being secure items from the 2004 assessment cycle.

Allocation and rotation of items to test booklets

Seven test forms were used at both Year 6 and Year 10. A rotated booklet design was used to ensure coverage of the Assessment Domain and to allow for the potential effects of item position within the test booklets. The rotated design consisted of seven clusters of units of items for each year level (each cluster containing approximately 14 items at Year 6 and 15 items at Year 10). These seven clusters were rotated through the seven test booklets in such a way that:

- Each cluster appeared once in a booklet with each other cluster;
- Each cluster appeared once in each position in a booklet (beginning, middle or last); and
- Each cluster appeared in three booklets.
- As a result, each booklet contained approximately 42 items at Year 6 and approximately 45 items at Year 10.

In addition, items were allocated to clusters (in intact units) in order to achieve a within-cluster equivalence of item type (see Chapter 3 and Technical Report), reading load, vertical link items (linking Years 6 and 10), and horizontal link items (linking the 2004 and 2007 assessments). The clusters also assisted in ensuring equivalence during the process of marking of student responses.

Student Background Survey

A Student Background Survey was included in the test booklets in order to collect data to provide context for the results of the cognitive assessment. The Student Background Survey consisted of questions concerned with:

- participation in citizenship activities outside school;

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

Details on these questions, the data collected and the relationships with cognitive achievement data are reported in Chapter 5.

Information about individual and family background characteristics was also collected. The background variables were gender, age, Indigenous status, language background (country of birth and main language spoken at home), socioeconomic background (parental education and parental occupation) and geographic location. The structure of these student background variables had been agreed to by MCEETYA as part of the National Assessment Program, established to monitor progress toward the achievement of the National Goals of Schooling. At Year 6 this information was collected centrally through schools and education systems via the Online Student Registration System (OSRS). At Year 10, the background information was collected directly from the students, via questions in the Student Background Survey. The relationships between these personal characteristics data reported in this chapter and the cognitive achievement data are more fully explored in Chapter 4.

The Student Background Survey is provided as Appendix 2 to this report.

Sample

Sample Design

The National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship was administered to students in Year 6 and Year 10.

The sampling procedure followed the cluster sampling procedures established for national sample surveys conducted by the Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce. Cluster sampling is cost-effective because a larger group of students from the same school can be surveyed at the same time, rather than possibly just one or two if a simple random sample of students from the population were to be drawn. Sampling involves a two-stage process to ensure that each eligible student has an equal chance of being selected in the sample. The design was applied at Year 6 and Year 10 levels.

The first stage of sampling involved selecting a sample of schools with a probability proportional to size, and stratified according to State or Territory, school size and school sector. The probability of selection was proportional to the number of Year 6 students enrolled for one sample and to the number of Year 10 students enrolled in the other from all non-excluded schools in Australia that had students in Year 6 or Year 10¹.

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

Schools excluded from the target population included non-mainstream schools (such as schools for students with intellectual disabilities), schools with fewer than five students at the target year levels and very remote schools, except in the Northern Territory (where their inclusion is necessary to better reflect its whole school population – see Technical Report). These exclusions accounted for 1.53 per cent of the Year 6 student population and 0.77 per cent of the Year 10 student population.

The second stage comprised the drawing of a sample of one classroom from the target year level in sampled schools. A sample was drawn separately for each year level (for more detail see Technical Report). Where only one class was available at the target level, that class was selected automatically. Where more than one class existed, classes were sampled with equal probability of selection.²

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

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

The number of student-level exclusions at Year 6 was 93 and at Year 10 it was 61. The final student population exclusion rate was 2.8 per cent at Year 6 and 1.9 per cent at Year 10. More information about the sample is provided in the Technical Report.

² In some schools, smaller classes were combined to make a pseudo-class group before sampling. For example, two multi-level classes with 13 and 15 Year 6 students respectively might be combined into a single pseudo class of 28 students. This was to maximise the number of students selected per school (the sample design was based on 25 students per school). Pseudo-classes were treated like other classes and had equal probability of selection during sampling.

Achieved Sample

Of the eligible sampled students, 92 per cent of Year 6 students and 86 per cent of Year 10 students completed the assessment. Table 2.1 shows the achieved school and student sample.

Table 2.1: Achieved School and Student Sample, by State and Territory

| | Year 6 | | Year 10 | |
|--------------|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| | Schools | Students | Schools | Students |
| NSW | 48 | 1091 | 40 | 883 |
| VIC | 48 | 961 | 38 | 740 |
| QLD | 47 | 1071 | 35 | 759 |
| SA | 49 | 923 | 35 | 748 |
| WA | 47 | 1019 | 35 | 777 |
| TAS | 48 | 853 | 32 | 576 |
| NT | 33 | 546 | 26 | 395 |
| ACT | 29 | 595 | 28 | 628 |
| Total Sample | 349 | 7059 | 269 | 5506 |

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

Participating sample characteristics

This section reports on the personal characteristics of the achieved population of Year 6 and Year 10 students, using the data collected by means of the Student Background Survey. The background variables were age, student gender, parental occupation, main language spoken at home, country of birth, geographic location and Indigenous status. They provide a profile of the students participating in the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship. All data reported in this report are weighted unless otherwise stated. Weighting of data allows inferences to be made about the national Year 6 and Year 10 student populations. Thus the data presented in the following tables and figures are weighted. Any differences in total numbers of students between tables are due to missing data for those variables (See Appendix 3).

Age

MCEETYA protocols mean reporting is against year levels rather than age. Nevertheless age differences can account for some of the observed differences in performance, and systematic differences in the distribution of ages in a given year level may contribute to observed differences between States and Territories. In the achieved sample of participating students, 55 per cent of the Year 10 students stated they were 15 years old in October 2007 and another 39 per cent said they were 16 years old (Table 2.2). At Year 6, 55 per cent of students were 11 years old and 41 per cent were 12 years old.

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

| | AUST % | NSW % | VIC % | QLD % | SA % | WA % | TAS % | NT % | ACT % |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Year 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 and below | 3 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| 11 | 55 | 47 | 34 | 84 | 52 | 85 | 23 | 62 | 43 |
| 12 | 41 | 52 | 63 | 6 | 47 | 3 | 76 | 37 | 55 |
| 13 and above | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Mean age | 11.8 | 12.0 | 12.1 | 11.4 | 11.9 | 11.3 | 12.2 | 11.8 | 12.0 |
| Year 10 | | | | | | | | | |
| 14 and below | 4 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 1 | 12 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| 15 | 55 | 46 | 39 | 79 | 56 | 84 | 24 | 70 | 42 |
| 16 | 39 | 53 | 56 | 9 | 41 | 4 | 75 | 27 | 55 |
| 17 and above | 2 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Mean age | 15.8 | 16.0 | 16.1 | 15.4 | 15.9 | 15.4 | 16.2 | 15.7 | 16.0 |

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

Table 2.3 provides the length of schooling data derived from jurisdictional sources.

Table 2.3: Average Time at School by State and Territory

| | Year 6 | Year 10 |
|-----|---------------|----------------|
| NSW | 6yrs 9mths | 10yrs 9mths |
| VIC | 6yrs 9mths | 10yrs 9mths |
| QLD | 5yrs 10mths | 9yrs 10mths |
| SA | 6yrs 8mths | 10yrs 7mths |
| WA | 5yrs 10mths | 9yrs 10mths |
| TAS | 6yrs 9mths | 10yrs 9mths |
| NT | 6yrs 5mths | 10yrs 4mths |
| ACT | 6 yrs 8mths | 10 yrs 8mths |

Due to differences in school starting ages and participation in school before Year 1, the average length of time in formal schooling varies between the states and territories. Table 2.3 shows difference in length of schooling at time of testing across the state and territory education jurisdictions. From Table 2.3 it shows that students in Queensland and Western Australia had experienced 6 to 11 months less formal schooling than students in the other states.

Table 2.4 presents the characteristics of the Year 6 and Year 10 samples, by background variables. Since the student background data for Year 6 were collected via the Online Student Registration System (OSRS) which resulted in a large amount of missing data, as shown in Table 2.4. This level of missing data makes it difficult to make accurate estimates of student achievement. Therefore, only Year 10 results will be presented, in Chapter 4, for these background variables.

Table 2.4: Distribution of Weighted Sample Characteristics*

| | Year 6 | | Year 10 | |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | % of cohort | Adjusted % | % of cohort | Adjusted % |
| Student Gender | | | | |
| Boy | 51.5 | 51.5 | 49.4 | 49.4 |
| Girl | 48.5 | 48.5 | 50.5 | 50.6 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 99.9 | 100.0 |
| Missing | 0.0 | | 0.1 | |
| Parental Occupation | | | | |
| Senior Managers and Professionals | 13.9 | 24.3 | 22.3 | 22.7 |
| Other Managers and Associate Professionals | 15.0 | 26.3 | 36.0 | 36.6 |
| Skilled trades, clerical and sales | 14.6 | 25.6 | 23.9 | 24.4 |
| Unskilled manual, office & sales | 8.4 | 14.7 | 14.9 | 15.2 |
| Not in paid work for 12 months** | 5.1 | 9.0 | 1.1 | 1.2 |
| Total | 57.0 | 100.0 | 98.2 | 100.0 |
| Missing | 43.0 | | 1.8 | |
| Indigenous Status | | | | |
| Non Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander | 84.3 | 95.5 | 96.4 | 97.0 |
| Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander | 4.0 | 4.5 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Total | 88.2 | 100.0 | 99.4 | 100.0 |
| Missing | 11.8 | | 0.6 | |
| Language spoken at home | | | | |
| English Only | 71.1 | 84.3 | 77.1 | 77.8 |
| Language other than English | 13.2 | 15.7 | 22.0 | 22.2 |
| Total | 84.3 | 100.0 | 99.2 | 100.0 |
| Missing | 15.7 | | 0.8 | |
| Country of birth | | | | |
| Born in Australia | 74.4 | 90.9 | 88.0 | 88.3 |
| Not born in Australia | 7.4 | 9.1 | 11.6 | 11.7 |
| Total | 81.8 | 100.0 | 99.6 | 100.0 |
| Missing | 18.2 | | 0.4 | |
| Geographic Location | | | | |
| Metropolitan | 70.6 | 70.6 | 72.3 | 72.3 |
| Provincial | 26.5 | 26.5 | 27.2 | 27.2 |
| Remote | 2.9 | 2.9 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Missing | 0.0 | | 0.0 | |

Notes:

* The Year 6 and Year 10 data displayed are reported as both a percentage of cohort and also as adjusted percent. The adjusted per cent figures for each background variable refer to the proportion of those students who actually responded to the sub-category.

** For Year 6 students this category includes the data provided by parents to the school, and recorded in OSRS, that they have not been in paid work in the past 12 months. For Year 10 students this category includes those who indicated in their responses to the Student Background Survey that a parent was on home duties, studying, unemployed or undertaking volunteer work.

The text in the rest of this chapter, which describes the sample characteristics by background variables, refers to the percentages in Table 2.4, using the adjusted per cent.

Gender

There were almost equal numbers of males and females in the sample, with females comprising 48.5 per cent of Year 6 students and 50.6 per cent of Year 10 students (see Table 2.4). According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in 2007 females made up 49 per cent of the population at both year levels.

Socioeconomic background – parental occupation

The parental occupation variable used in this report is based on questions which asked for both the name of the job the student's mother and father had and what work they did in the job. Missing data for either the father's or mother's occupation ranged between 9 and 12 per cent for Year 10. However, the combined variable had an acceptable 2 per cent missing data. The Year 6 student data on parent occupation collected by OSRS had 50 and 46 per cent missing for father and mother's occupation respectively, and 43 per cent missing for the combined variable.

As shown in Table 2.4, around 15 per cent of Year 10 students reported that their parents' highest occupation was in the group of unskilled manual, office and sales staff. Twenty-six per cent of Year 6 students and 24 per cent of Year 10 reported that their parent's occupation was that of a tradesperson or skilled clerical, sales or service person. Another 26 per cent of the Year 6 students and 37 per cent of the Year 10 students had parents who were managers or associated professionals and a further 24 per cent of Year 6 students and 23 per cent of Year 10 students had parents in the senior manager or professionals group.

Indigenous status

Approximately five per cent of the Year 6 students and three per cent of the Year 10 students sampled identified themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders.

Because of the very small number of Indigenous students in the sample and since the distribution of Indigenous students by geographic location varied from that of non-Indigenous students, an analysis of these variations was undertaken. Indigenous students were far more likely than non-Indigenous students to live or go to school in provincial or remote areas.

Language background – language other than English spoken at home

As Table 2.4 shows, 16 per cent of the Year 6 students and 22 per cent of the Year 10 students came from homes in which languages other than English were spoken (in place of, or in addition, to English).

Country of birth

Nine per cent of the Year 6 students and 12 per cent of the Year 10 students were not born in Australia (see Table 2.4).

Geographic location

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

- **Metropolitan zones** included all State and Territory capital cities except Darwin, and major urban areas with populations above 100,000 (such as Geelong, Wollongong and the Gold Coast).
- **Provincial zones** included provincial cities (including Darwin) and provincial areas
- **Remote zones** were areas of low accessibility such as Katherine and Coober Pedy.

Around 70 per cent of the students in the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship attended school in metropolitan areas (see Table 2.4). Approximately 27 per cent lived and/or attended school in provincial areas, while only 1 to 3 per cent lived in remote areas. This distribution of sample students by geographic location matches the Australian student population statistics extremely closely.

Additionally, information was collected for Year 10 students on the geographic location of where they lived. These figures were very similar to that of their school location, with 70 per cent of Year 10 students living in Metropolitan locations, 27 per cent in provincial areas, while 1 per cent of Year 10 students lived in remote locations.

Calculating the Precision of Estimates

For any survey there is a level of uncertainty regarding the extent to which an estimate measured from the sample of students is the same as the true value of the parameter for the population (that is, all students). An estimate derived from a sample is subject to uncertainty because the sample may not reflect the population precisely. If a statistic was estimated from different samples drawn from the same population of students the observed values for the statistic would vary from sample to sample. The extent to which this variation exists is expressed as the confidence interval. The 95 per cent confidence interval is the range within which the estimate of the statistic based on repeated sampling would be expected to fall for 95 of 100 samples drawn.

The magnitude of the confidence interval can be estimated using formulae based on assumptions about the distribution of the measure being considered (typically assuming a normal distribution), from modelling based on assumptions about the distributions of different levels of clustering in the sample or from empirical methods that examine the actual variation in the sample.

The survey sample design in this study involves clustering, stratification, and disproportionate allocation which means that it is not appropriate to use the

estimates of confidence intervals through standard software procedures because these generally assume a simple random sample and will therefore underestimate the real confidence intervals. The estimates of confidence intervals in this report are based on 'Jackknife' replication methods. In replication methods a series of sub-samples is derived from the full sample, and the statistic of interest is generated for each sub-sample (OECD, 2005:174 – 184). The variance is then estimated by calculating the variability in the estimate between these sub samples. This technique generates an estimate of the standard error of the estimate and the confidence interval is ± 1.96 times the standard error.

Concluding Comments

The National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship data were gathered from 7059 Year 6 students from 349 schools and 5506 Year 10 students from 269 schools. Sample weights were applied to the data so that the sample statistics accurately reflected population parameters. The sample design and procedures, and the high response rates, ensured that there was very little bias in the sample.

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

Chapter 4 describes the student profile for Year 6 and Year 10 students in terms of personal background characteristics such as student gender, parental occupation, language spoken at home, country of birth and geographic location and Indigenous status. Later analyses investigate the relationship between these characteristics and achievement in Civics and Citizenship.

Chapter 3

Describing the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

This chapter describes the development of the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, through psychometric analysis of the data and the establishment of the five proficiency levels and standards. In this chapter student achievement, at Year 6 and Year 10, is reported for Australia only. The achievement reported is at the level of the proficiency bands which form the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. From this data is developed a profile of student achievement in Civics and Citizenship. In the second part of this chapter the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale is described and illustrated with a selection of items from the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship 2007. Chapter 5 will provide details of the achievement distribution for each State and Territory. The items analysed and used to describe and illustrate student achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale are all release items (See Chapter 1).

Developing the Scale

To establish the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale the analysis that was conducted used the Rasch model. Rasch analysis produces information about the relative difficulty of items as well as information about students' abilities. (The Technical Report has more information about the model). Student responses to the items were analysed, using the model to establish and describe students' proficiency in Civics and Citizenship.

To assist with interpretation of the scores, the 2007 Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale was equated to that constructed in the first cycle of the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship in 2004, which had been standardised to have a mean score of 400 and a standard deviation of 100 for the national Year 6 sample, and to which the Year 10 mean was anchored. The mean for the national 2007 Year 6 sample was 405.0 with a standard deviation of 107.7, and the mean for the national Year 10 sample was 501.7, with a standard deviation of 120.6 which statistically indicates no change in the proficiency of students.

The proficiency levels

To describe student proficiency on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, the continuum was divided into five proficiency levels, ranging from ‘1’ (containing the least difficult items) to ‘5’ (containing the most difficult items). The proficiency levels and standards had been established in 2004, by a combination of experts’ knowledge of the skills required to answer each item and information from the analysis of students’ responses. The widths of the levels were set to be equal.

The location of a student at a particular proficiency level means that student was able to demonstrate the understandings and skills associated with that level and possessed the understandings and skills of lower levels. A student placed at a certain point on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale would most likely be able to successfully complete items at or below that location, and increasingly be more likely to complete items located at progressively lower points on the scale. But would be less likely to be able to complete items above that point, and increasingly less likely to complete items located at progressively higher points on the scale.

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

The proficient standards

In addition to deriving the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Proficiency Scale, Proficient Standards were established for each of Year 6 and Year 10. For the National Sample Assessment Program proficiency standards represent points on the proficiency scale that represent a ‘challenging but reasonable’ expectation for typical Year 6 and 10 students to have reached by the end of each of those years of study. A proficient standard is not the same as a minimum benchmark standard because the latter refers to the basic level needed to function at that year level

whereas the former refers to what is expected of a student at that year level. Thus the students need to demonstrate more than minimal or elementary skills to be regarded as having reached the standard appropriate to their year level.

The proficient standards are important because they provide reference points of reasonable expectation of student achievement on the scale, but also because the standards refer to Year 6 which is the penultimate or ultimate year of primary schooling, and Year 10. In some senses the standards can be considered as markers of Civics and Citizenship preparedness for students as they begin the transition to next stages of their educational or vocational lives.

The two Year 6 and Year 10 Civics and Citizenship Proficient Standards, were set in 2004. The proficiency standard for Year 6 was set at Level 2; defined as the boundary between levels 1 and 2 or a score of 405 on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. The proficiency standard for Year 10 was set at Level 3; defined as the boundary between levels 2 and 3 or a score of 535 on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale.

Students who exceeded the proficient standard for their year level showed exemplary performance. Students who did not achieve the proficient standard demonstrated only partial mastery of the skills and understandings expected. The proficient standard will be the main reference point for monitoring Civics and Citizenship in Australian schools over time.

Achievement at each of the proficiency levels

Student proficiency with respect to the skills and understandings described by the different levels of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale is shown in Table 3.1 and Figure 3.1.

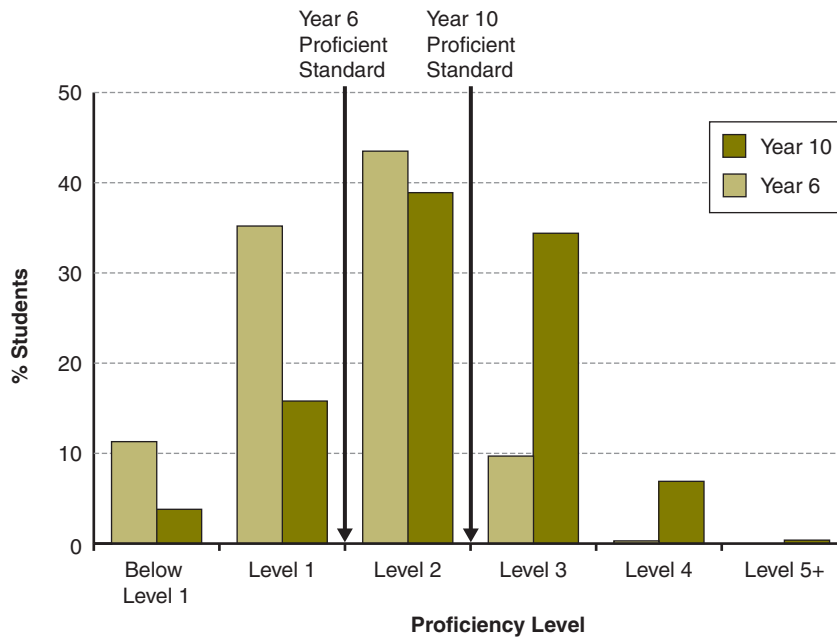
Table 3.1: Years 6 & 10 Achievement by Percentage by Proficiency Level in 2007

| 2007 | Below Level 1 | | Level 1 | | Level 2 | | Level 3 | | Level 4 | | Level 5+ | |
|---------|---------------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|----------|-----|
| | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI |
| Year 6 | 11.3 | 1.3 | 35.2 | 2.4 | 43.5 | 2.6 | 9.7 | 1.1 | 0.3 | 0.2 | – | – |
| Year 10 | 3.8 | 1.4 | 15.8 | 2.2 | 38.9 | 2.8 | 34.4 | 2.1 | 6.9 | 1.4 | 0.2 | 0.2 |

Note: Achievement is expressed as a percentage of the full student cohort at each year level.

Table 3.1 provides the percentage of Year 6 and Year 10 student in each proficiency level in 2007. Figure 3.1, which is a visual representation of the same data, plus an indication of the proficiency standards, displays results from an analysis of test items which were successfully completed by Year 6 and 10 students. It enables more comprehensive comparisons to be made.

Figure 3.1: Distribution of Year 6 and Year 10 Students, by Percentage, over Civics and Citizenship Proficiency Levels in 2007



Comparisons of student achievement by year and proficiency level in 2007

Table 3.1 and Figure 3.1 enable some comparison of these student data, as they show that a total of 54 per cent of Year 6 students reached or exceeded the Year 6 proficient standard, and a total of 41 per cent of Year 10 students reached or exceeded the Year 10 proficient standard. Figure 3.1 reveals there was considerable overlap in proficiency between the Year 6 and Year 10 populations. At Level 2, 44 per cent of the Year 6 students achieved at the same level as 39 per cent of the Year 10 students. And at Level 3, 34 per cent of the Year 10 students achieved at the same level as 10 per cent of the Year 6 students.

The data also indicate that although the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale scores of Year 6 and Year 10 students overlap there is also a good level of separation, with the Year 10 students clearly having a higher achievement in the upper levels. These between year level differences in the one assessment cycle suggest that the assessment items were satisfactorily pitched to the proficiency and student ability levels. This view is supported by the finding from Table 3.2 which shows the mean score for Year 10 students was much greater than that of Year 6 students.

Table 3.2: Mean Differential Performance Between Years 6 and 10 for All Students

| Assessment Cycle | Year 6 | | Year 10 | | Difference (Year 10 – Year 6) | |
|------------------|------------|-----|------------|-----|-------------------------------|------|
| | Mean Score | CI | Mean Score | CI | Mean Score | CI |
| 2007 | 405.0 | 5.5 | 501.7 | 8.6 | 96.7 | 10.9 |

Table 3.2 shows the average performance of Years 6 and 10 for all students surveyed in 2007. The difference in performance between the year levels is construed as ‘growth’ in proficiency between Years 6 and 10, and it was inferred from the differences observed between the Year 6 and Year 10 students who were assessed in 2007. The overall difference was 96.7 scale points, which is a significant difference.

Growth in Proficiency from 2004 to 2007

The data collected in the National Civics and Citizenship Sample Assessment in 2004 in Civics are taken to be the base from which future measurement of growth over time in student achievement in this area was to be constructed.

In addition to overlap in student achievement between year levels in the one assessment cycle described above, other differences in student achievement can be identified and described. Another is between year level difference across the cycles of assessment, (ie trends).

Table 3.3: Differential Performance Between Years 6 and 10 across assessment cycles

| Assessment Cycle | Year 6 | | Year 10 | | Difference (Year 10 – Year 6) | |
|------------------|------------|-----|------------|-----|-------------------------------|-------|
| | Mean Score | CI | Mean Score | CI | Mean Score | CI |
| 2004 | 400.0 | 6.7 | 495.8 | 7.0 | 95.8 | N/A * |
| 2007 | 405.0 | 5.5 | 501.7 | 8.6 | 96.7 | 10.9 |

**Note: The confidence interval for the difference between Year 10 and Year 6 was not calculated in 2004*

Table 3.3 shows the mean achievement scores, confidence intervals and difference between Year 10 and Year 6 mean scores for both assessment cycles (2004 and 2007) of the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship. The data indicate that from 2004 to 2007, mean scale scores improved for both Year 6 and Year 10; however, these differences were not significant. Year 10 improved more than Year 6 across cycles, with an improvement of approximately 6 scale points compared with 5 at Year 6. The table also indicates that the difference in mean performance between Year 10 and Year 6 remained stable across the 2004 and 2007 cycles.

Table 3.4 shows the 2007 percentages in each proficiency level for Year 6 and 10, with 2004 comparisons.

Table 3.4: 2007 Percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 Students at Each Proficiency Level on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, with 2004 comparisons

| 2007 | Below Level 1 | | Level 1 | | Level 2 | | Level 3 | | Level 4 | | Level 5+ | |
|---------|---------------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|----------|-----|
| | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI |
| Year 6 | 11.3 | 1.3 | 35.2 | 2.4 | 43.5 | 2.6 | 9.7 | 1.1 | 0.3 | 0.2 | – | – |
| Year 10 | 3.8 | 1.4 | 15.8 | 2.2 | 38.9 | 2.8 | 34.4 | 2.1 | 6.9 | 1.4 | 0.2 | 0.2 |

| 2004 | Below Level 1 | | Level 1 | | Level 2 | | Level 3 | | Level 4 | | Level 5+ | |
|---------|---------------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|----------|-----|
| | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI |
| Year 6 | 10.8 | 1.6 | 39.2 | 2.4 | 41.9 | 2.4 | 8.0 | 1.5 | 0.1 | 0.1 | – | – |
| Year 10 | 4.3 | 0.9 | 15.3 | 1.4 | 41.1 | 2.3 | 34.5 | 2.4 | 4.7 | 1.0 | 0.1 | 0.1 |

Table 3.4 shows that there was little change from 2004 to 2007 in percentages in the proficiency levels.

Describing the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

To elaborate the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, descriptions of the five proficiency levels were developed by examining the skills and understanding students needed to respond to the items in each proficiency level. Items which were located in the ‘band’ called ‘below Level 1’ and a description of that band are also reported. As part of the descriptive analysis in this chapter, the content and difficulty of items are examined and links to the Assessment Domain are established. Due to the equating methods used in the (data) analysis (see Technical Report), where an item was unlinked, the location on the scale of that item may be different for Year 6 and Year 10. A summary of the main characteristics of each of the six bands and the two Proficiency Standards is also provided.

The location of students at a particular proficiency level indicates they were able to demonstrate the understandings and skills associated with that level and additionally possessed the understandings and skills of lower levels.

In the descriptive analysis of item responses for each level on the scale which follows, the text will provide:

- the scale score range for items in the level;
- examples of items with typical student responses;
- information about the skills and abilities assessed by the example items, with references to the Assessment Domain;
- the percentage or proportion of students answering each selected item correctly or giving a particular level of response; and
- a summary of the item characteristics.

A table with the percentage correct, by score code level, of the sample items referenced in this chapter, is provided in Appendix 4.

The Assessment Domain contains two sub-dimensions of Civics and Citizenship Literacy: Civics (Knowledge and Understanding of Civic Institutions and Processes [KPM 1]) and Citizenship (Dispositions and Skills for Participation [KPM 2]). While these are generally understood to be different aspects of the field of Civics and Citizenship, they are sufficiently highly correlated in this assessment to be reported as a common scale. Therefore achievement is reported by the general Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale but in the following text some reference will be made to KPM 1 and KPM 2 in the context of the Assessment Domain.

Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale: Below Level 1

Items falling below Level 1 had a scale score of less than 275 (see Table 3.5). In 2004, there was only one item in this level for measuring student achievement. For the 2007 assessment new items appropriate to this level were developed, with the view of being able to better describe the skills and understandings of students whose scores were in this range. Compared with 2004, in 2007 there were many more items appearing in this level.

Analysis of student's responses in below Level 1

Items administered to students at both year levels appear in the below Level 1 band, typically referenced a single basic element of civic knowledge, are KPM1 items and are multiple choice. Some examples of the content of below Level 1 items, all with a multiple choice structure, follow.

The following single item unit is an example of those located in this lowest level on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale.

Figure 3.2: Choosing a Class Captain – Question 1

The final year students at Sugarhill Primary School want to choose a class captain.

Q Which of the following ways of choosing a class captain is democratic?

- choosing the person who the teacher suggests
- choosing the person who lives closest to the school
- choosing the person who gets the most votes from the class
- choosing the person who usually gets the highest marks on tests

The aspect of the Assessment Domain assessed by this question was:

- Recognise key features of Australian democracy (6.1)

Students were required to select the correct response; '*choosing the person who gets the most votes from the class*'. This response to the item was located at 191 on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, and it was provided by 88 per cent of the Year 6 students.

In the 2007 assessment it was found that most Year 6 students knew that in Australia everybody, not just Australian citizens, must obey the law, and that citizens become eligible to vote in federal elections at 18 years of age. Most Year 6 and Year 10 students knew that a process of voting which includes placing of completed ballot papers in a sealed ballot box is known as ‘secret ballot’. They also knew that the federal capital is in Canberra. Students at both year levels were able to identify that the wearing of a head scarf made of the Australian flag by some Muslim students indicated a sense of multiple identity in the wearer (The image associated with this item is shown in Figure 3.21 and is also on the front cover of this report). Analysis of this image was a much more complicated task and responses which achieved this will be discussed at Level 4.

Text Box 1: Below Level 1 Proficiency – Selected Item Response Descriptors

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

- Recognises that in ‘secret ballot’ voting papers are placed in a sealed ballot box (6.2,10.1)
- Recognises the location of the Parliament of Australia (6.3, 10.1)
- Recognises voting is a democratic process (6.1)
- Recognises Australian citizens become eligible to vote in Federal elections at 18 years of age (6.5)
- Recognises who must obey the law in Australia (6.1)

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

Summary characteristics of responses in below Level 1

Text Box 1 provides selected item response descriptors illustrative of the items corresponding to the below Level 1 band. It is evident that students responding at this level were able only to recognise or identify Civics and Citizenship concepts and facts at the most basic level. No interpretation was required.

Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale: Level 1

Level 1 corresponded to a scale score range of 275 to 404 (see Table 3.5).

Analysis of students’ responses in Level 1

Most items in this band were of multiple choice format, requiring only the correct response be selected from the other response options. There were also some constructed response items. All the open ended items at this level were scored at ‘1’ (i.e. at a lower level of the score guide). Some of them had higher score code levels that could be achieved by students, and these were located in higher bands. An analysis of some exemplar items which illustrate the skills and understandings appropriate to Level 1 follows.

Figure 3.3: Secret Ballot Unit – Question 2

| |
|--|
| <p>Q How does the secret ballot help to make sure that elections are democratic?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> Voters can change their mind up until when they cast their vote.<input type="radio"/> Voters can be confident they will vote for the person who will win.<input type="radio"/> Voters can feel free to vote for who they really want to represent them.<input type="radio"/> Voters are given the best chance to encourage others to vote the same way as them. |
|--|

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by this question were:

- Recognise key features of Australian democracy (6.1); and for Year 10 students it tests if they have ‘already achieved’ this civic knowledge.

This multiple choice item was administered at both Year 6 and Year 10. Students were required to select the response; ‘*Voters can feel free to vote for who they really want to represent them*’. This response to the item was provided by 75 per cent of Year 6 students and was located at 303 on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale for them. The response to the item was provided by 87 per cent of Year 10 students and was located at 278 on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale for them. This difference in location indicates that the Year 10 students found it slightly easier than the Year 6 students. Of course to select the correct answer implies that all the other response options are to be rejected, and the response options are quite challenging. It was pleasing to see that such a high proportion of students are clear about the role of secret ballot in democracy.

The Online Information Unit, administered at both year levels, had two items and an analysis of student responses to the first question, a multiple choice item, follows.

Figure 3.4: Online Information Unit – Question 1

| |
|---|
| <p>In 2000, the Government released the Government Online Strategy. This aims to give the public online (internet) access to information about government services.</p> |
| <p>Q The Government already provides the public with printed information about its services.</p> <p>Why would the Government also provide online (internet) access to that information?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> to make use of information software technology<input type="radio"/> to show that it is a modern and efficient government<input type="radio"/> to make information more widely available<input type="radio"/> to make it easier to control the information the public receives |

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by this question were:

- Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens in Australia’s democracy (6.5); and

- Understand the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a range of contexts (10.4)

Students were required to select the response; *'To make information more widely available'*. This response to the item was provided by 72 per cent of Year 6 students, and was located at 332 on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale in the Level 1 band.

The Global Citizen Unit, was a single-item unit with a constructed response (open-ended) format. It was administered at Year 10, and an analysis of student responses, which were located at Level 1, follows.

Figure 3.5: Global Citizen Unit – Question 1

The information below is taken from the AusAID website.

AusAID is the Australian Government agency responsible for managing Australia's overseas aid program. The objective of the aid program is to assist developing countries reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development, in line with Australia's national interest.

Q How can providing aid for neighbouring countries benefit Australia?

The aspect of the Assessment Domain assessed by this question was:

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

The responses which were acceptable were ones which referred to either the general benefit that comes from helping other countries or a benefit relating to Australia's social international relations/reputation. Students achieving this level of response wrote a response similar to *'It creates goodwill with our neighbours'* or *'It can make some countries want to trade with Australia'*. These responses were located at the top of the Level 1 band, at 395 on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, and 76 per cent of students achieved that score. Students who provided a vague or incoherent response or repeated the question (*'It's good for us to help them'*) did not score.

Other items which fall into this band required Year 10 students know the titles of persons in charge of the three levels of government in Australia. Year 6 students demonstrated that they knew Australian citizens had the right to *'serve on their local council for a year'*, but that they could not *'ignore laws which stop them from doing things they like'*, or *'use any public transport for free if they do not own a car'*.

Text Box 2: Proficiency Level 1 – Selected Item Response Descriptors

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

- Identifies a benefit to Australia of providing overseas aid (6.7, 10.6)
- Identifies one reason why a person may choose not to become a whistleblower (10.10)
- Recognises the purposes of a set of school rules (6.4)
- Recognises a benefit of information about government services being available online (6.5, 10.4)
- Matches the titles of leaders to the three levels of government (10.1)
- Describes, in a familiar school context, how a representative body can effect change (10.8)
- Recognises that ‘secret ballot’ contributes to democracy by reducing pressure on voters (6.1, 10.1)

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

Summary characteristics of Level 1 responses

Text Box 2 provides selected item response descriptors illustrative of the items corresponding to Level 1 proficiency. The content of the items was mostly concerned with civic institutions, or the processes civic institutions utilise. The items response options were marginally more complex than for the items in the below Level 1 band, or required a marginally more specific civic knowledge. Typically, students responded to open-ended items in a minimal way. They asserted rather than reasoned and their language was imprecise and generalised, indicating they had only a weak grasp of the point of the question and were possibly unsure of what was required.

Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale: Level 2

Level 2 had a scale score range of 405 to 534 (see Table 3.5). Two units (SRCs and Compulsory Voting) have been selected to illustrate Proficiency Levels 2 to 5, though additional items will also be included in the descriptive analysis of each of the following levels.

Analysis of students’ responses in Level 2

The items in Level 2 required relatively unsophisticated responses, which were however demonstrably more complex than those in Level 1. A detailed analysis of item responses, illustrating the skills and understandings of students described as Level 2 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, follows.

Figure 3.6: SRC Unit – Question 1

In many schools, students are encouraged to participate in Student Representative Councils (also known as SRCs).

An SRC is a group of students elected by their fellow students.

SRCs represent students in the school and provide ways for them to participate in school life.

(SRCs are sometimes called Junior Councils or Student Councils.)

Q What does the setting up of an SRC say about the way a school sees its students?

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by Question 1 were:

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

This unit was administered at both Year 6 and Year 10, and this question enabled students to respond at one of two levels. The simpler of the response, scored at ‘1’ was located in Level 2 at 443 for Year 10 students and at 460 for Year 6 students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. These responses typically recognised that such schools see students as having the appropriate characteristics and capacity to contribute to school governance: for example, ‘*Students are important, good, smart, trustworthy etc.*’. 25 percent of Year 6 and 24 per cent of Year 10 students were able to score this level of response. The more complex of the responses, scored at ‘2’ were located in Level 3

An analysis of student responses to the third question in the SRC unit follows:

Figure 3.7: SRC Unit – Question 3

Q At some schools, the SRC is also involved in activities outside school, such as:

- raising money for charities;
- visiting senior citizens’ homes; and
- representing the school at council tree planting days.

Why do you think SRCs are involved in these kinds of activities?

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by Question 3 were:

- Identify ways that Australian citizens can effectively participate in their society and its governance (6.8), and
- Analyse the role of a critical citizenry in Australia’s democracy. (10.8)

This item was administered to both Year 6 and Year 10 students and there were two score code levels. The simpler of the responses, scored at '1', were located for Year 6 at 438 on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale in Level 2. These responses typically suggested that at such schools the SRC do things that contribute to the community, but gave only limited or vague examples: for example, *'They can help other parts of society'*. Forty eight percent of Year 6 students were able to score this level of response as were over half of the Year 10 students. The more complex of the responses, scored at '2' were located in Level 4 for Year 6.

An analysis of student responses to Question 1 in the Compulsory Voting unit follows:

Figure 3.8 Compulsory Voting Unit – Question 1

| |
|--|
| <p>Australia is one of a few countries in which citizens are required by law to vote at elections. This is known as 'compulsory voting'.</p> |
| <p>Q What is the best reason you can think of in favour of compulsory voting?</p> <hr/> <hr/> |

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by the 3 items in this unit were:

- Outline the roles of political and civic institutions in Australia (6.3), and
- Understand the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a range of contexts (10.4)

This item was administered to both Year 6 and Year 10 students and it enabled students to respond at one of two score code levels. The simpler of the responses, scored at '1', was located for Year 6 at 529 and for Year 10 students at 418 in Level 2 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. These responses typically suggested that one advantage of compulsory voting was that it means the outcome of the election will be more representative: for example, *'so more people will have a say about who gets into government'*. 35 per cent of Year 6 and 63 per cent of Year 10 students were able to score this level of response. The more complex of the responses, scored at '2', were located just below and in Level 5 and these are discussed as part of the descriptive analysis at that point of this chapter.

An analysis of student responses to Question 2 in the Compulsory Voting unit follows:

Figure 3.9: Compulsory Voting Unit – Question 2

Q What is the best reason you can think of **against** compulsory voting?

This item sought a consideration of the inverse of Question 1, and Year 6 students found the mental gymnastics of this too challenging. But the Year 10 students were able to adjust their thinking to address both sides of this issue. The simpler of the responses to this item, scored at '1', were located for Year 10 students at 468 in Levels 2 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. These responses typically referred to a pragmatic reason against compulsory voting such as its cost, the difficulty of ensuing compliance, or the inconvenience to voters. Others did make a stab at a substantive reason: for example, '*because a majority of the population is enough to make a fair decision*'. One third of Year 10 students were able to score this level of response. The more complex of the responses, scored at '2' were located in Level 3, where the responses of a further one third of Year 10 students responses demonstrated a recognition of the tension existing between the democratic right to choose to vote and the element of compulsion, for example: '*it doesn't give people the right not to vote*'.

An analysis of student responses to Question 3 in the Compulsory Voting unit follows:

Figure 3.10: Compulsory Voting Unit – Question 3

Q Compulsory voting only means compulsory attendance at a polling booth on election day (or voting by post before the election). Voters do not have to show how they have marked the ballot paper.

Why is it important that voters do **not** have to show how they have marked the ballot paper?

Essentially this is a question about the purpose and importance of secret ballot. As described in the analysis for below Level 1, most students from both year levels know what secret ballot is. The stimulus in this item describes the process implemented to ensure a vote is secret and the question asked why such a process is important.

The simpler of the responses to this item, scored at '1', were located for Year 10 students at 428 in Level 2 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. These responses typically referred to voting as a private and/or personal matter, without linking it to democracy: for example, '*because it's no-one else's business*'. This level of response was achieved by 31 per cent of Year 6 students and 37 per

cent of Year 10 students. It would appear that the concepts associated with secret ballot and compulsory voting are comprehended by approximately one third of Australian students. Approximately a further third of students were able to provide an even more complex response, and these are discussed as part of the Level 3 descriptive analysis.

The Federal Budget Unit was a single-item unit with a multiple choice response format. It was administered at both Year 6 and Year 10, and an analysis of the student responses located at Level 2, follows.

Figure 3.11: Federal Budget Unit – Question 1

| |
|--|
| <p>In May every year the Federal Treasurer announces the Federal Budget.</p> |
| <p>Q What is the main purpose of the Federal Budget?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> to show how the government plans to raise and spend its income<input type="radio"/> to explain to Australians how they can best save and invest their own money<input type="radio"/> to show Australians how they can influence the way the government runs the country<input type="radio"/> to explain the reasons for any financial mistakes the government has made in the past year |

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by this item were:

- Understand the purposes and processes of creating and changing the rules and laws (6.4), and
- Recognise that perspectives on Australian democratic ideas and civic institutions vary and change over time. (10.1)

Students were required to select the correct response; *'to show how the government plans to raise and spend its income'*. This response to the item was provided by 67 per cent of the Year 10 students with it being located at 455 on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, which placed the item in the lower half of the band. Although 43 per cent of Year 6 selected the correct response, the item statistics indicated that they were confused by the response options, and so were unable to consistently reject them with confidence. This indicates Year 6 students' knowledge of the purpose of a government budget is uncertain regardless of their overall achievement.

Other items which were located in this band required from Year 10 students civic knowledge about the role of political parties in Australia, knowing that the benefit of having different parties was that it is more likely that a range of opinions would be heard in the parliament. A small majority of Year 10 students had a fair understanding of the benefits to government and individuals of having an independent ombudsman office. Year 6 students demonstrated that they understood examples of the way in which democratic process was based on respect and/or fairness, and they recognised that a federated nation is one which divides

the responsibilities for government between national and state parliaments. Students from both year levels identified that a referendum is held when citizens are required to vote about proposed changes to the Australian Constitution.

Text Box 3: Proficiency Level 2 – Selected Item Response Descriptors

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

- Recognises that a vote on a proposed change to the constitution is a referendum (6.1, 10.2)
- Recognises a benefit to the government of having an Ombudsman’s Office (6.4, 10.4)
- Recognises a benefit of having different political parties in Australia (6.3, 10.1)
- Recognises that legislation can support people reporting misconduct to governments (10.10)
- Identifies a principle for opposing compulsory voting (6.3, 10.4)
- Recognises that people need to be aware of rules before the rules can be fairly enforced (6.4)
- Recognises the sovereign right of nations to self-governance (10.6)
- Recognises the role of the Federal Budget (6.4, 10.1)
- Identifies a change in Australia’s national identity leading to changes in the national anthem (10.5)
- Recognises that respecting the right of others to hold differing opinions is a democratic principle (10.7)
- Recognises the division of governmental responsibilities in a federation (6.2)

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

Summary characteristics of Level 2 responses

A range of item descriptors corresponding to Level 2 proficiency is provided in Text Box 3. All the items in Text Box 3 represent responses which were scored at ‘1’. Some of them had a higher score code level that could be achieved/demonstrated, and these were located in higher bands. The responses in the text box and the preceding analysis indicate that the cognition and dispositions demonstrated, while not complex, were generally acutely and accurately made. Some capacity to interpret and reason within defined limits was also demonstrated in responses located in this band.

Responses illustrated the main distinguishing characteristics of the Year 6 Proficiency Level; that is the capacity to select correctly and apply the appropriate or correct concept, fact or aspect of a definition to a situation that was ‘known’, such as in the ‘SRC’ and ‘Voting’ units. Item responses in this band required some recognition be shown that change processes existed; that democracy need not be static.

Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale: Level 3

Level 3 corresponded to a scale score range of 535 to 664 (see Table 3.5). The items represented in this level required comparatively precise or detailed factual responses to complex Civics and Citizenship concepts or issues, and many involved the interpretation of information. Many of the items located in this band were scored at higher than the initial score code level in the score guide; that is they were scored ‘2’ rather than ‘1’.

Analysis of students' responses in Level 3

The following analysis of a sample of items illustrates the skills and understandings of students in Level 3 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale.

The first item to be considered at Level 3 is the more sophisticated of the two possible scored responses for the third question in the Compulsory Voting unit.

Figure 3.12: Compulsory Voting Unit – Question 3

| |
|---|
| <p>Q Compulsory voting only means compulsory attendance at a polling booth on election day (or voting by post before the election). Voters do not have to show how they have marked the ballot paper.</p> <p>Why is it important that voters do not have to show how they have marked the ballot paper?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |
|---|

The student responses which were scored at '1' were discussed previously in Level 2. The more complex of the responses, scored at '2', were located in Level 3 for Year 10. These students provided some elaboration to the basic recognition that secret ballot is crucial to fair and representative voting, referring, for example, to the need to be not open to influence: *'people's votes might change if they thought others knew them'*. Others referred to the benefit of avoiding civic disturbance, for example: *'so people don't argue about who they voted for'*. 29 per cent of Year 6 students and 41 per cent of Year 10 students were able to make such a response, which, when combined with those who provided responses at the Level 2, results in over two thirds of students at both year levels indicating they have a clear understanding of secret ballot and its role in the issue of compulsory voting.

The second item to be considered at Level 3 is the more sophisticated of the two possible scored responses for the first question in the SRC unit. The student responses which were scored at '1', were discussed previously in Level 2. A further analysis of student responses to the first question follows:

Figure 3.13: SRC Unit – Question 1

| |
|--|
| <p>Q What does the setting up of an SRC say about the way a school sees its students?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |
|--|

The more complex of the responses, which were scored at '2' were located for Year 6 and Year 10 students at 594 and 552 respectively on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale in Level 3. These responses typically recognised that such schools see students as being legitimate active participants in school governance: for example, *'Students have a role to play in the school'*. 25 percent of Year 6 and 53

per cent of Year 10 students were able to give this response. The responses and the achievement levels on this item point to an important understanding which half of the Year 10 students and a quarter of the Year 6 students demonstrate they have. They know that students can have a role in school governance, and that schools that set up SRCs are showing an interest in student participation in school decision-making.

The third item to be considered at Level 3 is the more sophisticated of the two possible scored responses for the second question in the SRC unit.

Figure 3.14: SRC Unit – Question 2

| |
|--|
| <p>Q SRCs are often involved in helping to improve school facilities, such as the playground.</p> <p>Explain the role an SRC could have in helping to improve a playground.</p> <hr/> <hr/> |
|--|

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by Question 2 were:

- Identify ways that Australian citizens can effectively participate in their society and its governance (6.8), and
- Analyse the role of a critical citizenry in Australia’s democracy. (10.8)

This item enabled students to respond at one of two levels. The simpler of the responses were located for Year 6 and Year 10 students in Level 1 and had consisted simply of examples of improvement activities. The more complex of the responses, scored at ‘2’ were located for Year 6 and Year 10 students at 657 and 625 respectively on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale in Level 3. These responses typically suggested a plausible general approach: for example, ‘*The SRC could help identify problems with the current arrangements*’. 18 per cent of Year 6 and 41 per cent of Year 10 students were able to give this response.

These sophisticated, generalised responses indicate that one in five Year 6 students and two in five Year 10 students are able to conceptualise an appropriately complex view of how SRCs can approach, and contribute to, school governance matters. Given the data generated from the Student Background Survey it would appear unlikely that such proportions of students, have had personal experience of working on an SRC on such matters. But still they can hypothesise what can be usefully contributed by them. Their positive views should encourage schools to formalise SRC arrangements and ensure that school governance is part of the SRC brief.

The fourth item to be considered at Level 3 is the less sophisticated of the two possible scored responses for the fourth question in the SRC unit.

Figure 3.15: SRC Unit – Question 4

| |
|---|
| <p>Q Many people believe that SRCs are important because they teach students valuable things about democracy.</p> <p>In your own words describe two important things about democracy that being on an SRC can teach a student.</p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> |
|---|

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by Question 4 were:

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

This item enabled students to respond at one of two levels. The simpler of the responses, scored at '1' were located for Year 6 students at 555 on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale in Level 3. These responses provided one important aspect of democracy that could be plausibly learnt from serving on an SRC: for example, *'How to represent ones peers, how to negotiate with authority, how to run meetings, how to get people to support your ideas and that voting can be used to elect leaders'*. Twenty-nine percent of Year 6 and 39 per cent of Year 10 students were able to score this level of response. The more complex of the responses, scored at '2', which required the provision of two aspects from the list, were located in Level 4 for both year levels.

The fifth item to be considered is the Year 6, KPM 2, single item Good Citizen unit.

Figure 3.16: Good Citizen Unit – Question 1

| |
|--|
| <p>Sam takes part in a peaceful protest against the government's decision to build a major road next to his home.</p> <p>His friend Judy says, 'You can't criticise the government and still be a good citizen.'</p> |
| <p>Q Sam replies, 'Of course you can. Good citizens should ...'</p> <p>Complete Sam's sentence.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |

The aspect of the Assessment Domain assessed by the question was:

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

This item required that students consider and attempt a definition of the ‘good citizen’ in the context of the scenario of a peaceful protest. The item was located at 547, near the bottom of the level, and 36% of Year 6 students provided such an answer. Students who provided an acceptable response referred to the importance, in democratic societies, of engaging with issues, but they needed to do more than refer only to free speech. Examples of such responses were: (‘Of course you can. Good citizens should ...’) ... *participate in discussion, be active in their community*’ or *‘not just accept things but question them’*. One strikingly clear response was: *‘I can still be a good citizen if I protest. I am just am showing what I think is right’*.

The sixth item to be considered in Level 3 is an item in the Independent Judiciary unit. This multiple choice item was administered at both year levels.

Figure 3.17: Independent Judiciary Unit – Question 1

The Australian Constitution includes measures to help protect the independence of the courts.

One way it does this is by protecting the salaries of judges. The Constitution states that:

- parliaments set the salaries of judges according to the courts they work in; and
- parliaments are **not** allowed to decrease the salaries of judges.

Q How does protecting judges’ salaries help make the courts independent?

- It prevents judges from being offered money by people wanting their help.
- It prevents judges from feeling that their decisions need to please the parliament.
- It means that judges can never ask to be paid more for their work.
- It means that all lawyers will want to become judges.

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by the question were:

- Understand the purposes and processes of creating and changing rules and laws (6.4), and
- Understand the role of law-making and governance in Australia’s democratic tradition. (10.3)

Students were required to select the correct response; *‘It prevents judges from feeling that their decisions need to please the parliament’*. This response to the item was provided by 50 per cent of the Year 10 students with it being located at 565 on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, which placed the item in the lower half of the band. Despite just over half of the Year 6 students selecting the correct response, as the item statistics indicated that Year 6 students as a group were confused by the incorrect response options and/or the conceptual demands were too great, and so they were unable to distinguish between them with confidence. This indicates Year 6 students’ understandings regarding the independence of the judiciary, and why it is important to the functioning of a democracy is not common at Year 6 and is not clearly conceptualised for half of the students at Year 10.

Other items which were located in this band indicated that many Year 10 students knew that the main role of lobby and pressure groups was to seek to influence government decisions. Almost half of the Year 10 students recognised that the responsibility for implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child rests with each signatory country. Two thirds of the Year 10 students were able to explain how a whistleblower was motivated by the common good. One quarter of the Year 6 students recognised that if so motivated, one could support a cause which did not explicitly affect oneself by signing a petition.

Text Box 4: Proficiency Level 3 – Selected Item Response Descriptors

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

- Analyses the common good as a motivation for becoming a whistleblower (10.10)
- Identifies and explains a principle for opposing compulsory voting (6.3, 10.4)
- Identifies that signing a petition shows support for a cause (6.8)
- Explains the importance of the secret ballot to the electoral process (6.3, 10.4)
- Recognises some key functions and features of the parliament (10.3)
- Recognises the main role of lobby and pressure groups in a democracy (10.1)
- Identifies that community representation taps local knowledge (6.8)
- Recognises responsibility for implementing a UN Convention rests with signatory countries (10.6)
- Identifies the value of participatory decision making processes (6.7, 10.7)
- Recognises a way that the independence of the judiciary is protected (10.3)
- Identifies the importance in democracies for citizens to engage with issues (6.7)

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

Summary characteristics of Level 3 responses

A range of item descriptors corresponding to Level 3 proficiency is provided in Text Box 4. Unlike the items referenced in Text Box 3, all the items in Text Box 4 represent responses which were scored at the highest score code level possible. Responses located in Level 3 dealt with much more complex concepts and issues than was the case with the items in Level 2, and additionally demonstrated greater precision and more detail.

Responses illustrated the main distinguishing characteristics of the Year 10 Proficiency Level; that is the capacity to undertake some interpretation or analysis of some key Civics and Citizenship concepts. They demonstrated precise cognition and dispositions which were occasionally insightful. Items at this level were commonly specific to the field of Civics and Citizenship, and having a constructed response format required a field-specific language. It is noteworthy that the language, in responding accurately and precisely, was used with much greater fluency than was evident at Level 3.

Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale: Level 4

Level 4 corresponded to a scale score range of 665 to 794 (see Table 3.5). Most items located in this level were scored at the upper scoring levels (that is, at '2' rather than '1'). They required accurate and detailed responses to complex Civics and Citizenship concepts or issues and most involved the interpretation of information, that is, understandings as well as knowledge.

Analysis of students' responses in Level 4

A detailed analysis of items illustrates the skills and understandings of students in Level 4 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. The first item to be considered at Level 4 is the more sophisticated of the two possible scored responses for the third question in the SRC unit.

Figure 3.18: SRC Unit – Question 3

| |
|--|
| <p>Q At some schools, the SRC is also involved in activities outside school, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• raising money for charities;• visiting senior citizens' homes; and• representing the school at council tree planting days. <p>Why do you think SRCs are involved in these kinds of activities?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |
|--|

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by Question 3 were:

- Identify ways that Australian citizens can effectively participate in their society and its governance (6.8), and
- Analyse the role of a critical citizenry in Australia's democracy. (10.8)

The simpler of the responses to this question scaled at Level 2, had typically suggested that at such schools the SRC do things that contribute to the community, but gave only limited or vague examples. The more complex responses, which were scored at '2', were located for Year 6 and Year 10 students at 777 and 794 respectively on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale in Level 4. These responses explicitly identified a relationship existing between the school and the community or described in explicit terms one that might exist: for example '*show their school is interested in more than just itself*' or '*to introduce students to different aspects of the community, so that the community can get behind the activities of the school*'. Eight percent of Year 6 students were able to give this response.

An analysis of responses by Year 10 students to the single multiple choice item in the Australian Constitution unit follows.

Figure 3.19: Australian Constitution Unit – Question 1

Q What is the Australian Constitution?

- the rules about how the major Australian political parties are run
- the policies of the Australian Federal government
- the framework for the ways Australia is governed
- all the laws that Australian citizens must obey

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by Question 1 was:


- Understand the ways in which the Australian Constitution impacts on the lives of Australian citizens (10.2).

In responding to this question students needed to be able to separate the response options which had been designed to test a range of possible purposes a national constitution might have, or roles it may play in a nation’s civic life. The fact that it is located at Level 4 indicates that the Year 10 students found it difficult, but 34 per cent of them were able to recognise the correct response was ‘*The framework for the ways Australia is governed*’. Conversely, it indicates that two thirds of Year 10 students could not recognise the correct response. Given that it is a definitional question, requiring only knowledge with no interpretation, it is clear that students have not been taught or at least have not learned this most basic information.

The next item to be considered at Level 4 is the more sophisticated of the two possible scored responses for the single constructed response item in the Hijab Wearers unit, administered to students at both year levels.

Figure 3.20: Hijab Wearers Unit – Question 1

The photograph below is of girls wearing the Australian flag as their hijab. A hijab is a scarf that many Muslim girls and women choose to wear.



Q What **attitudes** are these girls showing by using the Australian flag as their hijab?

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by Question 1 were:

- Recognise Australia is a pluralist society with citizens of diverse ethnic origins

- and cultural backgrounds (6.6), and
- Analyse how Australia’s ethnic and cultural diversity contribute to Australia’s democracy, identity and social cohesion (10.5).

The previously-mentioned responses located at below level 1, described the image as representing positive attitudes to either Muslim or Australian identity. These responses simply decoded the image in terms of smiling girls in some national mode. The more complex Level 4 responses analysed positive attitudes towards both a Muslim and Australian identity, for example; ‘*They are showing that they are proud to be Muslim Australians*’ or, ‘*They are happy to be Australian and Muslim*’ and also ‘*They are showing respect for Australian and Muslim people*’. These student responses indicate clarity about the concept of pluralism in the Australian identity and how it may be manifested. Such responses were located at 720 on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale and were made by 25 per cent of Year 10 students and fewer than 10 per cent of the Year 6 students.

An analysis of responses by Year 6 students to the single multiple choice item in the Australian Constitution unit follows.

Figure 3.21: Community Development Unit – Question 3

| |
|---|
| <p>Q Having young people from the Greensville area on the committee may benefit the community by helping the council to make better decisions about the park.</p> <p>What is one other benefit to the Greensville community of having young people from the Greensville area working on the committee?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |
|---|

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by Question 3 were:

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

Question 2 in this unit had asked how having young local people on a committee charged with developing a community park could contribute to better decisions. A third of students had typically responded with comments about how input from local or young members would bring more focussed input, and that response was located in Level 3.

Question 3 asks for another benefit of having young people on the committee, and there were two score code levels for measuring the responses and they were both located in Level 4.

The lower scores, achieved by 9 per cent of the students, were located at 679 and the more sophisticated, achieved by a further 4 per cent, were located at 766 on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. The ‘closeness’ of these scale points indicates there was only a small difference in ability between the students who achieved the two scores.

The responses scored at '1' identified a process which, by implication, could lead to a beneficial outcome, for example; *'people get involved'* and/or *'it shows others that it is good for the community'*. Some other score '1' responses focussed on the advantage for the young people referenced in the question, for example; *'Get them interested in committees maybe for when they are older'*.

More sophisticated responses identified the beneficial outcome, for the community of having local people involved, for example; *'People will be happier with the decisions if they're made locally/if they've had local input'* and/or *'It can help the community grow in every way'*. It was common for the responses to reference the need to deal with conflict on the committee. The overall result indicates that a least one eighth of Year 6 students have a sophisticated understanding of the ways in which managing personal differences in a community process is both necessary and possible, and that it can result in greater harmony. To have evidence of such understanding is pleasing and it demonstrates that students, when they are taught or experienced such processes can achieve high levels of citizenship knowledge and, perhaps by implication, competence.

Text Box 5: Proficiency Level 4 – Selected Item Response Descriptors

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

- Identifies and explains a principle that supports compulsory voting in Australia (6.3, 10.4)
- Identifies how students learn about democracy by participating in a representative body (6.7, 10.7)
- Explains a purpose for school participatory programs in the broader community (10.8)
- Analyses why a cultural program gained formal recognition (10.5)
- Provide a complex analysis of an image of multiple identities (6.6, 10.5)
- Identifies a reason against compulsion in a school rule (6.4)
- Explains a social benefit of consultative decision-making (6.9)
- Recognises a definitional description of the Australian constitution (10.2)
- Identifies that successful dialogue depends on the willingness of both parties to engage (10.6)

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

Summary characteristics of Level 4 responses

Students at Level 4, demonstrated clear and appropriate understandings, and, in responding with precision, they demonstrate a familiarity with most of the Civics and Citizenship concepts required by the Assessment Domain. This knowledge was supported and stretched to complex understandings and interpretations. Additionally, the responses at this level were clearly expressed, with the correct and specific terminology. Students at this level are dealing with high levels of conceptual complexity and competency, indicating that they have experienced clear and precise teaching, especially at Year 6.

Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale: Level 5

Level 5 corresponded to a scale score range of 795 and above (see Table 3.5). On a six band scale, this was the location of items that had the conceptual complexity to ‘stretch’ the highest-ability students in their demonstration of Civics and Citizenship understandings. As Table 3.1 and Figure 3.1 indicated early in this chapter, and as Figure 3.24 again reminds, very few Year 10 students were able to respond at this level, in fact just a little less than 0.2 of 1 per cent of the Year 10 cohort. However there are a number of items which Year 10 students were able to score which are located at this level and an analysis of some of them follows.

Analysis of students’ responses in Level 5

The items in Level 5 were conceptually very complex, requiring responses that demonstrated understandings and skills of the highest order. Only three items located at Level 5 are being released and analysis of them, with mention of others follows.

The first item to be considered is the more sophisticated of the two possible scored responses for the first question in the Compulsory Voting unit.

Figure 3.22: Compulsory Voting Unit – Question 1

| |
|---|
| <p>Q What is the best reason you can think of in favour of compulsory voting?</p> <hr/> <hr/> |
|---|

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by the 3 items in this unit were:

- Outline the roles of political and civic institutions in Australia (6.3), and
- Understand the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a range of contexts (10.4)

This item was administered to both Year 6 and Year 10 students and it enabled students to respond at one of two levels. The simpler of the responses had typically suggested one advantage of compulsory voting was an increase in the representativeness of the election outcome. One third of Year 6 students and two thirds of Year 10 students, respectively, had provided such responses, which were described at Level 2.

The more complex Year 6 and 10 student responses, scored at ‘2’, were located for Year 6 at 783 and for Year 10 in Level 5 at 860. These responses incorporated an explicit comment on the view underpinning the notion of compulsory voting of the high value of the vote or of voting, for example; *‘People can’t be pressured not to vote. Governments must allow everyone to vote’*. They also may have explicitly referred to the principle of how the compulsory nature of the process resulted

in an increase in the legitimacy of the outcome, for example; *'It makes people think more about it so they choose carefully and obey'*. Six percent of the Year 6 student responses were located at Level 4 for this item.

Ten per cent of the Year 10 students' responses were located at Level 5, and this difference in band location indicates that the Year 10 students found it significantly easier than the Year 6 students. The knowledge and understanding demonstrated by such responses is impressive, for both cohorts, but especially for the Year 6 students. Their grip on the ramifications of certain aspects of the important (and almost uniquely Australian) process of compulsory voting is really commendable. The fact that the testing year, 2007, was a federal election year may well have heightened students' appreciation of such issues, and their teachers may well have been able to interest them in such a 'dry' topic! For the benefit of Australian democracy, to the extent that compulsory voting is seen to be central to the workings of that democracy, it should be the goal of schools to ensure that more than a handful of their students have this understanding.

The last item to be analysed in this chapter is the second item in the Online Information Unit requiring a constructed response from students.

Figure 3.23: Online Information Unit – Question 2

| |
|--|
| <p>Q Government department websites often have the following features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• information about the government department and what it is doing;• links to other relevant and useful websites;• useful documents or files to download; and• contact details for the department. <p>How does a government department providing these features help people to be informed and active citizens?</p> <hr/> <hr/> |
|--|

The aspects of the Assessment Domain assessed by Question 2 were:

- Identify ways that Australian citizens can effectively participate in their society and its governance (6.8), and
- Analyse the role of a critical citizenry in Australia's democracy. (10.8)

This item was administered to both Year 6 and Year 10 students and it enabled students to respond at one of two levels. The simpler of the responses had typically referred to ease of access, suggesting the website could be used by citizens to collect information, for example: *'You can download reports of find out about policies'*. At Year 6 such a response was provided by 12 per cent of the students and 29 percent of the Year 10 students achieved this.

The more complex of the responses, scored at '2', were located in Level 5 for students of both year levels, at 839 on the scale. These responses incorporated an explicit comment about using the features of the website, or information from it, to engage in some form of civic action. These students indicated they understood that the purpose of a citizenry having access to government information is to enable

an active engagement with that information, for example; *'It helps because then the people know all that's going on and (can) voice their opinion too'* or, more specifically, *'You can find out more about an issue and then write to the minister about it'*. In referencing both **informed** and **active**, they demonstrated exactly what the Adelaide Declaration is seeking to have students learn, and that this National Assessment Program is seeking to find out about student understandings. That only 3 per cent of Year 6 and 8 per cent of Year 10 students were able to provide such a response, indicates that there is much still to achieve before the goal is reached.

Other items which were located in this band indicated that only a very small percentage of Year 10 students had complex understandings about international agreements, about how a nation's identity is reshaped over time in part by demographic changes in society as a result of immigration. They were also able to work with a complex concept of one principle of democracy. It is worthy of note that the upper score of '2' for an item on Anzac Day is located in this level, indicating, as was reported after the 2004 assessment, that student understanding of this event and its role in the nation's history and identity development is still poor.

Text Box 6: Proficiency Level 5 – Selected Item Response Descriptors

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

- Identifies and explains a principle that supports compulsory voting in Australia (6.3, 10.4)
- Recognises how government department websites can help people be informed, active citizens (6.8, 10.8)
- Analyses reasons why a High Court decision might be close (10.2)
- Explains how needing a double majority for constitutional change supports stability (10.2)
- Explains the significance of Anzac Day (6.6 & 10.5)
- Analyse the capacity of the internet to communicate independent political opinion. (10.8)
- Analyse the tension between critical citizenship and abiding by the law (10.10)

Note: Numbers refer to Assessment Domain descriptors by year level

Summary characteristics of Level 5 responses

By definition, Level 5 items were those the students found most difficult. Items in Level 5 were characterised as requiring accurate responses to very complex Civics and Citizenship concepts and underlying principles or issues in cases where the identification and interpretation of key information was important. Level 5 included the most difficult elements of the Assessment Domain, though, as in 2004, there were some surprises in what students found most difficult. The range and number of items in this level suggests that there is much still to be learnt by many students in the field of Civics and Citizenship.

Concluding Comments on the Descriptive Analysis of Student Responses

This descriptive analysis of student responses has mapped, described and analysed the differences in student achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. It referenced the five Proficiency Levels and provided examples of items

and the student responses mapped to these six bands. The descriptive analysis of student responses to the assessment items has demonstrated what students in Years 6 and 10 knew, understood and could do in relation to the concepts, knowledge and dispositions outlined in the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship Assessment Domain for 2007.

A summary of the item descriptors, by proficiency level, based on the descriptive analysis of student responses, is provided by Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Summary Table of Civics and Citizenship Proficiency Levels by Item Descriptors

| Level scale range | Proficiency level description | Selected item response descriptors |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Level 5 ≥795 | Students working at Level 5 demonstrate accurate civic knowledge of all elements of the Assessment Domain. Using field-specific terminology, and weighing up alternative views, they provide precise and detailed interpretative responses to items involving very complex Civics and Citizenship concepts and also to underlying principles or issues. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies and explains a principle that supports compulsory voting in Australia Recognises how government department websites can help people be informed, active citizens Analyses reasons why a High Court decision might be close Explains how needing a double majority for constitutional change supports stability Explains the significance of Anzac Day Analyse the capacity of the internet to communicate independent political opinion. Analyse the tension between critical citizenship and abiding by the law |
| Level 4 665–794 | Students working at Level 4 consistently demonstrate accurate responses to multiple choice items on the full range of complex key Civics and Citizenship concepts or issues. They provide precise and detailed interpretative responses, using appropriate conceptually-specific language, in their constructed responses. They consistently mesh knowledge and understanding from both Key Performance Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies and explains a principle that supports compulsory voting in Australia Identifies how students learn about democracy by participating in a representative body Explains a purpose for school participatory programs in the broader community Explains a social benefit of consultative decision-making Analyses why a cultural program gained formal recognition Analyses an image of multiple identities Identifies a reason against compulsion in a school rule Recognises the correct definition of the Australian constitution Identifies that successful dialogue depends on the willingness of both parties to engage |
| Level 3 535–664 | Students working at Level 3 demonstrate relatively precise and detailed factual responses to complex key Civics and Citizenship concepts or issues in multiple choice items. In responding to open-ended items they use field-specific language with some fluency and reveal some interpretation of information. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyses the common good as a motivation for becoming a whistleblower Identifies and explains a principle for opposing compulsory voting Identifies that signing a petition shows support for a cause Explains the importance of the secret ballot to the electoral process Recognises some key functions and features of the parliament Recognises the main role of lobby and pressure groups in a democracy Identifies that community representation taps local knowledge Recognises responsibility for implementing a UN Convention rests with signatory countries Identifies the value of participatory decision making processes Identifies the importance in democracies for citizens to engage with issues |

| Level scale range | Proficiency level description | Selected item response descriptors |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Level 2 405–534 | Students working at Level 2 demonstrate accurate factual responses to relatively simple Civics and Citizenship concepts or issues in responding to multiple choice items and show limited interpretation or reasoning in their responses to open-ended items They interpret and reason within defined limits across both Key Performance Measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises that a vote on a proposed change to the constitution is a referendum • Recognises a benefit to the government of having an Ombudsman’s Office • Recognises a benefit of having different political parties in Australia • Recognises that legislation can support people reporting misconduct to governments • Identifies a principle for opposing compulsory voting • Recognises that people need to be aware of rules before the rules can be fairly enforced • Recognises the sovereign right of nations to self-governance • Recognises the role of the Federal Budget • Identifies a change in Australia’s national identity leading to changes in the national anthem • Recognises that respecting the right of others to hold differing opinions is a democratic principle • Recognises the division of governmental responsibilities in a federation |
| Level 1 275–404 | Students working at Level 1 demonstrate a literal or generalised understanding of simple Civics and Citizenship concepts. Their cognition in responses to multiple choice items is generally limited to civics institutions and processes. In the few open-ended items they use vague or limited terminology and offer no interpretation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies a benefit to Australia of providing overseas aid • Identifies a reason for not becoming a whistleblower • Recognises the purposes of a set of school rules • Recognises one benefit of information about government services being available online • Matches the titles of leaders to the three levels of government • Describes how a representative in a school body can effect change • Recognises that ‘secret ballot’ contributes to democracy by reducing pressure on voters |
| Below Level 1 <275 | Students working at below Level 1 are able to locate and identify a single basic element of civic knowledge in an assessment task with a multiple choice format. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises that in ‘secret ballot’ voting papers are placed in a sealed ballot box • Recognises the location of the Parliament of Australia • Recognises voting is a democratic process • Recognises Australian citizens become eligible to vote in Federal elections at 18 years of age • Recognises who must obey the law in Australia |

A Profile of Civics and Citizenship Literacy

The descriptive analysis by scaled score undertaken in the previous part of this chapter creates a rich and nuanced picture of student achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. But there is a more succinct way of reporting Civics and Citizenship literacy overall; one which would allow for comparisons of different groups of students. On the basis of the descriptive analysis by scaled score exercise, it is possible to develop a profile of Australian students’ Civics and Citizenship literacy, in terms of proficiency levels.

In this instance five proficiency levels were defined and descriptions were developed to characterise typical student performance at each level. The percentage of students in each proficiency level could then be calculated. The levels and the percentage in each level can be used to summarise the performance of students overall, to compare performances across subgroups of students, and to compare average performances among groups of students (and results of work such as this will be reported in Chapter 4 of this report.). The proficiency levels are set out in

Figure 3.24, and were previously referenced in Table 3.1 and Figure 3.1.

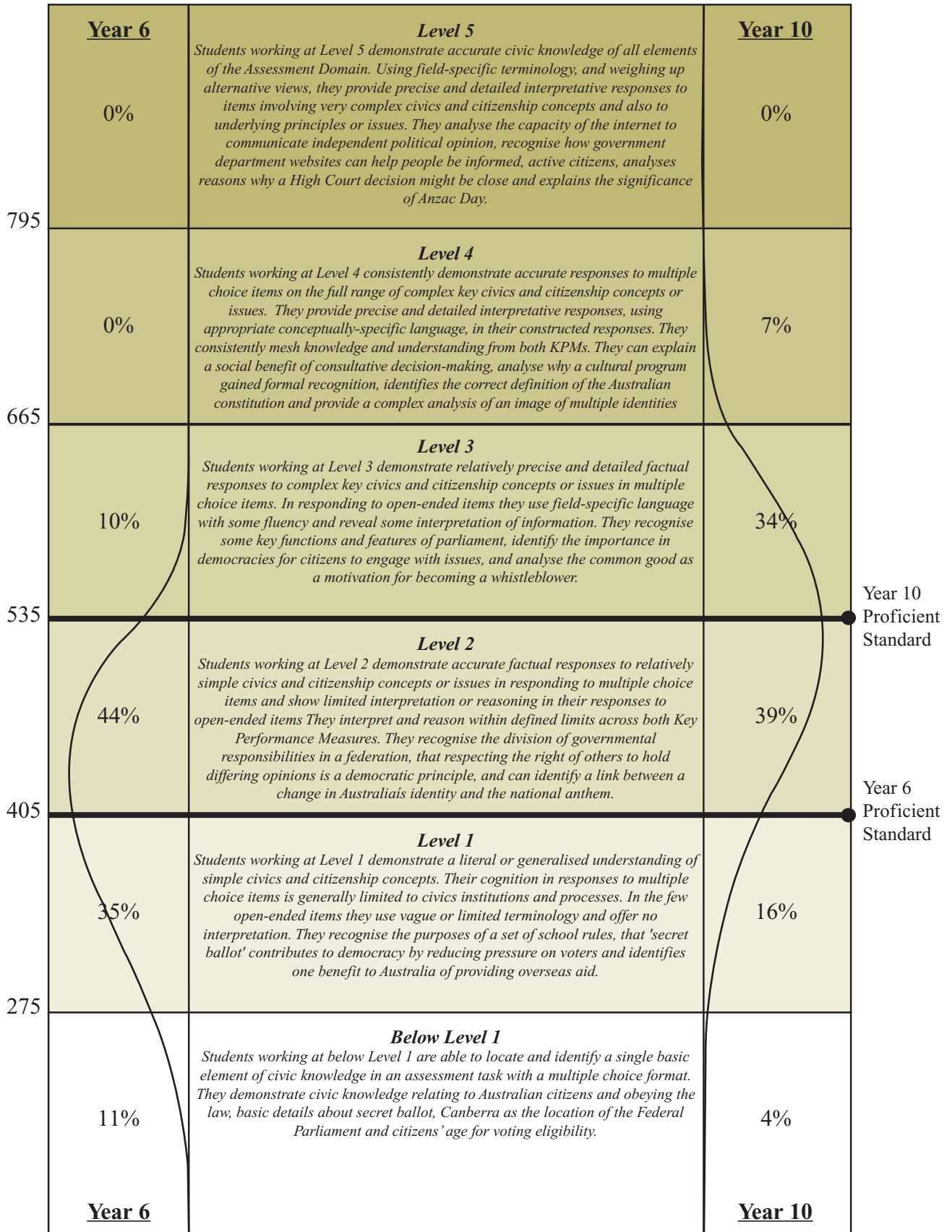
To form the proficiency levels, the continuum of increasing Civics and Citizenship literacy was initially divided into five levels, each representing an equal range of student ability/item difficulty on the scale. Necessity in the 2004 cycle of assessment and again in 2007 required the addition of the below Level 1 band, resulting in six bands in total. The profile has the bottom and top bands being unbounded.

The creation of performance levels involves assigning a range of values on the continuous scale to a single level. A procedure similar to that used in the PISA study was adopted (OECD, 2005). Students were assigned to the highest level for which they would be expected successfully to complete the majority of assessment items. If items were spread uniformly across a level, a student near the bottom of the level would be expected successfully to complete at least half of the assessment items from that level. Students at progressively higher points in that level would be expected to correctly answer progressively more of the questions in that level.

Information about the items in each level from earlier in this chapter was used to develop summary descriptions of Civics and Citizenship associated with different levels of proficiency. These summary descriptions are then used to encapsulate Civics and Citizenship literacy of students associated with each level. As a set, the descriptions encapsulate a representation of growth in Civics and Citizenship literacy.

Figure 3.24 contains summary information about the score range for each proficiency level on the Civics and Citizenship literacy scale and the percentage of Year 6 and Year 10 students in each proficiency level. The figure shows the distribution of Year 6 and Year 10 scores on the scale against the proficiency levels. Level cut points are shown on the left of the figure. The Year 6 and Year 10 Proficient Standards are marked and named on the right hand side of the figure. It characterises the skills and understandings students needed to successfully demonstrate each of the levels.

Figure 3.24: Civics and Citizenship Literacy Profile for Years 6 and 10



Note: The percentages for this figure have been rounded.

Concluding Comments

Student responses to the items that made up the various modules in the Civics and Citizenship assessment were manifestations of a single underlying dimension of Civics and Citizenship literacy. Those items formed a scale that ranged from less to greater Civics and Citizenship literacy that could be measured reliably. In 2004 the scale was standardised so that the mean score for Year 6 was 400 and the standard deviation for Year 6 was 100 points, and to which the Year 10 mean was anchored. In 2007 the mean score for Year 6 was 405 and the standard deviation for Year 6 was 107.7 points. Students from Year 10 recorded a mean score of 501.7, with a standard deviation of 120.6 points on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. The difference between the Year 6 and Year 10 mean scores was 96.7 scale points and this indicates no change in relative achievement of the Year 6 and Year 10 students from 2004 to 2007.

The Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale was described in terms of six described proficiency bands that provide a profile of progress in Civics and Citizenship literacy from students at below Level 1 who *'are able to locate and identify a single basic element of civic knowledge in an assessment task with a multiple choice format'* to students at Level 5 who *'demonstrate accurate civic knowledge of all elements of the Assessment Domain. Using field-specific terminology, and weighing up alternative views, they provide precise and detailed interpretative responses to items involving very complex Civics and Citizenship concepts and also to underlying principles or issues'*.

Fifty four per cent of Year 6 students reached or exceeded the Year 6 proficient standard of Level 2 in their ability to *'demonstrate accurate factual responses to relatively simple Civics and Citizenship concepts or issues in responding to multiple choice items and show limited interpretation or reasoning in their responses to open-ended items They interpret and reason within defined limits across both Key Performance Measures'*.

Forty one per cent of Year 10 students reached or exceeded the Year 10 proficient standard of Level 3 in their ability to *'demonstrate relatively precise and detailed factual responses to complex key Civics and Citizenship concepts or issues in multiple choice items. In responding to open-ended items they use field-specific language with some fluency and reveal some interpretation of information'*.

Chapter 4 describes patterns of achievement across the States and Territories and according to student background variables. Chapter 5 describes student participation in Civics and Citizenship activities in and out of school and the relationship of participation with achievement.

Chapter 4

Patterns in Student Achievement in Civics and Citizenship Literacy

Chapter 3 reported the development of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale and the proficiency levels and described student achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. From studies of student achievement in other fields, it is known that achievement is influenced by many factors: age, level of schooling, amount of time (years) at school, gender, socioeconomic background, language background, geographic location, opportunity to learn, interest and participation in related activities. Students come from a wide range of backgrounds and experience a range of learning environments, and it is important to understand the extent to which these factors affect their achievements.

This chapter examines the relationship between students' performance in the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship, and their civic experiences and personal and family backgrounds. The first section of the chapter focuses on differences in proficiency between students across the States and Territories and between students in Year 6 and Year 10. The second examines the relationship between students' performance and each of the individual background characteristics about which information was collected in the Student Background Survey. It should be noted that, due to the amount of missing data for some Year 6 student background variables, only Year 10 results will be presented for those characteristics.

As part of the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship, students completed a background survey. A discussion of some aspects of the Student Background Survey was conducted in Chapter 2. The discussion in Chapter 2 related to the information collected about students' gender, age, Indigenous status,

language background, school location and family background. Chapter 4 concludes with a brief report of findings of regression analyses of the combined influence of the background characteristics on students' proficiency in civics and citizenship.

Performance in Civics and Citizenship Literacy between States and Territories

Chapter 3 provided information on the distribution of student achievement by year level. The first part of this chapter focuses on student achievement across the States and Territories.

Year 6 and Year 10 Mean Distribution by State and Territory

Table 4.1 records the Civics and Citizenship Literacy mean score for each State and Territory, together with the 95 per cent confidence interval that indicates the level of accuracy with which the mean was measured.

Table 4.1: Year 6 and Year 10 Means and Confidence Intervals for Civics and Citizenship Literacy, Nationally and by State and Territory

| State or Territory | Year 6 | | Year 10 | |
|--------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|---------------------|
| | Mean Score | Confidence Interval | Mean Score | Confidence Interval |
| NSW | 432.4 | 11.0 | 529.0 | 17.0 |
| VIC | 418.4 | 10.1 | 493.8 | 17.1 |
| QLD | 376.2 | 13.5 | 480.8 | 13.9 |
| SA | 384.5 | 15.1 | 504.8 | 23.4 |
| WA | 369.0 | 10.9 | 477.6 | 22.6 |
| TAS | 400.8 | 17.7 | 484.5 | 16.0 |
| NT | 266.0 | 32.8 | 463.7 | 38.1 |
| ACT | 425.4 | 20.5 | 523.2 | 19.6 |
| AUST | 405.0 | 5.5 | 501.7 | 8.6 |

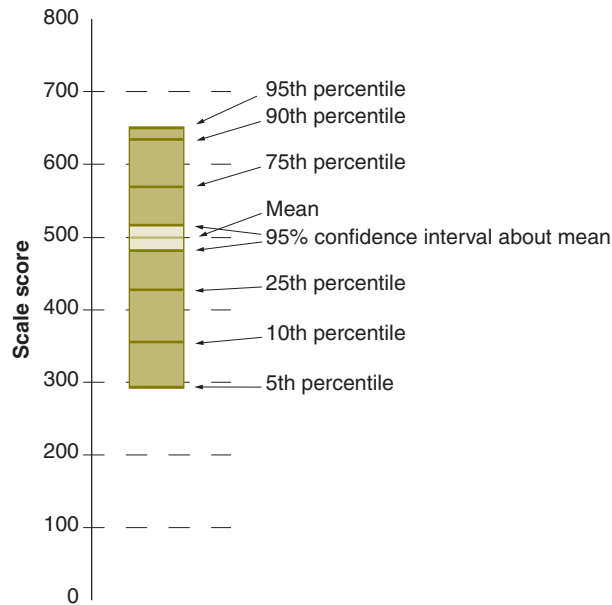
Note: The Northern Territory sample includes very remote schools, to better reflect its whole school population (see Technical Report).

Differences in the confidence intervals in Table 4.1 reflect differences in sample sizes for jurisdictions as well as differences in the variation within jurisdictions. (See Table 2.1 for sampling and participation rates.) The larger confidence intervals for the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory (followed closely by Tasmania) reflect the smaller sample sizes for those jurisdictions. For the Northern Territory the effect of the smaller sample size is compounded by the large variation in scores within the jurisdiction.

Representation of State and Territory Distributions on Bar Charts

Figure 4.1 is an example of a bar chart which is a display format which will be used in this chapter to show the scaled means and distributions for States and Territories at the two year levels.

Figure 4.1: Example of a Bar Chart



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

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

In technical terms, the pale band represents a region of about two 'standard errors' (SE) of the mean on either side of it. Each State and Territory's result was an estimate of the total population value, inferred from the result obtained by the sample of students tested. Because it was an estimate, it was subject to uncertainty. If the mean scores were estimated from different samples drawn from the same population of students, the actual results for the mean would vary a little. However, the reader may be confident that the population mean lies between the value obtained and about two SE (actually 1.96) on either side of it.

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

The pale bands (confidence intervals) vary in size from one State and Territory

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

The bar charts can be used to determine visually whether one State or Territory's mean score is significantly different from that of another. As a rule of thumb, differences that are significant are those for which the confidence intervals do not overlap.

Multiple Comparisons of Jurisdictional Means for Year 6 and 10

Figures 4.2 and 4.3, and Tables 4.2 and 4.3 enable comparisons of State and Territory mean achievement for the two year levels to be made. For these figures and tables, the jurisdictions are listed in order of their mean scores on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, and a State or Territory's performance can be compared with that of the others by reading across the appropriate row.

As this report uses estimates of population results inferred from the results achieved by the samples of students tested, apparent differences between the mean scores of the jurisdictions may not be statistically significant. In Tables 4.2 and 4.3, the arrows show whether a mean score for one State or Territory is significantly lower, as opposed to not statistically different from or significantly higher than a mean score of another State or Territory.

However, when making multiple comparisons (that is, comparing the performance of one jurisdiction with those of all the others), a more cautious approach is required. Multiple comparison significance tests that limit the probability of mistakenly finding a difference in performance to 5 per cent were applied (Bonferroni Adjustment). All data reported in this chapter are Bonferroni tested. Tables 4.2 and 4.3 report the comparative, across jurisdictional, data that, according to the Bonferroni tests, were statistically significant.

Comparison of Year 6 Mean Distributions

Figure 4.2 shows the Year 6 student performance for each State and Territory and nationally for 2004 and 2007. At the base of the figure are displayed their means and confidence intervals. The figure shows that in 2007 although there was some variation in mean score and spread of scores across the jurisdictions, there were more similarities than differences in performance.

Figure 4.2: 2004 and 2007 Year 6 Student Achievement, Nationally and by State and Territory, on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale – Means, Confidence Intervals and Percentiles

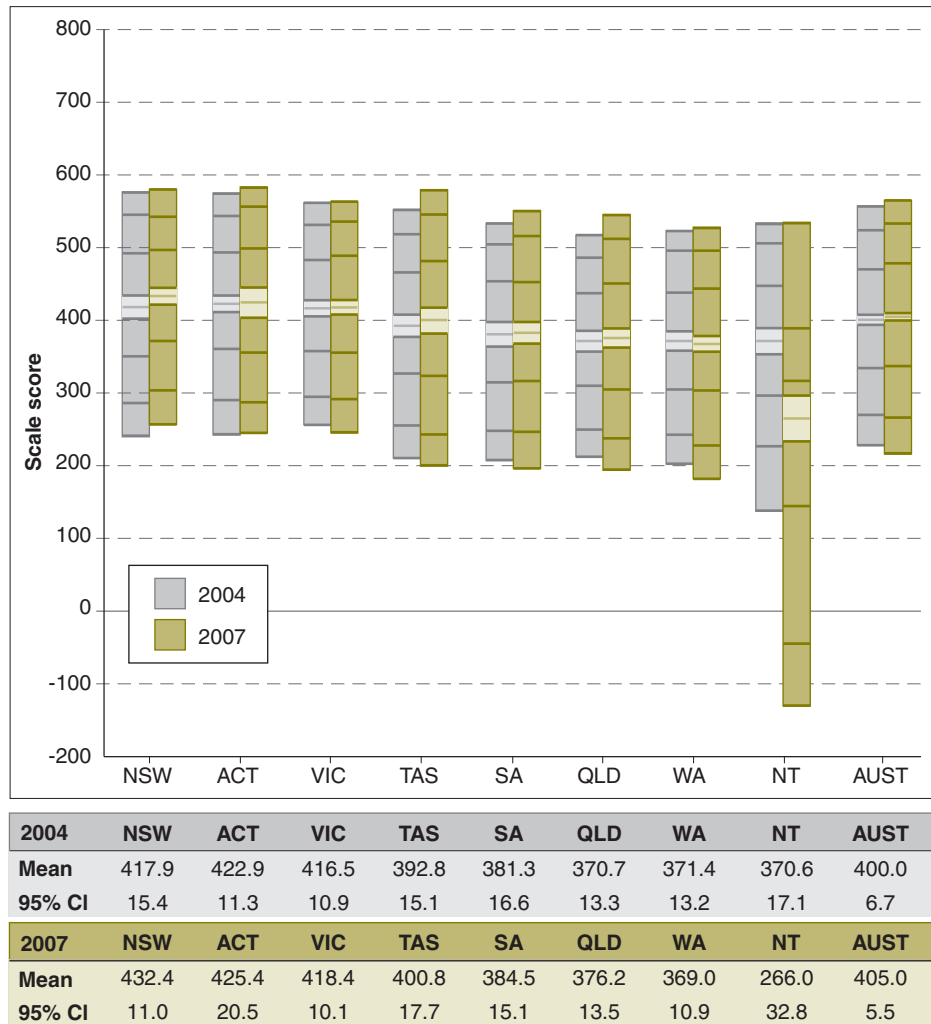


Figure 4.2 shows the spread of scores achieved by the middle 90 per cent of Year 6 students (those between the 5th and 95th percentiles) across Australia was approximately 345 scale points. The Northern Territory had the widest spread of scores (with a range of about 664 scale points). Most jurisdictions had ranges of between about 320 and 350 scale points. Victoria and New South Wales had the smallest spreads, with ranges of approximately 320 scale points.

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

In terms of 2004 to 2007 trends, it should be noted that Year 6 students in New South Wales achieved the highest mean of all jurisdictions (however, this was not a significant improvement from 2004). Additionally, the achievement of students

from Queensland exceeded that of Western Australia (also a positive, although not statistically significant, change from 2004). Most jurisdictions achieved a slightly higher mean than in 2004. The Northern Territory's mean achievement was significantly lower than in 2004, which is not unexpected, given the inclusion of the larger number of remote schools participating in the assessment in 2007.

Comparison of Year 6 Mean Scores

Table 4.2 describes the same trends in student proficiency as those discussed for Figure 4.2 and shows performance data for Year 6 students from each State and Territory by actual scaled mean achievement score and with its 95 per cent confidence interval. The jurisdictions are listed in order of their mean scores on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, and a State or Territory's performance can be compared with that of the others by reading across the appropriate row.

Table 4.2: Multiple Comparisons of Year 6 Mean Performance on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale between States and Territories

| | | | NSW | ACT | VIC | TAS | SA | QLD | WA | NT |
|------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | Mean | 432.4 | 425.4 | 418.4 | 400.8 | 384.5 | 376.2 | 369.0 | 266.0 |
| | | 95% CI | 11.0 | 20.5 | 10.1 | 17.7 | 15.1 | 13.5 | 10.9 | 32.8 |
| Mean | 95% CI | | | | | | | | | |
| NSW | 432.4 | 11.0 | | ● | ● | ^ | ^ | ^ | ^ | ^ |
| ACT | 425.4 | 20.5 | ● | | ● | ● | ^ | ^ | ^ | ^ |
| VIC | 418.4 | 10.1 | ● | ● | | ● | ^ | ^ | ^ | ^ |
| TAS | 400.8 | 17.7 | ∨ | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ^ | ^ |
| SA | 384.5 | 15.1 | ∨ | ∨ | ∨ | ● | | ● | ● | ^ |
| QLD | 376.2 | 13.5 | ∨ | ∨ | ∨ | ● | ● | | ● | ^ |
| WA | 369.0 | 10.9 | ∨ | ∨ | ∨ | ∨ | ● | ● | | ^ |
| NT | 266.0 | 32.8 | ∨ | ∨ | ∨ | ∨ | ∨ | ∨ | ∨ | |

Note: The Northern Territory sample includes very remote schools, to better reflect its whole school population (see Technical Report).

Legend

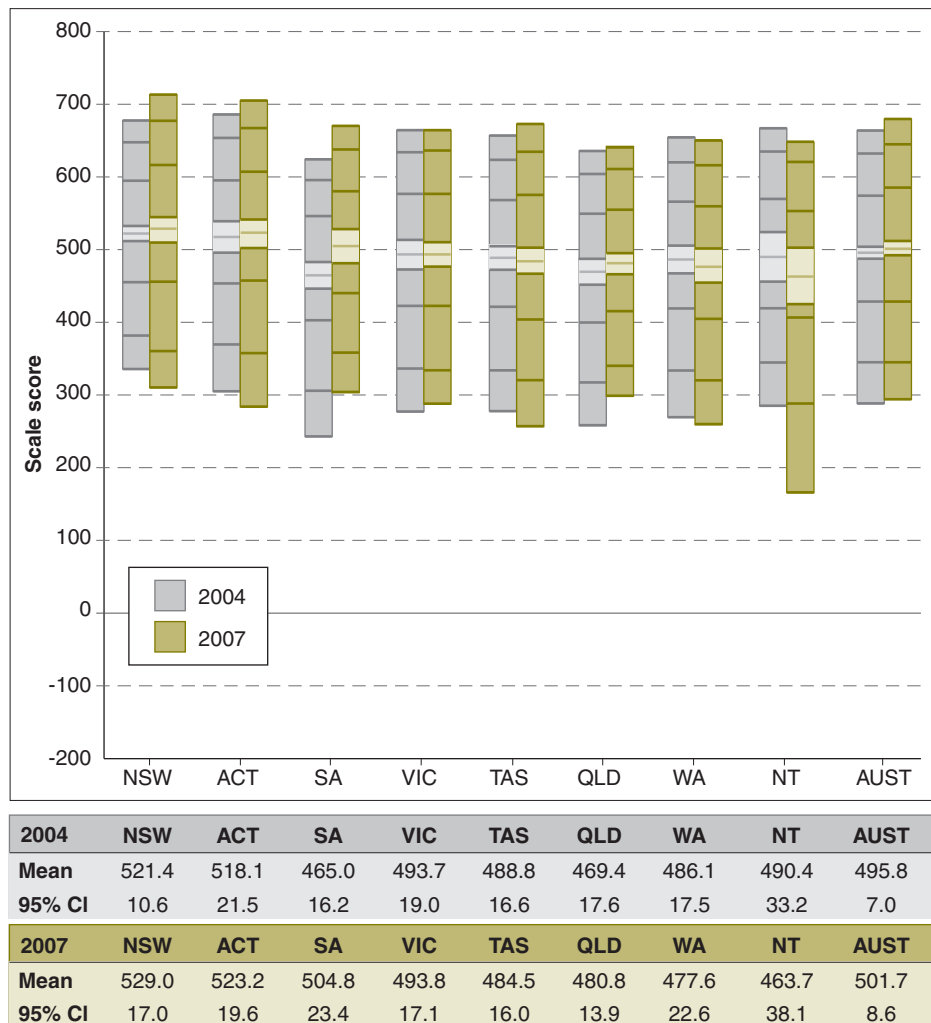
| With the Bonferroni Adjustment | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| ^ | Mean scale score statistically significantly higher than in comparison State/Territory |
| ● | No statistically significant difference from comparison State/Territory |
| ∨ | Mean scale score statistically significantly lower than in comparison State/Territory |

Students in New South Wales achieved a significantly higher mean score than those from Tasmania, South Australia, Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. Students in the Australian Capital Territory achieved a significantly higher mean score than did those in South Australia, Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory, and students in Victoria achieved a significantly higher mean score than did those in South Australia, Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory achieved a significantly lower mean score than all other states.

Comparison of Year 10 Mean Distributions

Figure 4.3 shows the Year 10 student performance for each State and Territory and nationally for 2004 and 2007. As was apparent with the Year 6 results, the variations in performance between the jurisdictions were relatively small. At the base of the figure are displayed their means and confidence intervals.

Figure 4.3: 2004 and 2007 Year 10 Student Achievement, Nationally and by State and Territory, on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale – Means, Confidence Intervals and Percentiles



It can be seen from Figure 4.3 that the Northern Territory had the widest spread of scores achieved by the middle 90 per cent of Year 10 students (those between the 5th and 95th percentiles), a range of about 484. The spread for Australia as a whole was approximately 386. Queensland had the smallest spread of 343.

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

Besides the obvious difference in mean scores, the chief difference between Year 6 and Year 10 achievement, as shown in Figures 4.2 and 4.3 is that the spread of scores was greater at Year 10 than it was at Year 6 and the ‘tail’ was far longer at Year 10, indicating that lower-performing students were further behind the rest of the students at Year 10 than they were at Year 6.

In terms of 2004 to 2007 trends in achievement, South Australia achieved the third highest mean score (a significant improvement of two places from 2004), with Victoria having the fourth highest mean, (falling one place from 2004), followed by Tasmania (improving one place). Queensland and Western Australia swapped positions from 2004 to 2007, with Queensland achieving a higher ranking than Western Australia in 2007. The Northern Territory’s position remained the same, although the average achievement had decreased from 2004, (although not significantly).

Comparison of Year 10 Mean Scores

Table 4.3 describes the same trends in student proficiency as those discussed for Figure 4.3 and shows performance data for Year 10 students from each State and Territory by scaled mean achievement score and with its 95 per cent confidence interval. The jurisdictions are listed in order of their mean scores on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, and a State or Territory’s performance can be compared with that of the others by reading across the appropriate row.

Table 4.3: Multiple Comparisons of Year 10 Mean Performance on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale between States and Territories

| | | | NSW | ACT | SA | VIC | TAS | QLD | WA | NT |
|-----|-------------|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Mean | | 529.0 | 523.2 | 504.8 | 493.8 | 484.5 | 480.8 | 477.6 | 463.7 |
| | Mean | 95% CI | 17.0 | 19.6 | 23.4 | 17.1 | 16.0 | 13.9 | 22.6 | 38.1 |
| NSW | 529.0 | 17.0 | | ● | ● | ∧ | ∧ | ∧ | ∧ | ∧ |
| ACT | 523.2 | 19.6 | ● | | ● | ● | ∧ | ∧ | ∧ | ∧ |
| SA | 504.8 | 23.4 | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| VIC | 493.8 | 17.1 | ∨ | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| TAS | 484.5 | 16.0 | ∨ | ∨ | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| QLD | 480.8 | 13.9 | ∨ | ∨ | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● |
| WA | 477.6 | 22.6 | ∨ | ∨ | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● |
| NT | 463.7 | 38.1 | ∨ | ∨ | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | |

Note: The Northern Territory sample includes very remote schools, to better reflect its whole school population (see Technical Report).

Legend

With the Bonferroni Adjustment

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

Table 4.3 shows students in the New South Wales achieved a significantly higher mean score than did those in Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. Students in the Australian Capital Territory achieved a significantly higher mean score than Tasmania, Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. There were no significant differences between any of the other pairings of jurisdictions.

Comparison of Year 6 and Year 10 Percentages in Proficiency Levels

The information in this section draws on the distribution of students' performances across proficiency levels, as shown in Figure 3.24. The tables in this section report percentage of distributions in terms of 'At' Proficiency Levels. Percentage distributions for 'At or above' the proficiency levels were also calculated for both year levels (See Appendix 5). In Figures 4.4 and 4.5, and Tables 4.4 and 4.5 attention is given to the percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 students in all jurisdictions who reached the relevant Proficient Standards. From this point onwards, the States and Territories are reported by MCEETYA sequence.

Year 6 Percentage Distributions by Proficiency Levels

Figure 4.4 displays the percentage of Year 6 students that achieved the Proficient Standard set for Year 6, with the 95 per cent confidence intervals (see arrow at each end of bars).

Figure 4.4: Percentages of Year 6 Students at or above the Year 6 Proficient Standard, Nationally and by State and Territory

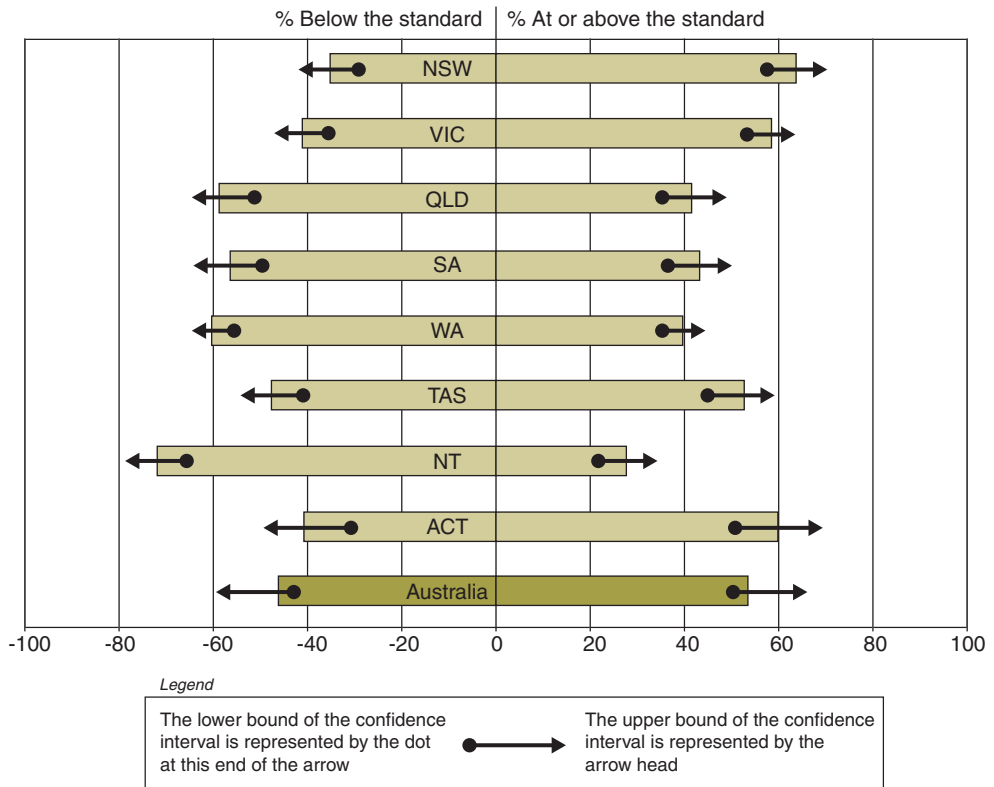


Figure 4.4 shows that approximately 53 per cent of Australian Year 6 students achieved the Year 6 Proficient Standard, which is set at Level 2. The range of students achieving the Year 6 Proficiency Standard went from 65 per cent of students in New South Wales to approximately 28 per cent of students in the Northern Territory.

Comparison of Year 6 Percentages by Proficiency Level

Table 4.4 describes the same trends in student proficiency as those discussed for Figure 4.4 and shows the 2007 percentages of Year 6 students who achieved each of the proficiency levels across the States and Territories, with confidence intervals. At the base of the table is shown the comparative data of the percentage of students achieving at or above the Proficient Standard for 2007 and 2004. A State or Territory's performance can be compared with that of the others by reading across the appropriate row.

Table 4.4: 2007 Percentages of Year 6 Students at each Proficiency Level, at or above the Proficient Standard with 2004 comparison, on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, Nationally and by State and Territory

| Proficiency Level | NSW | VIC | QLD | SA | WA | TAS | NT | ACT | AUST |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Below Level 1 | 6.5 | 7.9 | 17.0 | 14.4 | 18.0 | 15.2 | 42.5 | 8.6 | 11.3 |
| Confidence Interval | (2.4) | (2.5) | (3.8) | (3.9) | (3.4) | (4.4) | (8.3) | (4.3) | (1.3) |
| Level 1 | 29.2 | 33.4 | 41.9 | 42.3 | 42.4 | 32.4 | 29.8 | 31.6 | 35.2 |
| Confidence Interval | (6.1) | (5.1) | (5.5) | (5.6) | (4.7) | (5.5) | (5.6) | (7.1) | (2.4) |
| Level 2 | 50.4 | 48.2 | 34.8 | 36.1 | 35.3 | 40.8 | 22.9 | 45.1 | 43.5 |
| Confidence Interval | (5.4) | (5.4) | (4.7) | (5.9) | (3.8) | (6.0) | (5.8) | (6.0) | (2.6) |
| Level 3 | 13.3 | 10.3 | 6.2 | 7.1 | 4.3 | 11.3 | 4.7 | 14.3 | 9.7 |
| Confidence Interval | (3.0) | (2.5) | (2.5) | (3.1) | (1.9) | (4.5) | (2.2) | (5.7) | (1.1) |
| Level 4 | 0.5 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.1 | 0.5 | 0.3 |
| Confidence Interval | (0.6) | (0.3) | (0.3) | (0.4) | (0.2) | (0.8) | (0.2) | (0.8) | (0.2) |
| Level 5 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| At or above Proficiency Standard 2007 | 64.2 | 58.6 | 41.2 | 43.4 | 39.6 | 52.5 | 27.7 | 59.9 | 53.4 |
| Confidence Interval | (6.3) | (5.5) | (5.9) | (6.8) | (4.3) | (6.9) | (6.6) | (8.7) | (2.8) |
| At or above Proficiency Standard 2004 | 56.6 | 57.7 | 37.3 | 43.0 | 38.5 | 48.1 | 40.6 | 60.5 | 50.0 |
| Confidence Interval | (6.6) | (5.3) | (6.4) | (6.7) | (5.7) | (6.6) | (7.1) | (4.7) | (3.0) |

Notes: 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

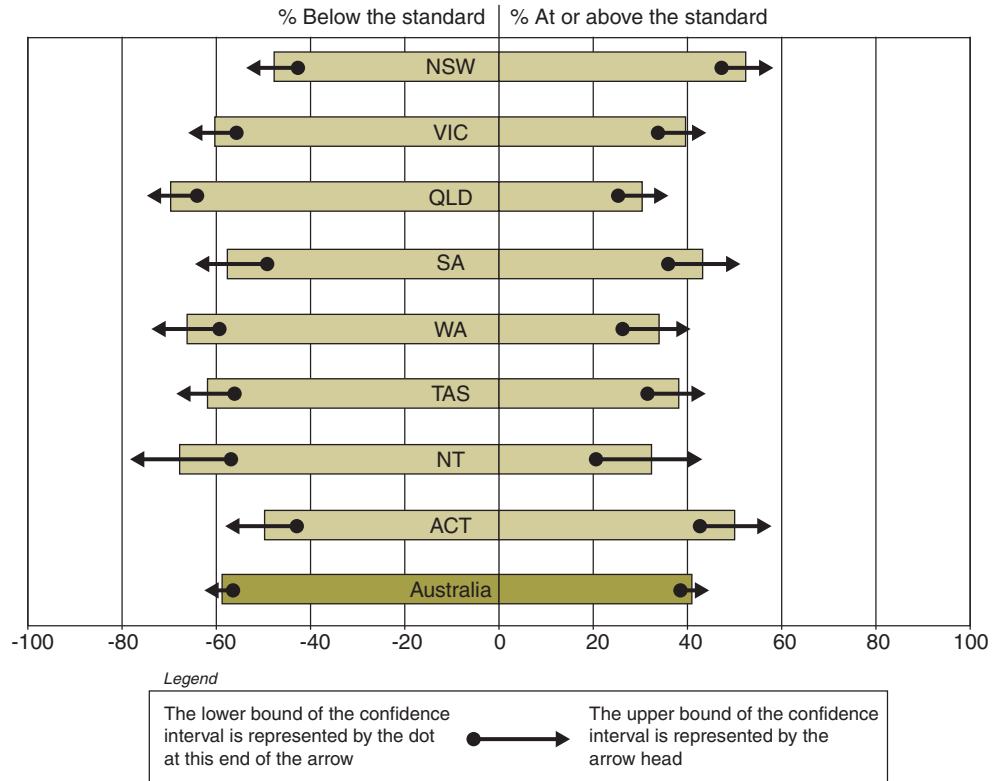
The Northern Territory sample includes very remote schools, to better reflect its whole school population (see Technical Report).

In terms of 2004 to 2007 trends, while there were some changes, the only significant change was for the Northern Territory. The previously referenced change in sampling for the Northern Territory offers some explanation for this decline in numbers.

Year 10 Percentage Distributions by Proficiency Level

Figure 4.5 displays the percentage of Year 10 students achieving at or above the Proficient Standard for Year 10, with the 95 per cent confidence intervals (shown as the arrow at each end of the bar).

Figure 4.5: Percentages of Year 10 Students Achieving at or above the Year 10 Proficient Standard, Nationally and by State and Territory



About 42 per cent of the Australian Year 10 students achieved the Year 10 Proficient Standard, which was set at Level 3. Achievement across States and Territory varied from a high of about 52 per cent in New South Wales to a low of about 30 per cent in Queensland.

Comparison of Year 10 Percentages by Proficiency Level

Table 4.5, describes the same trends in student proficiency as those discussed for Figure 4.5 and shows the 2007 percentages of Year 10 students who achieved each of the proficiency levels for Australia and across the States and Territories, with confidence intervals. At the base of the table is shown the comparative data of the percentage of students achieving at or above the Proficient Standard for 2007 and 2004.

Table 4.5: 2007 Percentages of Year 10 Students at each Proficiency Level, at or above the Proficient Standard with 2004 comparison, on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, Nationally and by State and Territory

| Proficiency Level | NSW | VIC | QLD | SA | WA | TAS | NT | ACT | AUST |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| Below Level 1 | 3.0 | 4.4 | 3.1 | 3.4 | 5.8 | 6.2 | 8.8 | 4.3 | 3.8 |
| Confidence Interval | (2.9) | (3.3) | (2.1) | (2.3) | (4.1) | (3.2) | (5.8) | (3.1) | (1.4) |
| Level 1 | 12.3 | 16.7 | 19.3 | 13.5 | 19.1 | 20.0 | 15.6 | 11.1 | 15.8 |
| Confidence Interval | (3.9) | (4.8) | (4.4) | (5.3) | (4.8) | (4.3) | (10.6) | (4.2) | (2.2) |
| Level 2 | 32.4 | 39.3 | 47.3 | 40.1 | 41.7 | 36.0 | 43.1 | 34.5 | 38.9 |
| Confidence Interval | (5.6) | (4.6) | (6.0) | (5.1) | (5.5) | (5.6) | (8.8) | (6.1) | (2.8) |
| Level 3 | 39.7 | 34.5 | 27.6 | 37.1 | 29.8 | 31.6 | 28.8 | 39.5 | 34.4 |
| Confidence Interval | (3.5) | (4.1) | (4.8) | (6.4) | (6.3) | (5.0) | (9.3) | (6.7) | (2.1) |
| Level 4 | 12.1 | 5.0 | 2.8 | 5.7 | 3.6 | 5.9 | 3.7 | 10.5 | 6.9 |
| Confidence Interval | (3.6) | (1.7) | (1.6) | (2.8) | (1.7) | (3.2) | (3.4) | (3.0) | (1.4) |
| Level 5 | 0.4 | 0.2 | – | 0.1 | – | 0.3 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Confidence Interval | (0.5) | (0.4) | – | (0.5) | – | (0.5) | (0.2) | (0.4) | (0.2) |
| At or above Proficiency Standard 2007 | 52.2 | 39.6 | 30.4 | 42.9 | 33.4 | 37.8 | 32.5 | 50.1 | 41.5 |
| Confidence Interval | (5.1) | (4.8) | (5.0) | (7.8) | (6.9) | (5.8) | (10.9) | (7.5) | (2.6) |
| At or above Proficiency Standard 2004 | 47.5 | 39.6 | 29.7 | 29.2 | 36.3 | 37.1 | 35.9 | 48.0 | 39.3 |
| Confidence Interval | (4.9) | (7.4) | (5.5) | (4.8) | (6.1) | (4.7) | (14.6) | (7.6) | (2.8) |

Notes: 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

The Northern Territory sample includes very remote schools, to better reflect its whole school population (see Technical Report).

In terms of 2004 to 2007 trends in percentage of students at or above the Proficient Standard, only South Australia's increase was significant.

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

Table 4.6 shows the differences in performance by mean scores between Years 6 and 10 by State and Territory, with confidence intervals.

Table 4.6: Differences in Mean Performance on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale between Year 6 and 10, Nationally and by State and Territory

| State or Territory | Year 6 | | Year 10 | | Difference (Year 10 – Year 6) | |
|--------------------|------------|------|------------|------|-------------------------------|------|
| | Mean Score | CI | Mean Score | CI | Mean Score | CI |
| NSW | 432.4 | 11.0 | 529.0 | 17.0 | 96.6 | 22.5 |
| VIC | 418.4 | 10.1 | 493.8 | 17.1 | 75.4 | 19.8 |
| QLD | 376.2 | 13.5 | 480.8 | 13.9 | 104.6 | 21.7 |
| SA | 384.5 | 15.1 | 504.8 | 23.4 | 120.3 | 26.7 |
| WA | 369.0 | 10.9 | 477.6 | 22.6 | 108.6 | 25.0 |
| TAS | 400.8 | 17.7 | 484.5 | 16.0 | 83.7 | 23.6 |
| NT | 266.0 | 32.8 | 463.7 | 38.1 | 197.7 | 52.8 |
| ACT | 425.4 | 20.5 | 523.2 | 19.6 | 97.8 | 29.4 |
| AUST | 405.0 | 5.5 | 501.7 | 8.6 | 96.3 | 10.9 |

Notes: 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

The Northern Territory sample includes very remote schools, to better reflect its whole school population (see Technical Report).

Nationally, the difference between the means for Year 6 and Year 10 performance was 96 scale points. Victoria demonstrated the smallest absolute differences in mean performance and the Northern Territory the largest. For Victoria, the difference was 75 scale points and for the Northern Territory it was 198. These differences invite further exploration of variations in curriculum and other associated factors, only some of which could be explored for this second cycle of the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship.

Differences in Civics and Citizenship Literacy by Background Characteristics

The information in this section examines the relationship between students' performance and each of the individual background characteristics about which information was collected in the Student Background Survey.

Differences in Civics and Citizenship Literacy between Males and Females

Tables 4.7 and 4.8 show the relative performance of males and females, nationally and by State and Territory for 2007, with 2004 comparison.

Table 4.7: 2007 Mean Performance Males and Females on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale by Year Level, with 2004 comparison, Nationally and by State and Territory

| State or Territory | Year 6 | | | | Year 10 | | | |
|--------------------|------------|------|------------|------|------------|------|------------|------|
| | Males | | Females | | Males | | Females | |
| | Mean Score | CI | Mean Score | CI | Mean Score | CI | Mean Score | CI |
| NSW | 427.6 | 15.6 | 437.6 | 11.6 | 512.2 | 24.8 | 543.8 | 20.2 |
| VIC | 401.2 | 12.3 | 436.3 | 11.3 | 484.7 | 25.9 | 503.7 | 19.3 |
| QLD | 366.2 | 14.5 | 386.8 | 15.9 | 470.8 | 21.8 | 491.0 | 12.4 |
| SA | 380.3 | 18.0 | 389.5 | 19.3 | 487.3 | 25.0 | 522.7 | 23.7 |
| WA | 360.8 | 12.8 | 377.2 | 15.2 | 476.9 | 24.3 | 478.4 | 26.0 |
| TAS | 380.3 | 19.2 | 422.3 | 19.2 | 462.1 | 21.9 | 506.1 | 24.0 |
| NT | 259.0 | 31.3 | 273.6 | 46.4 | 468.4 | 37.7 | 457.8 | 46.8 |
| ACT | 426.2 | 25.9 | 424.5 | 22.2 | 512.9 | 28.8 | 535.4 | 23.3 |
| Australia 2007 | 395.6 | 7.2 | 415.0 | 6.3 | 489.2 | 11.8 | 514.3 | 10.0 |
| Australia 2004 | 390.7 | 7.5 | 409.0 | 7.8 | 480.4 | 9.2 | 510.8 | 8.4 |

Note: 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

Among Year 6 students, females in New South Wales were the highest performing group (with a mean score of 438), followed by those in Victoria (with a mean

score of 436). Of the male students, those in New South Wales were the highest performing (with a mean score of 428) and those in the Northern Territory (with a mean score of 259) were the lowest. Female students in Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania and Australia overall achieved significantly higher mean scores than their male peers. In jurisdictions where there was no significant difference, the tendency was for females to record higher mean scores than males.

Among Year 10 students, females in New South Wales were the highest performing group (with a mean score of 544), followed by females in Australian Capital Territory (with a mean score of 535). Of the male students, those in the Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales were the highest performing (with mean scores of 513 and 512 respectively) and those in Tasmania were the lowest (with a mean score of 462). Year 10 female students in New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and Australia as a whole achieved significantly higher mean scores compared with the male students in Year 10. In the jurisdictions where no significant difference was found, the tendency was for females to record higher mean scores than males.

Both genders at both year levels showed a slight increase in mean achievement from 2004; however these increases were not significant.

Table 4.8 shows the 2007 percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 male and female students at each proficiency level, with confidence intervals. At the base of the table is shown the comparative data of the percentage of students achieving at or above the Proficient Standard for 2007 and 2004.

Table 4.8: 2007 Percentages of Males and Females at each Proficiency Level, at or above the Proficient Standard with 2004 comparison, on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, Nationally

| | Year 6 | | | | Year 10 | | | |
|--|--------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|---------|-----|
| | Males | | Females | | Males | | Females | |
| | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI |
| Under Level 1 | 13.7 | 1.9 | 8.8 | 1.6 | 4.9 | 1.8 | 2.7 | 1.3 |
| Level 1 | 36.4 | 2.6 | 34.0 | 3.1 | 18.5 | 2.8 | 13.2 | 2.5 |
| Level 2 | 40.9 | 3.1 | 46.3 | 3.1 | 38.8 | 3.1 | 39.0 | 3.7 |
| Level 3 | 8.7 | 1.6 | 10.7 | 1.6 | 32.2 | 3.0 | 36.6 | 2.9 |
| Level 4 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 5.4 | 1.7 | 8.3 | 2.1 |
| Level 5 | – | – | – | – | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 0.3 |
| At or above the Proficient Standard 2007 | 49.9 | 3.3 | 57.2 | 3.4 | 37.9 | 3.7 | 45.1 | 3.4 |
| At or above the Proficient Standard 2004 | 46.5 | 3.5 | 53.4 | 3.3 | 34.7 | 3.2 | 43.7 | 3.9 |

Note: 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the percentages.

More female students than male students at both year levels achieved at or above the Proficient Standard. Additionally, there was no significant change from 2004 in the number of students achieving at or above the Proficient Standard at either year level.

Differences in Civics and Citizenship Literacy by Socioeconomic Group

Information about two aspects of the home (or parental) background of students was collected as part of the Student Background Survey in both cycles of assessment: parental occupation and parental educational attainment. At Year 6 this information was collected centrally through schools and education systems via the Online Student Registration System (OSRS). Due to the dimension of missing data at Year 6 (See Chapter 2), no reporting of Year 6 achievement by parental occupation, Indigenous status, language spoken at home, country of birth is possible (though Year 6 data are available in Appendix 6). Parental occupation was used as the indicator of socioeconomic group. Data based on parental education have not been reported for either year level because of the high level of respondents who indicated that they did not know their parents' education.

The occupations of parents were provided by students in Year 10 and classified into five categories following the MCEETYA endorsed classification: (1), senior managers and professionals; (2), other managers and associate professionals; (3), tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff; (4), unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff; and (5), not in paid work in the last 12 months.

Where occupations were available for two parents, the higher coded occupation was used in the analyses. Mean scores for each group of students are recorded in Table 4.9 for both 2004 and 2007 cycles.

Table 4.9: 2004 and 2007 Mean Scores for Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Parental Occupation Group

| Occupational group | 2004 | | 2007 | |
|---|------------|------|------------|------|
| | Mean Score | CI | Mean Score | CI |
| 1. Senior Managers and professionals | 540.5 | 10.0 | 557.3 | 12.5 |
| 2. Other managers and associate professionals | 521.6 | 8.6 | 514.9 | 8.4 |
| 3. Tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff | 482.1 | 7.9 | 478.0 | 10.8 |
| 4. Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff | 462.7 | 9.3 | 451.0 | 14.7 |
| 5. Not in paid work in the last 12 months | 424.8 | 24.7 | 348.5 | 92.2 |

Note: 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

This table shows that in 2007 there were differences in the mean scores among students from each of these occupation groups, that the trend was linear, and that the differences were as expected on the basis of underlying socioeconomic differences as they typically present in national assessments and surveys. The differences between adjacent groups were statistically significant.

In terms of 2004 to 2007 trends, it appears that the gaps between occupation groups have grown since 2004. The difference between 2007 mean scores for children of parents who have not been in paid work for the last 12 months and senior managers and professionals is 208 score points for Year 10. This is greater than in 2004 when the comparable difference was only 116 score points. The improvement in achievement from 2004 to 2007 of the highest level of occupation group was statistically significant. The large decline of the lowest group (not in paid work) is not significant due to the large confidence interval.

Figure 4.6 is a graphical representation of the 2007 data in Table 4.9. It shows the linear trend of mean scores according to occupation groups, and the associated confidence intervals. The table shows that the confidence interval for 'Not in paid work in the last 12 months' is dramatically larger than the other occupation groups, indicating that there is a large amount of variance around the mean score. This means that there is a very large range of values that the mean scores of students whose parents are not in paid work in the last 12 months could fall within.

Figure 4.6: Mean Scores of Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Parental Occupation Group

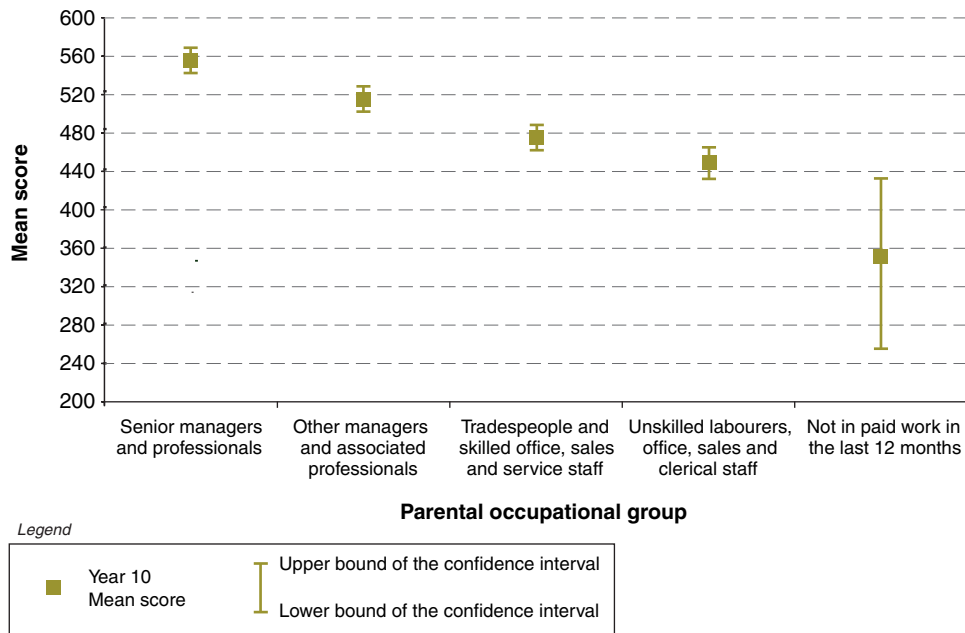


Table 4.10 records the 2007 percentages of Year 10 students in each proficiency level by parental occupation group, with confidence intervals. At the base of the table is shown the comparative data of the percentage of students achieving at or above the Proficient Standard for 2007 and 2004.

Table 4.10: 2007 Percentages of Year 10 Students by Parental Occupation Group and Proficiency Level, at or above the Proficient Standard with 2004 comparison, on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, Nationally

| Proficiency Level | Parental Occupation Group | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---------------------------------------|------|
| | 1. Senior Managers and professionals | | 2. Other managers and associate professionals | | 3. Tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff | | 4. Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff | | 5. Not in paid work in last 12 months | |
| | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI |
| Below Level 1 | 1.5 | 1.1 | 2.7 | 1.2 | 3.8 | 1.8 | 6.9 | 3.1 | 26.2 | 27.7 |
| Level 1 | 7.4 | 2.7 | 12.2 | 2.4 | 19.5 | 4.5 | 25.8 | 4.6 | 40.5 | 15.9 |
| Level 2 | 28.5 | 4.5 | 39.7 | 4.1 | 46.5 | 6.3 | 43.0 | 4.8 | 24.6 | 18.1 |
| Level 3 | 47.1 | 4.5 | 38.3 | 3.8 | 27.1 | 4.2 | 22.3 | 4.4 | 8.6 | 10.7 |
| Level 4 | 14.9 | 3.9 | 7.0 | 2.0 | 3.2 | 1.5 | 2.0 | 1.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Level 5 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| At or above the Proficient Standard 2007 | 62.5 | 4.7 | 45.4 | 3.8 | 30.3 | 4.4 | 24.4 | 4.5 | 8.6 | 10.7 |
| At or above the Proficient Standard 2004 | 57.0 | 4.1 | 47.5 | 3.8 | 32.8 | 3.3 | 27.0 | 3.7 | 14.9 | 9.6 |

It can be seen that in Year 10, for which the Proficient Standard was Level 3, 63 per cent of students with one or both parents classified in parental occupation group 1, and 9 per cent of students with parents classified in parental occupation group 5 achieved this Proficient Standard or above.

The number of students achieving at or above the Proficient Standard according to parental occupation group has not changed significantly from 2004.

The strength of the association between parental occupation background and achievement in civics and citizenship was broadly similar to that observed for achievement in other assessment / learning domains. The simple correlation coefficient between parental occupation group and achievement in civics and citizenship was 0.33. This was approximately the same as the correlation between reading literacy achievement and parental occupation reported in PISA (Thomson, Cresswell & De Bortoli, 2004).

Differences in Civics and Citizenship Literacy by Indigenous Status

Indigenous Year 10 students' achievement relative to that of non-Indigenous students is shown in Tables 4.11 and 4.12 for 2004 and 2007.

Table 4.11: 2004 and 2007 Mean Scores for Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

| Indigenous Status | 2004 | | | 2007 | | |
|--------------------|------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------|------|-----------------|
| | Mean Score | CI ^(a) | Number of Cases | Mean Score | CI | Number of Cases |
| Non-Indigenous | 498.2 | 7.0 | 9158 | 505.1 | 8.5 | 5230 |
| Indigenous | 426.9 | 22.3 | 292 | 414.2 | 25.1 | 240 |
| All ^(b) | 495.8 | 7.0 | 9536 | 501.7 | 8.6 | 5506 |

Notes: (a) 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the percentages.
(b) A number of students did not identify their Indigenous status

Table 4.11 shows Indigenous students did not perform as well as non-Indigenous students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. The gap between the non-Indigenous and Indigenous students was about 90 scale points, a statistically significant difference. This figure compares with a 71 scale point difference in the same direction between the mean scores of non-Indigenous and Indigenous students in 2004 (not a significant change between 2004 and 2007). It should also be noted, by way of explanation, that these Indigenous data are very small and predominantly derive from regional and remote locations which typically present in national assessments and surveys, and in this assessment, (see Table 4.15), with lower means than other locations. See Chapter 2 and Appendix 3 for more details on sampling.

The 2007 percentages of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students at each proficiency level are shown in Table 4.12, with confidence intervals. At the base of the table is shown the comparative data of the percentage of students achieving at or above the Proficient Standard for 2007 and 2004.

Table 4.12: 2007 Percentages of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Year 10 Students by Proficiency Level, at or above the Proficient Standard with 2004 comparison, on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, Nationally

| Proficiency Level | Indigenous Status | | | |
|--|-------------------|-----|------------|------|
| | Non-Indigenous | | Indigenous | |
| | % | CI | % | CI |
| Below Level 1 | 3.3 | 1.3 | 14.1 | 8.0 |
| Level 1 | 15.2 | 2.1 | 33.3 | 10.6 |
| Level 2 | 39.1 | 2.8 | 34.1 | 9.7 |
| Level 3 | 35.1 | 2.1 | 16 | 8.8 |
| Level 4 | 7.0 | 1.4 | 2.5 | 3.7 |
| Level 5 | 0.2 | 0.2 | – | – |
| At or above the Proficient Standard 2007 | 42.3 | 2.6 | 18.5 | 8.1 |
| At or above the Proficient Standard 2004 | 39.9 | 2.8 | 22.4 | 8.2 |

Note: 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the percentages.

Table 4.12 shows that for all proficiency levels above Level 1 the percentage achievement rates of Year 10 Indigenous students were lower than the non-Indigenous percentages. The Proficient Standard was achieved by 18.5 per cent of Year 10 Indigenous students, compared with 42.5 per cent of the non-Indigenous students. The results for 2007 were not significantly different from those in 2004.

Differences in Civics and Citizenship Literacy by Language Background

The achievement of Year 10 students according to their language background is shown in Tables 4.13 and 4.14, for both 2004 and 2007.

Table 4.13 compares the 2004 and 2007 mean scores of Year 10 students who spoke languages other than English at home with students who spoke only English. The table also compares the mean scores of Year 10 students born in Australia with those born overseas. It is probable that many of the students who speak languages other than English are the same students as those who stated they were born overseas.

Table 4.13: 2004 and 2007 Mean Scores for Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Language Background and Country of Birth

| Year of assessment | 2004 | | 2007 | |
|--------------------------------|------------|------|------------|------|
| | Mean Score | CI | Mean Score | CI |
| Language spoken at home | | | | |
| English | 499.2 | 7.3 | 507.4 | 8.6 |
| Language other than English | 486.1 | 11.4 | 487.7 | 20.4 |
| Country of birth | | | | |
| Australia | 499.0 | 7.0 | 506.5 | 8.0 |
| Overseas | 473.7 | 14.6 | 470.8 | 27.3 |

Note: 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

Table 4.13 shows that at both assessment cycles (2004 and 2007), the Year 10 students who spoke languages other than English at home scored slightly lower than students who spoke only English at home, but the difference was not statistically significant. Table 4.13 also shows that the students born overseas scored significantly lower than those born in Australia. No data were collected on how long these students had lived in Australia. The results for 2007 were not significantly different from those in 2004.

Table 4.14 shows the 2007 percentages and confidence intervals at each of the proficiency levels of students who spoke languages other than English at home compared with those students who spoke only English. At the base of the table is shown the comparative data of the percentage of students achieving at or above the Proficient Standard for 2007 and 2004.

Table 4.14: 2007 Percentages of Year 10 Students at each Proficiency Level, at or above the Proficient Standard with 2004 comparison, on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Language Spoken at Home

| Proficiency Level | Language spoken at home | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|-----|--|-----|
| | Only English spoken at home | | Language other than English spoken at home | |
| | % | CI | % | CI |
| Below Level 1 | 2.8 | 0.9 | 6.3 | 3.6 |
| Level 1 | 15.2 | 2.3 | 17.3 | 4.3 |
| Level 2 | 39.5 | 3.0 | 37.0 | 5.1 |
| Level 3 | 35.2 | 2.5 | 32.6 | 4.4 |
| Level 4 | 7.1 | 1.6 | 6.5 | 2.6 |
| Level 5 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.6 |
| At or above the Proficient Standard 2007 | 42.5 | 3.0 | 39.4 | 5.6 |
| At or above the Proficient Standard 2004 | 40.4 | 1.9 | 36.1 | 3.2 |

Note: 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the percentages.

A similar pattern to that shown by Table 4.13 is evident in these data. The proportion of students who speak a language other than English at home achieving Proficiency Levels 2, 3 and 4 was only slightly lower than the proportion of those who spoke only English at home achieving those levels.

Interestingly, the percentage of students in Level 5 who spoke languages other than English at home was almost the same as those students who speak only English at home (0.3 compared with 0.2 respectively). Ability and interest in the area of Civics and Citizenship appear to not be inhibited by the lack of discussion in English at home.

There was no significant difference from 2004 to 2007 in the number of students achieving at or above the Proficient Standard according to language spoken at home.

Differences in Civics and Citizenship Literacy by Geographic Location

Table 4.15 displays the mean scores on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale of Year 6 and Year 10 students attending schools in metropolitan, provincial and remote areas. As outlined in Chapter 2, information regarding school location was sought of all students but home location was sought only from students in Year 10.

Table 4.15: 2007 Mean Scores for Year 6 and Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Geographic Location of School and Student

| Geographic Location | Geographic Location of school | | | | Location of student's home | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|------|------------|------|----------------------------|------|
| | Year 6 | | Year 10 | | Year 10 | |
| | Mean Score | CI | Mean Score | CI | Mean Score | CI |
| Metropolitan | 414.5 | 6.7 | 508.3 | 10.3 | 507.9 | 10.3 |
| Provincial | 390.8 | 12.6 | 485.8 | 20.3 | 490.2 | 19.0 |
| Remote | 306.5 | 32.7 | 419.3 | 59.8 | 473.3 | 38.0 |

Note: 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the means.

Table 4.15 shows that, at Year 6, students attending metropolitan schools scored higher on the scale than did students who attended schools in provincial or remote areas. The differences between all three geographic locations (metropolitan, regional and remote) were statistically significant for all Year 6 students. It also shows that, at Year 10, students attending metropolitan and provincial schools achieved somewhat similar mean scores and both were significantly higher than those achieved by students attending schools in remote areas.

The third column of Table 4.15 (location of student's home) shows the mean scores for geographic location based on the Year 10 students' residential addresses. Difference in mean scores between home and school in the geographic location code were mainly evident for students in remote locations, where the mean score for remote location of school was lower than that of remote location of home. The mean scores for Year 10 students living in different geographic locations are not significantly different from each other. This finding suggests that for civics and citizenship learning there is some efficacy for students who attend schools in less remote areas.

Table 4.16 shows the distribution in 2007 across the proficiency levels of Year 6 and Year 10 students attending schools in metropolitan, provincial or remote areas.

Table 4.16: 2007 Percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 Students at each Proficiency Level, at or above the Proficient Standards on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Geographic Location of School

| Proficiency Level | Year 6 | | | | | | Year 10 | | | | | |
|--|--------------|-----|------------|-----|--------|------|--------------|-----|------------|-----|--------|------|
| | Metropolitan | | Provincial | | Remote | | Metropolitan | | Provincial | | Remote | |
| | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI |
| Below Level 1 | 9.5 | 1.5 | 13.8 | 3.2 | 33.0 | 11.4 | 3.3 | 1.6 | 5.1 | 2.5 | 12.6 | 19.1 |
| Level 1 | 33.9 | 2.8 | 38.3 | 4.4 | 38.7 | 11.7 | 14.5 | 2.6 | 19.0 | 4.5 | 26.7 | 27.5 |
| Level 2 | 45.4 | 3.0 | 40.4 | 5.7 | 26.2 | 10.7 | 38.9 | 3.6 | 38.9 | 4.9 | 37.2 | 16.4 |
| Level 3 | 10.8 | 1.6 | 7.4 | 2.3 | 2.1 | 2.3 | 35.3 | 2.3 | 32.3 | 5.8 | 21.9 | 11.4 |
| Level 4 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 7.8 | 1.8 | 4.6 | 2.2 | 1.6 | 3.8 |
| Level 5 | – | – | – | – | – | – | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.2 | – | – |
| At or above the Proficient Standard 2007 | 56.6 | 3.3 | 47.9 | 5.9 | 28.3 | 11.6 | 43.3 | 3.2 | 37.0 | 7.1 | 23.5 | 12.1 |

Note: 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the percentages.

These data indicate that there was some difference in the percentages of Year 6 students attending schools in different geographic locations achieving each of the proficiency levels. More students attending metropolitan and provincial schools achieved Level 2 than students who went to remote schools. The case was similar with regard to Level 3.

Table 4.16 shows that 57 per cent of Year 6 students who attended a Metropolitan school achieved the appropriate Proficient Standard (Level 2). This compares with 48 per cent of students who attended provincial schools and 28 per cent of students from remote schools reaching this level.

At Year 10, more metropolitan and provincial students than remote students achieved Levels 3 and 4. Forty-three per cent of students from metropolitan schools and 37 per cent from provincial schools attained the Year 10 Proficient Standard (Level 3). The comparable performance figure for students who attended remote schools was 24 per cent.

The influence of background variables on achievement

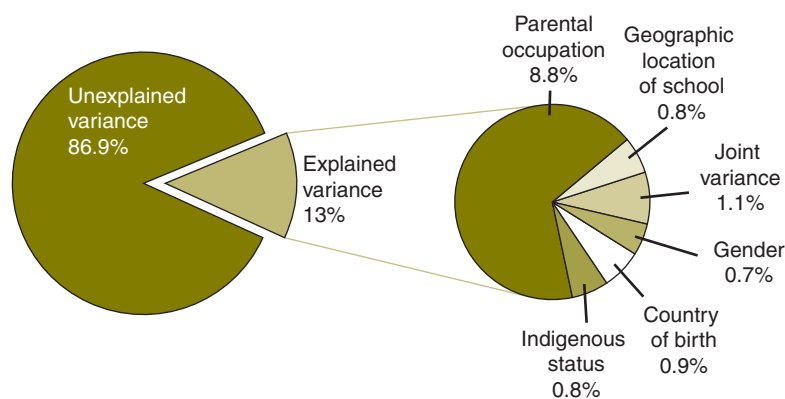
The preceding sections of Chapter 4 have described patterns of achievement according to individual student background variables. These variables are often interrelated, for example, Indigenous students have a higher representation in remote schools. Thus it is important to untangle the influence of these background variables on performance on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. A multiple regression analysis was undertaken to investigate both the unique influence of

each of these background characteristics on achievement and also the overall amount of variation in achievement explained by all of these variables. In Chapter 5 this multiple regression analysis will be extended further to include variables concerning participation in civics and citizenship activities.

The selected background variables were age, gender, country of birth, Indigenous status, language at home, parental occupation ³, and geographic location of the school the student attends. Due to missing data for Year 6 students the regression analysis has only been conducted for Year 10 students. For more detail on the regression analysis than is provided in this section, see Appendix 7.

The analysis revealed that when all background variables were included in the explanatory model, the background variables explain 13.2% of the total variance in performance. Of the background variables included in this analysis, parental occupation explained the largest amount of the variance (8.8 %) in performance on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. All other variables explained less than one per cent of the variance in student achievement. Some of the variance was also due to the interaction between these variables – about 1 per cent of the variance was explained jointly by the background variables. Figure 4.7 shows the percentage of variance explained by each of the background variables found to have had a significant influence on student performance on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale.

Figure 4.7: Disaggregation of Variance and Explained Variance in Student Performance on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale by Background Variables



The unique influence of each background variable can be translated into a change in scale score. Table 4.17 provides the change in scale score attributable to each background variable. This table should be read by considering the reference group, defined by the majority (or mean in the case of age) for each characteristic. This reference group has the following characteristics and the comparison is made with an entity which possesses this combination of characteristics: 15.8 years old; female; born in Australia; not Indigenous; speaks English only; parents are ‘other managers and associate professionals’ and goes to school in a metropolitan location. The change in score (either positive or negative) is reported in the table for each category of the background characteristics that differs from that in the reference group.

³ The measure of parent occupation was as provided by students for one parent or the higher-coded occupation in cases where data regarding two parents were supplied.

Table 4.17: Change in Score on the Year 10 Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale according to Student Background Characteristics

| Reference Group | Average Score of the Reference Group | SE |
|---|--------------------------------------|------|
| 15.8 years old; female; born in Australia; not Indigenous; speaks English only; parents are 'other managers and associate professionals' and goes to school in a metropolitan location. | 540.0 | 5.9 |
| Background variable | Change in score* | SE |
| Age** | 3.6 | 5.7 |
| Male | -19.6 | 5.7 |
| Not Born in Australia | -37.4 | 9.5 |
| Indigenous | -63.3 | 12.1 |
| Language Background other than English | -7.5 | 8.6 |
| Parental Occupation: Senior managers & professionals | 39.6 | 6.6 |
| Parental Occupation: Tradespeople, skilled office, sales and service staff | -37.0 | 5.7 |
| Parental Occupation: Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff | -58.5 | 7.1 |
| Parental Occupation: Not in paid work in last 12 months | -112.0 | 24.6 |
| Geographic Location of the School: Provincial location | -22.4 | 10.2 |
| Geographic Location of the School: Remote location | -62.3 | 26.6 |

Notes: * Numbers shaded are significant

**Change in score associated with an increase of 0.53 years (approximately six months).

In this model, all the background variables have a significant effect on performance, except for age and language spoken at home. Of the significant effects, the results show that the change in score for male students is -20, so that the civics and citizenship performance of male students is, on average, 20 scale points lower than that of female students. Indigenous status had the strong negative effect of over 60 points at Year 10. This means that the civics and citizenship performance of Indigenous students was more than 60 scale points lower than that of non-Indigenous students. The reason why only a small percentage of the variance in the full sample was explained by Indigenous status was that the sample included relatively few indigenous students. Not being born in Australia also had a significant negative effect, with the reported change indicating that students not born in Australia performed 37 points lower on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale than those students who were born in Australia (net of the other characteristics in the analysis).

Parental occupation explained 9 per cent of variance in achievement in Year 10. The overall effect of having a parent with a senior manager or professional occupation was 40 points (compared to the 'other managers and associate professionals' category). That is, students with a parent in the 'senior manager or professional' category were likely to score 40 scale points higher than students whose parent was in the category of 'other managers and associate professionals' on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. The corresponding overall effects for students whose parent was in the 'tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff' and 'unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff' occupational categories were 37

and 59 (respectively) points lower on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale than those students whose parent was in 'other managers and associate professionals'. For those whose parents had not been in paid work in the last 12 months, their civics and citizenship performance was, on average, 112 points lower on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale than those students whose parents fell in the category of 'other managers and associate professionals' category.

Geographic location of the school made a very small contribution to explaining the variance in civics and citizenship achievement. However the effects were significant. The effect of attending school in a provincial location was equivalent to a scale score of about 22 points lower than for students attending a school in a metropolitan location. The effect of attending school in a remote location corresponded to a scale score of about 62 points lower than that of students attending a school in a metropolitan location.

Summary

Parental occupation explained more variance in performance than the other background characteristics, that is approximately 70% of the total of the explained variance. Each of the other variables explained less than 8% of total of the explained variance.

All the social and demographic predictors together explained 13 per cent of the variance in performance for Year 10. It can be seen therefore, that of the total variance in student performance, 87% is not explained by the modelled background variables and is therefore open to explanation by unknown systematic or random information. This result is comparable to the other National Assessment Program sample assessments. The challenge is to identify, through the accumulation of research evidence, those other factors associated with schools, curriculum and other opportunities to learn, teaching, home environments and student interests that might explain more of the variance. The study of those factors is beyond the scope of a national assessment survey.

Concluding Comments

Differences in the means and dispersion of student achievement by State and Territory and year level were observed across Australia. Among Year 6 students the mean scores for the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales and Victoria were almost 50 scale points higher than those from Western Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory. Among Year 10 students the mean scores in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory were a little more than 50 points higher than those from Queensland and South Australia, although only in the case of New South Wales was the difference statistically significant. The magnitude of these differences can be gauged by reference to the difference in the mean scores for Year 6 (405) and Year 10 (502). These figures represent a very slight improvement on the findings reported in the first cycle in the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship.

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

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

The proficient standards provided a picture of the knowledge and understandings which proficient students were expected to demonstrate by the end of Years 6 and 10. Just over half of Year 6 and approximately 40 per cent of Year 10 students achieved their respective proficient standards. As with the mean scores, differences in the proportions of students achieving the appropriate standards were observed among the jurisdictions.

In the regression analysis conducted to determine the influence of student background characteristics on student performance, it was found that parental occupation had the largest effect on student achievement, comprising almost three quarters of the explained variance.

Chapter 5 reports findings in relation to the students' opportunities to participate in civics and citizenship activities in and outside of school, and the level of participation with which they engaged in them. Data were collected on the degree to which students believed they had learnt about and engaged in decision-making at school. The chapter reports on these data and discusses some relationships between student views on these activities and achievement in civics and citizenship.

Chapter 5

Student Participation in Civics and Citizenship Activities

The Student Background Survey asked students about the opportunities available in their school for participation in certain specified civics and citizenship-related activities, and the actual levels of participation they experienced. This chapter provides data and findings on student participation in civics and citizenship activities at and outside school, and student views on those activities. It also discusses some relationships between student views and their achievement in civics and citizenship. The student background survey is presented in Appendix 2 of this report.

Four sets of indices were developed from the questions asked of students on their participation in civics and citizenship activities. They were:

1. Opportunities for student participation in civics and citizenship activities at school;
2. Participation in student civics and citizenship activities at school;
3. Learning about governance at school; and
4. Participation in civics and citizenship activities outside school.

These indices are discussed in the following sections.

Opportunities and participation at school

Students were asked if students at their school had the opportunity to:

- vote for class representatives;
- be represented on student councils (or student representative councils);
- contribute to decision making as a representative on the student council;

- contribute in ways different from the student council to decision making at school;
- help prepare school papers or magazines;
- participate in mentoring or peer support programs;
- participate in activities in the community; and
- represent the school in activities outside of class.

The questions on civic and citizenship activities at school are very similar to those in the 2004 survey. However, there were some slight changes:

In 2004 there was a question regarding opportunities to contribute generally to school decision making. However, the 2007 student background survey makes a distinction between contributing to decision making through representation on a student council, and contributing to decision making using ways different from the student council. This distinction provides more specific data about the ways in which students are contributing to decision making at school.

The other addition to the 2007 student background survey concerned whether schools provided students with the opportunity to represent the school in activities at school but outside of class. This question provides data about whether schools support students' participation in out-of-class representative activities.

Additionally, in 2007 questions were also asked as to whether the students themselves had participated in the above-mentioned activities.

Learning about governance at school

Questions regarding learning about governance at school asked students whether they thought that they had learnt about the following at school:

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

These questions regarding learning about governance at school were not changed from 2004 to 2007.

Participation in civics and citizenship activities outside school

The questions on participation in civic and citizenship activities outside school asked students how often they did the following:

- obtained access to news about current events through newspapers, television, radio and the internet;
- talked to family members and friends about political and social issues;
- took part in sporting or musical activities with others; and

- took part in environmental activities, or community or volunteer work.

The above questions include all the questions from the 2004 student background survey, along with two additional questions for the 2007 survey. The two new questions asked students whether they:

- obtained news from the internet, or
- talked to friends about political and social issues.

The adoption of these new questions acknowledged the high usage levels of information technology by young people, as well as the importance of their peers in their lives, and the potential of these activities as sources of civics and citizenship knowledge and understanding.

The data collected on these activities in and outside school are the subject of this chapter. Descriptions of the results are presented first, and then the relationship between these variables and the achievement data are explored.

Civics and Citizenship-related Activities at School

Opportunities to participate

Students were asked if opportunities to participate in the following civic and citizenship-related activities existed at their school. According to the students, opportunities exist in most schools for them to participate in decision making and school governance activities. These data are recorded in Table 5.1.

In the following tables the percentages reported are based on students' perceptions of whether civic and citizenship-related activities existed at their school and therefore are not necessarily a true indication of the presence or absence of such activities. For most activities, there was a high level of congruence between students' responses about whether the activity existed or not at their school, and whether the individual student stated that they personally participated in the activity or not. However, it should be noted that there were some cases where students inconsistently responded that an activity was not available at their school, but at the same time responded that, as an individual, they had participated in it at school.

Table 5.1: Opportunities for Participation in Civics and Citizenship-related Activities at School, by Year Level, 2007

| At this school ... | Year 6 | | Year 10 | |
|---|---------|-----|---------|-----|
| | % 'Yes' | CI | % 'Yes' | CI |
| Students vote for class representatives | 82 | 3.2 | 65 | 3.8 |
| Students are represented on student councils | 77 | 4.2 | 85 | 2.6 |
| Student representatives contribute to decision making | 79 | 3.4 | 82 | 2.4 |
| Students can contribute, in ways different from student councils, to decisions about what happens at school * | 76 | 2.9 | 80 | 1.7 |
| Students can help prepare a school paper or magazine | 56 | 4.2 | 70 | 3.1 |
| Students can participate in peer support programs | 88 | 2.5 | 78 | 2.5 |
| Students can participate in activities in the community | 84 | 2.0 | 88 | 1.7 |
| Students can participate in activities outside the classroom* | 94 | 0.9 | 94 | 1.1 |

Notes:* New questions in the 2007 student background survey

Generally, at both year levels larger majorities of students agreed that students had these opportunities at their schools. From Year 6 to Year 10 there were increases in the percentages of students agreeing that they were represented on student councils, that they can contribute to what happens at school and that students can help to prepare school papers or magazines. However, fewer Year 10 than Year 6 students reported that students voted for class representatives. These results (except for the new questions) are very similar to those reported for the 2004 cycle.

Associations between opportunities for civics and citizenship-related activities at school

Schools that encourage students to learn about decision making and school governance through participation could be expected to provide a number of ways for them to participate. In order to investigate whether opportunities to participate in governance and civics-related activities at school were associated, correlations between the indicators were analysed (see Appendix 8 for the details).

The strongest correlation for Year 6 was the association between being able to vote for class representatives and having student representation on student councils ($r=0.35$). At Year 10, the strongest associations were between the opportunity to participate in activities in the community and opportunities to participate in activities outside the classroom ($r=0.40$), and opportunities to participate in peer support programs ($r=0.30$). For those questions that appeared in both the 2004 and 2007 surveys, the pattern of associations is very similar to that found in the 2004 cycle. In general the associations between the different activities were stronger at Year 10 than at Year 6.

To explore the relationships between these items further, a factor analysis ⁴ was conducted on the Year 6 and Year 10 responses to the 8 civic-related activities in school items reported in Table 5.1. At both year levels the factor analysis revealed

⁴ All factor analyses reported in this chapter were exploratory factor analyses conducted with *Mplus*; these analyses are described in the NAP-CC 2007 Technical Report.

two groups of activities that broadly align to school governance activities and general activities. This indicates that the provision of these activities within schools tends to be in bundles – that is, schools that provide at least one school governance activity would be likely to provide more.

Student Participation at School

It is reasonable to expect that students’ actual participation in civics and citizenship-related activities would provide a more precise indication of their level of understanding of civics and citizenship than does the opportunities for participation that their school offers. To collect this more precise information the 2007 survey asked students about their individual participation in civics and citizenship-related activities, such as whether they were involved in school governance and extra-curricula civic activities at and outside school.

Where students’ responses indicated any confusion as to availability of certain activities being part of the school program, it was decided that the reporting of the students’ actual individual participation would be the more reliable indication of the true state of affairs regarding the existence of the activity at their school.

Table 5.2: Participation in Civics and Citizenship-related Activities at School, by Year Level, 2007*

| At this school, I ... | Year 6 | | Year 10 | |
|--|---------|-----|---------|-----|
| | % 'Yes' | CI | % 'Yes' | CI |
| Have voted for class representatives | 78 | 3.0 | 63 | 3.8 |
| Have been represented on student councils | 30 | 2.2 | 18 | 2.3 |
| Believe that as a student council representative I have contributed to school decision making** | 80 | 2.7 | 73 | 4.2 |
| Have contributed, in ways different from student councils, to decisions about what happens at school | 51 | 2.3 | 35 | 2.3 |
| Have helped prepare a school paper or magazine | 27 | 3.6 | 15 | 1.9 |
| Have participated in peer support programs | 78 | 3.2 | 35 | 3.0 |
| Have participated in activities in the community | 66 | 2.5 | 54 | 3.1 |
| Have represented the school in activities outside of class | 81 | 1.4 | 72 | 2.2 |

Notes: * New questions to the student background survey

** These percentages are the proportion of the sub-set of those students who indicated that they had been a representative on a student council

Table 5.2 shows that generally there are fewer Year 10 than Year 6 students who report they have participated in civics and citizenship-related activities at school. Across both the year levels, the most common activity was representing the school in extracurricular activities such as sport, drama and debating. This was followed by voting for class representatives. Activities with the lowest levels of participation for both Year 6 and 10 were ‘helping prepare a school paper or magazine’ and ‘being elected on student council’.

Associations between participation in civics and citizenship-related activities at school

Students who learn about decision making and school governance through participation could be expected to do so through involvement in a range of activities. In order to investigate whether participation in certain types of governance and civics and citizenship-related activities at school was associated with participation in other activities, correlations between the indicators were analysed (see Appendix 8 for the details).

A moderate association at both Year 6 and Year 10 was found to exist between student council representatives and students who had contributed to decisions about what happens at school other than through student councils ($r=0.27$). This suggests that, in some schools at least, students felt that as representatives on student councils, or through other forms of decision-making, they were able to contribute meaningfully to decision making and school governance.

In general the associations between the different activities were stronger at Year 10 than at Year 6. Other relatively strong associations (at Year 10) were between having represented the school in activities outside the classroom and participating in community activities ($r=0.33$); participating in activities in the community and contributing to school decision-making other than through a SRC ($r=0.30$); and student representatives feeling that they had contributed to school decision-making other than through a SRC ($r=0.33$).

The stronger relationships found at Year 10, and the particular associations mentioned, suggest Year 6 students participate in school governance and general school activities in a fairly broad way, whereas Year 10 students are more likely to participate in activities that suit their interests.

A factor analysis was conducted on the Year 6 and Year 10 responses to the elements reported in Table 5.2⁵. For Year 6, the factor analysis indicated that there are two groups of activities that broadly align to school governance activities and general activities (similar to that found for opportunities for participation). However, at Year 10, the factor analysis clearly showed that all items about participation in civics and citizenship activities at school reflected one single underlying dimension, indicating that they reflect a single concept for Year 10 students.

Student views about learning about governance at school

As well as investigating the opportunities for participation in civics and governance related activities at school, the student background survey included questions to determine whether students felt that they had learnt about governance and other civics and citizenship issues at school. These questions were identical to those asked in the 2004 cycle.

⁵ The item concerning whether student representatives feel that they have contributed to school decision making was taken out of the factor analysis, as this question only applied to a small number of students who were student council representatives.

Figure 5.1: Learning about Governance at School – Year 6 Students, 2007

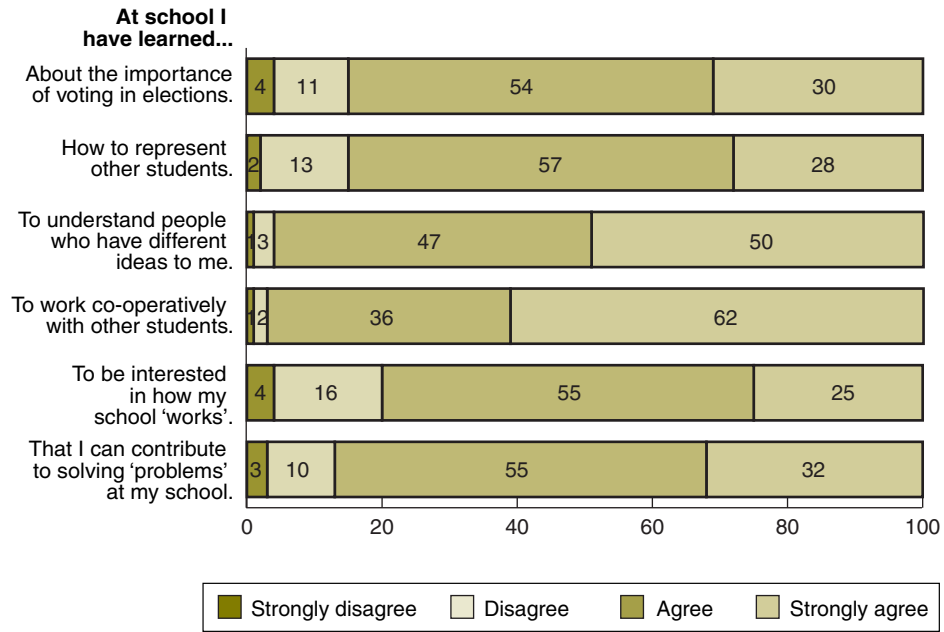


Figure 5.1 indicates that most Year 6 students agreed or agreed strongly with all of the statements. Almost all (over 95 per cent) agreed or agreed strongly that they had learned to work cooperatively with other students and to understand people who had ideas that were different from their own.

Figure 5.2: Learning about Governance at School – Year 10 Students, 2007

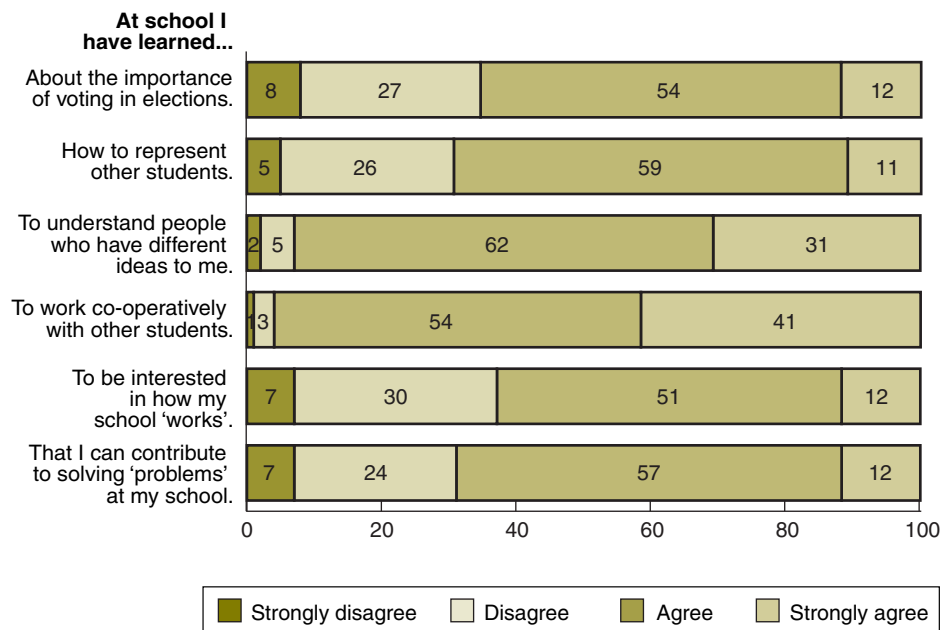


Figure 5.2 indicates that a majority of students in Year 10 also agreed with the statements about learning at school. Like in Year 6, over 90 per cent of Year 10 students agreed or strongly agreed that they had learned to understand people who had ideas that were different from their own and that they had learned to

work cooperatively with other students. However, about 30 percent of Year 10 students disagreed or strongly disagreed that they had learned how to represent other students and that they can contribute to solving school problems. And over one third of Year 10 students did not agree that they had learned about the importance of voting and to be interested in how their school works. These figures show that students at the year levels differ substantially when it comes to how strongly they believe they have learned about the importance of voting in elections and to be interested in how their school works. It is possible that these differences can be explained by the differences in scale and governance structures for primary and secondary schools and also the general attitudes of the two different age level cohorts.

Generally, the patterns of 2007 results shown in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 are very similar to the patterns found in 2004.

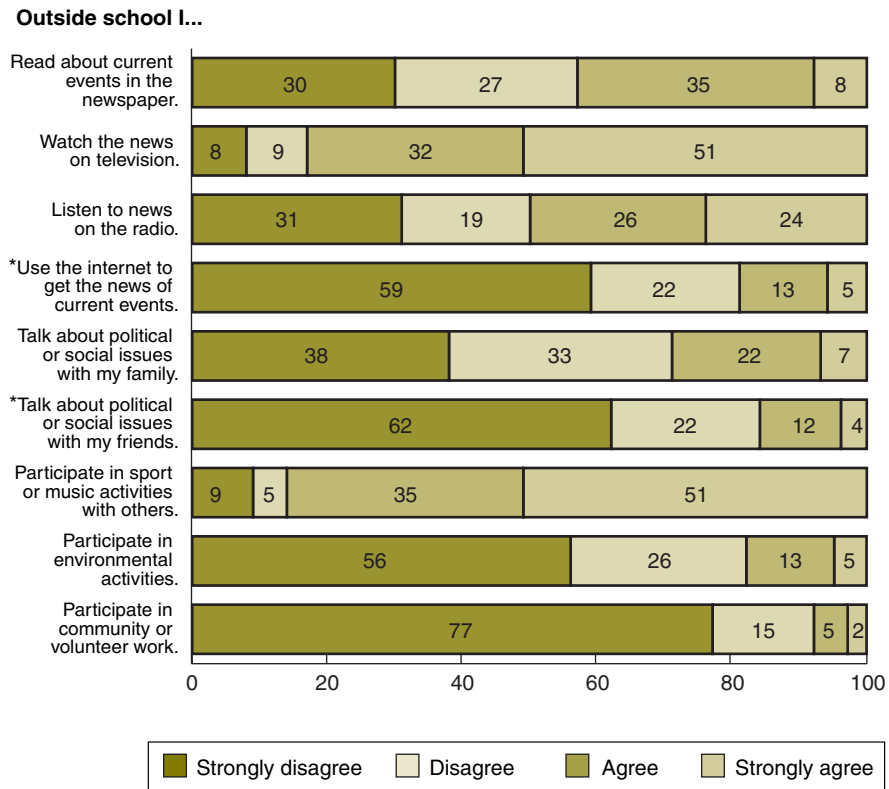
Almost all of the concepts about governance and civics and citizenship correlated relatively strongly with one another (on average $r=0.3$ at Year 6 and $r=0.4$ at Year 10). (See Appendix 8 for the table of correlation coefficients and a more detailed discussion of the findings.) This pattern of associations is very similar to those found in 2004.

Factor analysis indicated that for both Year 6 and Year 10 students there was one underlying dimension for the responses to the six items on learning about voting and governance at school. This indicates that the six items are all measuring the same or a similar construct.

Student participation in Civics and Citizenship-related activities outside of school

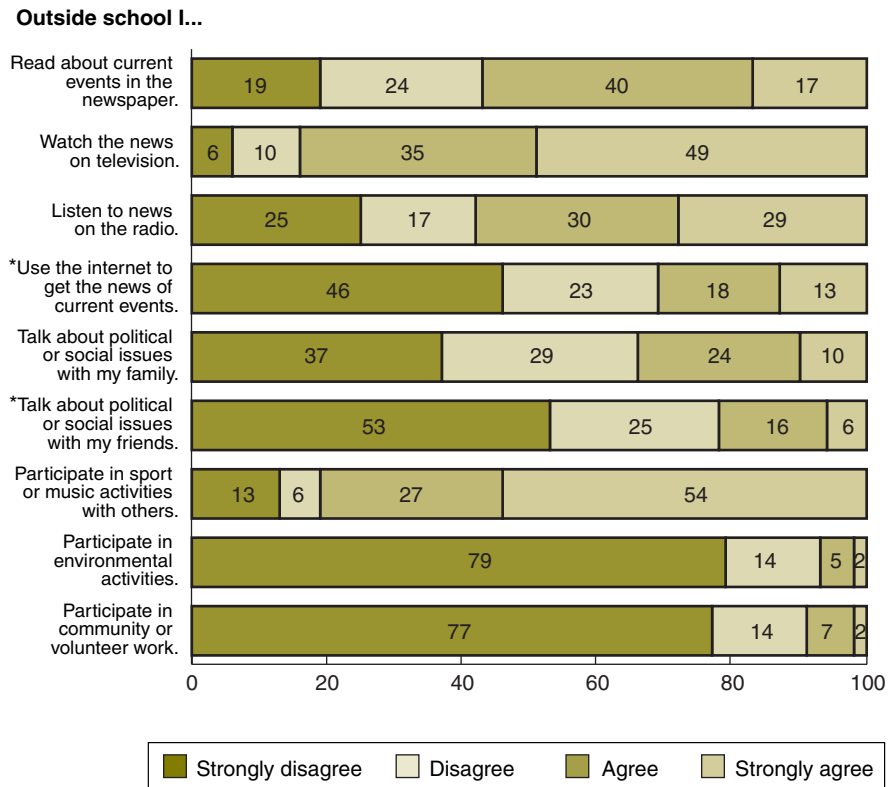
Students were asked how often they participated in a number of specified civics-related activities outside school. These data are reported in Figure 5.3 (Year 6) and Figure 5.4 (Year 10).

Figure 5.3: Year 6 Participation in Civics and Citizenship-related Activities Outside School, 2007



Note: *New questions included in the 2007 Student Background Survey

Figure 5.4: Year 10 Participation in Civics and Citizenship-related Activities Outside School, 2007



Note: * New questions included in the 2007 Student Background Survey

Obtaining news from the media

For both Year 6 and Year 10, watching television news was the out-of-school activity students most frequently engaged in with over 80 per cent of students doing this at least once a week. Reading about current events in newspapers was the next most common way to obtain news, with 40 per cent of Year 6 and over 50 per cent of Year 10 engaging in this activity at least once a week. Listening to radio was the third most common form of obtaining news among both year levels, both having similar percentages.

The internet was the least used medium to obtain news of current events. Eighteen per cent of Year 6 students used the internet to get the news at least once a week, while this figure was higher for Year 10 students (31 per cent at least once a week).

Discussion of political and social issues

Year 6 and 10 students answered similarly regarding how much they discuss political and social issues with their families. Approximately 30 per cent of students said they talked about political and social issues with their families at least once a week. Students talked with their friends about political and social issues less than they did with their families, only 16 per cent of Year 6 students and 22 per cent of Year 10 students talked to their friends about political or social issues at least once a week.

Group and community activities

Apart from watching television news, the most frequently engaged in out-of-school activity among Year 6 and 10 was participation in group activities, such as music and sport, with over 80 per cent of students in both year levels participating at least once a week. Only a few students in either year level participated in environmental activities or community or volunteer work outside of school, and fewer than a quarter of students at both year levels undertook these types of activity at least once a month. Students at Year 6 were twice as likely to participate in environmental activities outside of school: 44 per cent participated at least once a month (Figure 5.3), compared with only 22 per cent of Year 10 students (Figure 5.4).

Participating in Sport, Music and Community Activities Outside School

Figure 5.3 shows that the most popular activities outside of school for Year 6 students were sport and music. Sixty-five per cent of the Year 6 students sampled provided a valid response to this question. Of these respondents, 76 per cent said they participate in sport only. Seventeen per cent reported they play both sport and music, while 7 per cent play music only.

Not as many Year 6 students participated in environmental activities compared to sport and music, with only 31 per cent of students providing a valid response to the question asking them what they do as part of their environmental activities.

However, of those students who did respond, half reported planting trees or caring for vegetation as part of their environmental activities (e.g. planting trees, watering plants). The next most popular environmental activity was cleaning up the environment, with 40 per cent of students who answered this question stating that they pick up litter and participate in initiatives such as 'Clean up Australia Day'. Approximately 10 per cent of students said they contribute to helping the environment by practising sustainable living techniques, such as saving water and electricity, or by supporting conservation organisations, such as animal welfare groups. A further 10 per cent said they recycle as part of their environmental activities.

Only ten per cent of the Year 6 sample gave a valid response to the question asking what they do as part of their community or volunteer work. Of these students, 35 per cent stated that they fundraise for, donate to, or work for a charity or non-profit organisation (e.g. St Vincent De Paul Society, or 'Meals on Wheels'). A further 20 per cent said they help out in a community or sporting organisation (e.g. work in the canteen at football). Sixteen per cent of students who gave a valid response answered that as part of their community/volunteering activities, they help someone in their family (e.g. help their grandmother do the gardening, or help at their father's work). It may be questionable whether helping family members constitutes community or volunteer work.

Sixty-one per cent of the Year 10 students sampled provided a valid response to this question on sport and music activities. Of these respondents, 82 per cent play sport (only), nine per cent play music (only), while another 9 per cent play both sport and music.

Not nearly as many Year 10 as Year 6 students said they participated in environmental activities. Only 15 per cent of Year 10 students (compared to 30 per cent of Year 6 students) provided a valid answer to the question asking them what they did as part of their environmental activities. Of these valid responses, the figures in each category of environmental activity were almost identical to the Year 6 students. Fifty per cent of Year 10 students said they plant vegetation as part of their environmental activities, while 40 per cent stated that they clean up the environment. Ten per cent of the Year 10 students who gave valid responses stated that they practise sustainable living techniques and support conservation organisations, while another 10 per cent recycle as part of their environmental activities.

There were more Year 10 than Year 6 students who gave a valid response to the question asking what they do as part of their community or volunteer work, with approximately 17 per cent of Year 10 students providing an out-of-school activity that they classify as being community or volunteer work. Of these valid responses, 35 per cent said they donated to, or worked for, a charity or non-profit organisation. Another 35 per cent said they help out in a community or sporting organisation. Thirteen per cent referred to caring for the elderly or those with special needs as part of their community or volunteer activities, while approximately 10 per

cent said they said they volunteered at their church or temple. Only 3 per cent of those Year 10 students who gave a valid response stated that helping out family members was their community or volunteer activity. These young people may well be more independent than children in Year 6 (of whom 16 per cent had given this response).

Associations between civics and citizenship-related activities outside school

Analyses were conducted to investigate associations between different civics and citizenship-related activities outside school (see Appendix 8 for the details). The strongest association at both year levels was between talking about political and social issues with family members and having these same discussions with friends ($r=0.45$ for Year 6 and $r=0.58$ for Year 10). Moderate to relatively strong correlations were found between most of the questions about accessing the media, and also with the two items about talking about political and social issues.

Participation in environmental activities and participation in community or volunteer work were associated moderately with one another. The association between obtaining access to news and current events, and participation in community, volunteer, environmental, sporting or musical activities was weak.

In general, the correlations between activities at Year 10 were similar or slightly stronger than those found for Year 6. The 2007 correlations are similar to those from the 2004 cycle.

An exploratory factor analysis shows that for Year 6 students, there were two constructs underlying the student responses to the questions about civics and citizenship-related activities outside of school. The first construct consisted of the four items related to accessing the media. The second group consisted of four items: talking about political and social issues with family; talking about political and social issues with friends; participation in environmental activities; and participation in community or volunteer work.

The factor analysis of Year 10 responses indicated three underlying constructs: access to the media; discussion of social and political issues with family and friends; and participation in sport or music environmental activities, and community or volunteer work.

The differences in the configuration of factors according to year level suggests differences in the way students make associations between these types of activities and therefore, the degree to which they participate in them. At Year 10 the activities of participation in environmental and community or volunteer work appear to be peer based social activities (possibly with a social activism motive, but driven by the peer group). However, at Year 6 the focus appears to be much more on the political and social issues aspects of these activities, perhaps through the influence of significant adults such as parents and teachers.

Relationships between In-school and Out-of-school Participation

In 2004 a correlation analysis of all of the variables used to examine the range of opportunities students had experienced in civics and citizenship participation was conducted. It was found that, in general, the correlation coefficients between the variables representing civic and citizenship-related participation were small. The same analysis of all the variables was conducted with the 2007 data and a similar result was obtained, suggesting that little association is made by students between opportunities to participate in civics and citizenship-related activities and what they have learned about governance.

Correlations between opportunities to participate and actual participation at school

The strongest relationships involved the new variable item set introduced in 2007, the actual participation in civics and citizenship activities at school. The items on actual participation of the students themselves were strongly correlated with opportunities for participation in civics and citizenship. These associations suggest that opportunities provided to students to participate in civic and citizenship-related activities support their actual participation in such activities. When students are offered the opportunity they appear willing to participate.

Actual participation in civics and citizenship-related activities was also moderately related to some items concerned with learning about school governance. In particular, participation in decision making outside the student council was related to learning about school decision making and being interested in how the student's school 'works'. Providing students with the opportunity to contribute to school decision making through methods other than student council, and students taking up that opportunity, leads students to feel that they have learnt about school governance.

Student Achievement and Civics-related Activities

In the Student Background Survey there was a set of eight items in which students responded to questions about opportunities to participate in various activities at their school. These items formed two groups: one was concerned with opportunities for participation in school governance; and the other with opportunities for participation in more general aspects of school life.

For each group it was possible to form a scale based on a count of the number of items to which a 'yes' response was provided. Since the items were describing what happened at the school, a mean score was then computed for the school. Based on the mean score obtained by the school on each scale, schools were divided into four equal groups (approximate quartiles) representing: Low opportunity; Medium-Low opportunity; Medium-High opportunity; and High opportunity for participation in these activities. The civics and citizenship achievement scores for each group of schools and the results of the comparison of these scores are recorded in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Mean Civics and Citizenship Achievement by Opportunities for Participation Categories, 2007

| Level of opportunity for participation (school quartiles) | School Governance (mean achievement score) | | | | Extra-curricular School Civic Activities (mean achievement score) | | | |
|---|--|------|---------|------|---|------|---------|------|
| | Year 6 | | Year 10 | | Year 6 | | Year 10 | |
| | mean | CI | mean | CI | mean | CI | mean | CI |
| Low | 381 | 16.4 | 464 | 17.3 | 386 | 17.3 | 450 | 25.6 |
| Medium-Low | 388 | 12.8 | 481 | 21.3 | 398 | 17.1 | 491 | 16.6 |
| Medium-High | 422 | 13.1 | 528 | 24.5 | 410 | 11.7 | 509 | 15.2 |
| High | 423 | 13.0 | 539 | 18.9 | 423 | 14.1 | 553 | 19.2 |
| Correlation with Achievement | 0.17 | | 0.25 | | 0.13 | | 0.31 | |

Table 5.3 shows for both year levels that as the level of opportunity provided by schools for student participation increases so too do the mean civic and citizenship achievement scores. It shows that this association is stronger for Year 10 students than Year 6 students.

In 2004 correlations were also found to exist between the opportunity to participate in school governance and mean achievement for Year 6 (0.04) and Year 10 (0.17). These associations were much stronger in 2007 (at 0.17 and 0.25 respectively).

The survey also asked students a further eight questions about their actual participation in various activities at their school. These items formed two groups: one group was concerned with an individual's participation in school governance; and the other was concerned with an individual's participation in school civic activities. For each group it was possible to form a scale based on a count of the number of items to which a 'yes' response was provided. As the items were describing what happened at the individual level, the count was used as an indicator of involvement.

As only about 18 per cent of Year 10 students and 30 per cent of Year 6 students had been elected to an SRC (and, of those, the majority felt that they had contributed to school decision-making) it was decided to combine all students who had been elected onto an SRC into the one group, regardless of whether they felt they had contributed to school decision-making or not. Therefore, there are only three possible activities for the school governance group.

The results are reported in Table 5.4 which shows the mean civics and citizenship achievement according to level of participation in school governance and extra curricula school civic activities. The results indicate that as the number of activities increases for students, so too do the mean civic and citizenship achievement scores.

Table 5.4: Mean Civics and Citizenship Achievement by Level of Participation, 2007

| Number of Activities Students Participated In | School Governance (mean achievement score) | | | | Extra-curricular School Civic Activities (mean achievement score) | | | |
|---|--|------|---------|------|---|------|---------|------|
| | Year 6 | | Year 10 | | Year 6 | | Year 10 | |
| | mean | CI | mean | CI | mean | CI | mean | CI |
| None | 378 | 12.7 | 468 | 13.7 | 355 | 22.5 | 447 | 17.7 |
| One | 400 | 8.4 | 499 | 10.6 | 389 | 12.8 | 486 | 10.5 |
| Two | 402 | 7.6 | 528 | 10.3 | 405 | 8.2 | 508 | 9.8 |
| Three | 437 | 9.0 | 548 | 16.4 | 410 | 8.6 | 543 | 12.1 |
| Four | – | – | – | – | 417 | 12.0 | 532 | 22.3 |
| Correlation with Achievement | 0.15 | | 0.22 | | 0.11 | | 0.25 | |

The results in Table 5.4 suggest that there is an association between participation in governance and civics achievement scores for both Year 6 and 10 students (at 0.15 and 0.22 respectively). There is also an association between participation in extra curricula school civic activities and civics achievement scores for both Year 6 and 10 students (at 0.11 and 0.25 respectively). In both cases the association is stronger at Year 10. Of interest, is the finding that those Year 10 students who were not elected to the SRC had a significantly lower average achievement than that of any student elected to the SRC.

Figures 5.5 and 5.6 are graphical representations of the data in Table 5.4. They show the linear trend of mean scaled scores according to the number of activities participated in, and the associated confidence intervals. Tests of the significance of the differences in mean scores, according to the number of activities participated in, support the finding of a general trend of increasing achievement with an increasing number of activities of both types; governance and civics and citizenship-related. The only differences that were not found to be significant were between one and two school governance activities at Year 6; between two and three and three and four general civics-related activities at Year 6; and three and four general civics-related activities at Year 10.

Figure 5.5 Mean Scaled Scores of Year 6 and Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Number of School Governance Activities Participated In

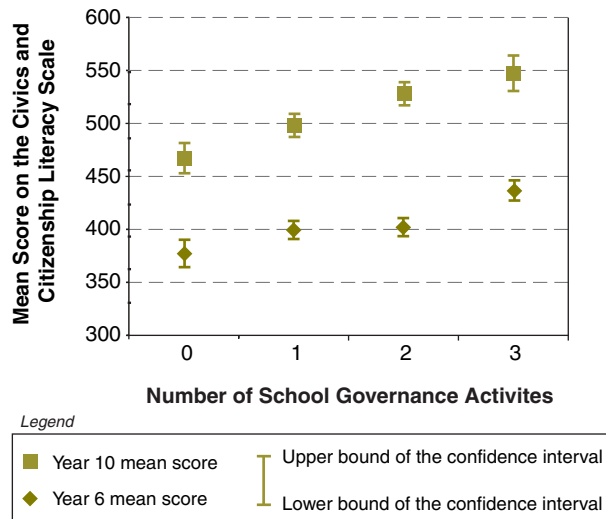
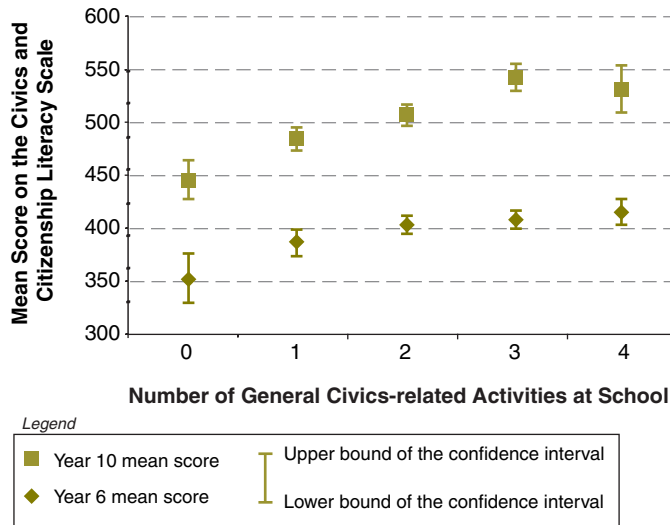


Figure 5.6: Mean Scaled Scores of Year 6 and Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Number of Civics-related Activities Participated In at School



Civics achievement and student views about learning about governance at school

Previously in this chapter it has been noted that for both Year 6 and Year 10 students there was one underlying dimension for the responses to the six items on learning about governance at school. A scale based on a combination of these items showed a low correlation with civics achievement scores at both Year 6 ($r = 0.21$) and Year 10 ($r = 0.22$). These are relatively small correlations indicating only a slight association between student views about their civics learning at school and civics achievement as measured by this instrument.

Civics achievement and civics-related activities outside school

Table 5.5 shows the mean civics and citizenship achievement according to frequency of participation in the nine questions asked in the Student Background Survey about civics and citizenship-related activities outside school.

Table 5.5: Year 6 Civics and Citizenship Achievement by Participation in Civics and Citizenship-related Activities Outside School, 2007

| Year 6 | Mean test score for response category | | | | | | | | Correlation with achievement |
|--|---------------------------------------|------|-----------------------|------|----------------------|------|--------------------------|------|------------------------------|
| | Never or hardly ever | | At least once a month | | At least once a week | | More than 3 times a week | | |
| | Mean score | CI | Mean score | CI | Mean score | CI | Mean score | CI | |
| Read a Newspaper | 385 | 8.4 | 417 | 7.8 | 411 | 7.1 | 418 | 13.2 | 0.10 |
| Watch TV News | 376 | 13.5 | 406 | 13.4 | 410 | 7.2 | 407 | 6.4 | 0.06 |
| Listen to Radio News | 380 | 8.1 | 410 | 8.5 | 416 | 6.9 | 422 | 8.4 | 0.15 |
| Use the internet to obtain News | 403 | 6.2 | 414 | 8.4 | 412 | 12.9 | 381 | 15.6 | 0.00 |
| Talk Politics & Social Issues with Family | 391 | 6.5 | 414 | 6.8 | 416 | 9.7 | 409 | 16.4 | 0.08 |
| Talk Politics & Social Issues with Friends | 403 | 6.1 | 416 | 9.0 | 406 | 12.0 | 383 | 17.6 | 0.00 |
| Participate in sport or music activities with others | 394 | 12.1 | 379 | 17.1 | 414 | 6.6 | 405 | 7.1 | 0.10 |
| Participate in environmental activities | 412 | 6.4 | 411 | 8.1 | 389 | 11.6 | 366 | 21.4 | 0.06 |
| Participate in community or volunteer work | 411 | 5.5 | 403 | 11.9 | 367 | 17.7 | 351 | 27.3 | 0.15 |

Table 5.6: Year 10 Civics and Citizenship Achievement by Participation in Civics and Citizenship-related Activities Outside School, 2007

| Year 10 | Mean test score for response category | | | | | | | | Correlation with achievement |
|--|---------------------------------------|------|-----------------------|------|----------------------|------|--------------------------|------|------------------------------|
| | Never or hardly ever | | At least once a month | | At least once a week | | More than 3 times a week | | |
| | Mean score | CI | Mean score | CI | Mean score | CI | Mean score | CI | |
| Read a Newspaper | 471 | 12.1 | 495 | 11.1 | 507 | 9.9 | 538 | 12.9 | 0.17 |
| Watch TV News | 468 | 25.9 | 490 | 13.6 | 498 | 8.8 | 511 | 11.1 | 0.10 |
| Listen to Radio News | 469 | 11.0 | 486 | 14.1 | 508 | 12.0 | 534 | 9.3 | 0.20 |
| Use the internet to obtain News | 483 | 10.0 | 504 | 12.7 | 523 | 12.7 | 536 | 17.1 | 0.17 |
| Talk Politics & Social Issues with Family | 459 | 11.3 | 507 | 10.6 | 533 | 10.4 | 574 | 15.8 | 0.32 |
| Talk Politics & Social Issues with Friends | 473 | 9.8 | 525 | 12.1 | 547 | 11.9 | 551 | 25.3 | 0.27 |
| Participate in sport or music activities with others | 499 | 13.6 | 471 | 22.7 | 502 | 11.2 | 506 | 10.0 | 0.04 |
| Participate in environmental activities | 504 | 8.4 | 498 | 14.9 | 497 | 25.7 | 508 | 33.4 | -0.01 |
| Participate in community or volunteer work | 497 | 8.6 | 516 | 12.4 | 540 | 18.0 | 495 | 43.4 | 0.08 |

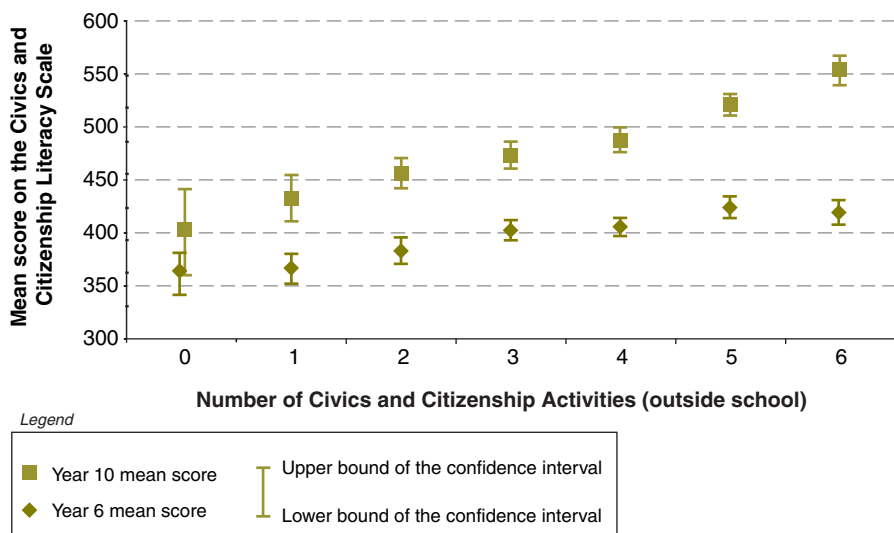
Table 5.5 shows that as the frequency of participation in the listed activities increases, so also do the mean achievement scores. The trend is weaker at Year 6 and less consistent, but it is worth noting that for Year 10 it is relatively strong for those items about accessing the media, and especially for the items about discussing

political and social issues with family and friends. For Year 6 students the strongest correlations with civics achievement were found for 'listening to the radio' and 'participating in community or volunteer work' but they were very modest. The strongest association shown in the table was between civics achievement and 'talking about politics and social issues with family' for Year 10 students.

It was found that participation in a greater number of civics and citizenship related activities at school was associated with higher achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. It was thought that it might also be the case that participation in a number of civics and citizenship activities outside of school may be associated with higher achievement, not just greater frequency of participation in a single activity (shown in Tables 5.5 and 5.6). To test this possibility, a variable combining participation in the first six activities (four media activities and two discussion activities) was constructed ⁶.

Figure 5.7 presents the mean scaled scores according to number of activities participated in, and the associated confidence intervals. Like the activities at school, a linear trend is shown, with higher achievement associated with a greater number of activities participated in. Tests of the significance of the differences support this finding. At Year 10, each additional activity above one is associated with a significant increase in achievement. At Year 6, as the figure suggests, the significant increments were not by single steps.

Figure 5.7 Mean Scaled Scores of Year 6 and Year 10 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Number of Civics and Citizenship Related Activities Participated In Outside School



The Influence of Participation in Civics and Citizenship Activities on Achievement

In Chapter 4 the influence of background characteristics on Year 10 student performance was examined using multiple regression analysis. In this chapter that analysis is built on by adding variables reflecting student participation in civic-related activities. Two sets of new variables were added: six items about

⁶ Each variable was dichotomised into 'Participated in (at least once a month)' versus 'Never participated in'. The number of activities 'Participated in (at least once a month)' was then counted.

participation in out-of-school civic-related activities; and three items reflecting participation in school governance activities (see Appendix 7 for details).

In Chapter 4, the model only included student background variables, which were found to explain 13.2 per cent of the variance in achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. The new model includes participation in civics and citizenship activities, as well as student background characteristics. Together, the variables in the second model were found to explain 23.6 per cent of the total variance in performance. This increase in explanatory power indicates that participation in civics and citizenship activities has a substantial influence on achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, over and above that of background characteristics.

Figure 5.8 shows the percentage of variance explained by each of the variables found to have had a significant influence on student performance on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. A comparison with the equivalent figure in Chapter 4 (Figure 4.6) shows that the explanatory power of parental occupation has been reduced from the 8.8 per cent in the earlier model to 5.4 per cent in this model. This indicates that some of the influence of parental occupation is due to differences in rate of participation in civics and citizenship activities according to level of parental occupation. Correspondingly, the joint variance (or explained variance that is due to interactions between the explanatory variables) has grown to five per cent from 1.1 per cent.

Figure 5.8: Disaggregation of Variance and Explained Variance in Student Performance on the Civics and Citizenship Scale by Student Background and Civic Participation Variables, 2007

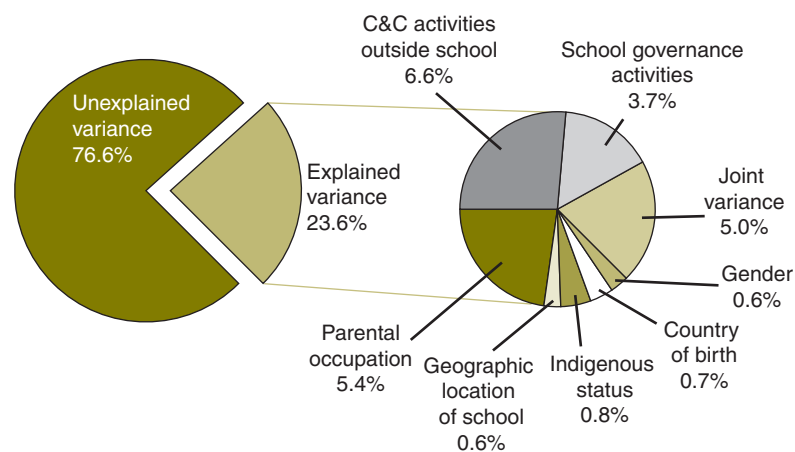


Figure 5.8 also shows that participation in civics and citizenship activities outside of school accounts for 6.6 per cent of the total variance and participation in school governance activities accounts for 3.7 per cent. In both of these cases, most of the variance accounted for by these groups of variables is joint variance (in most cases, less than 0.5 per cent of the variance can be attributed uniquely to any individual variable). Therefore, the influence of these variables on student achievement appears to be of a compounding nature – the more activities a student participates in, the greater the exposure to civics-related ideas, the higher achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. Conversely, any one

activity, on its own, has a very small effect. One activity that seems to have a relatively stronger effect on its own is talking about political and social issues with family: this uniquely explains approximately 2 per cent of the variance in student achievement.

The unique influence of each variable can be translated into a change in scale score. Table 5.7 provides the change in scale score attributable to each variable. This table should be read by considering the reference group of students who have a value of zero for all predictor variables. This reference group includes those students who are: 15.8 years old, female, were born in Australia, are not Indigenous, speak English only, whose parents are 'other managers and associate professionals', go to school in a metropolitan location, never or hardly ever participate in any civics and citizenship activity outside of school and have not participated in any school governance activity at school. The change in score (either positive or negative) is the un-standardised regression coefficient and reflects changes in test score with each category of the predictor variable. In the case of the Participation in C&C Activities Outside of School variables, the change in score refers to the change due to an increase by one response category.⁷

⁷ There were four possible response categories: Never or hardly ever (the reference); at least once a month; at least once a week; and more than three times a week. As there are three response categories above the reference category, the change in score should be multiplied by three in order to obtain the change in score for students who take part in that activity most frequently.

Table 5.7: Change in Score on the Year 10 Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale According to Student Background Characteristics and Civics and Citizenship Participation, 2007

| Reference Group | Average Score of the Reference Group | SE |
|--|--------------------------------------|------|
| 15.8 years old; female; born in Australia; not Indigenous; speaks English only; parents are 'other managers and associate professionals'; goes to school in a metropolitan location; never or hardly ever participates in any civics and citizenship activity outside of school; and has not participated in any school governance activity at school. | 471.4 | 8.4 |
| Background variable | Change in score* | SE |
| Age** | -3.7 | 4.9 |
| Male | -17.7 | 5.9 |
| Not Born in Australia | -28.2 | 9.2 |
| Indigenous | -59.7 | 11.4 |
| Language Background other than English | -9.0 | 7.5 |
| Parental Occupation: Senior managers & professionals | 32.8 | 5.7 |
| Parental Occupation: Tradespeople, skilled office, sales and service staff | -25.2 | 5.1 |
| Parental Occupation: Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff | -42.8 | 6.0 |
| Parental Occupation: Not in paid work in last 12 months | -96.3 | 29.6 |
| Geographic Location of the School: Provincial location | -21.5 | 8.2 |
| Geographic Location of the School: Remote location | -52.1 | 17.1 |
| Participation in C&C Activities Outside of School: reading about current events in the newspaper*** | 5.4 | 2.1 |
| Participation in C&C Activities Outside of School: watching the news on television*** | -0.7 | 2.8 |
| Participation in C&C Activities Outside of School: listening to news on the radio*** | 5.5 | 1.6 |
| Participation in C&C Activities Outside of School: using the internet to get news of current events*** | 1.2 | 2.1 |
| Participation in C&C Activities Outside of School: talking about political or social issues with your family*** | 20.9 | 2.8 |
| Participation in C&C Activities Outside of School: talking about political or social issues with your friends*** | 10.0 | 2.8 |
| Participation in School Governance Activities: I have voted for class representatives | 18.5 | 5.9 |
| Participation in School Governance Activities: I have been elected onto a SRC | 5.6 | 5.9 |
| Participation in School Governance Activities: I have contributed to decisions about what happens at school | 15.0 | 4.7 |

Notes: * Numbers shaded are significant

**Change in score associated with an increase of 0.53 years (approximately six months).

***Change in score associated with an increase of one response category.

In this model, as found in Chapter 4, all the background variables have a significant effect on performance, except for age and language spoken at home. Of the civics and citizenship participation variables, watching the news on television, using the internet to get news of current events and having been elected onto the SRC were not found to have a significant effect. Of the significant effects for the activities variables, the strongest influence was for the frequency of talking about politics and social issues with family: the effect of a one response category increase in frequency of discussion was about 20 points on the achievement scale. This indicates that the net difference in achievement scores between a Year 10 student who never or hardly ever engages in these discussions and a Year 10 student who

does so more than three times a week, was over 60 points, which is a considerable increase. Having voted for class representatives added about 18 points to the achievement score, while feeling that one had contributed to decisions about what happens at school (not through the SRC) added about 15 score points.

Summary

Participation in civics and citizenship activities is a major influence on student achievement in civics and citizenship. As a group these variables contributed an extra 10.4 per cent in explanatory power, over and above that contributed by background variables. Moreover, the regression analysis indicated that the influence of participation in civics and citizenship activities may be of a compounding nature; such that the effect of these activities is strongest when a number of activities are considered together.

Concluding Comments

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

According to students, opportunities existed in most schools for students to participate in decision making and school governance activities. More than four-fifths of the students (including 90 per cent of Year 10 students) indicated that their school provided an opportunity for students to be represented on student councils and that student representatives could contribute to decision-making.

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

Achievement in civics and citizenship appeared to be influenced by participation in civic-related activities over and above student background. There were small effects of the opportunity to participate in school governance (as measured at school level) on civics achievement among Year 10 students. Participation in out-of-school civic-related activities made a moderate contribution to civics achievement among Year 10 students. Specifically, frequent engagement in talking about politics and social issues with family was quite strongly related to civics achievement. Generally it appears that the influence on Civics and Citizenship achievement of participating in a range of civics and citizenship activities (including school governance) is a compounding one, with the joint effect of such activities being greater than the sum of their individual effect.

Chapter 6

Concluding Discussion

The 2007 cycle of the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship provided an opportunity to not only map the current national situation in detail, but also to examine changes from 2004. Although by 2007 civics and citizenship education generally had a more prominent place in curriculum policies than in 2004, it was an open question as to whether curricula implementation had advanced at the school or classroom level in such a way as to impact on achievement at a national level.

The trial for the second cycle of the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship was conducted in March 2007, with the Main Assessment being conducted in October 2007. Students at Years 6 and 10 in over 600 randomly sampled schools completed the assessment tasks.

The Assessment Domain remained largely the same from the 2004 to the 2007 assessment. Secure items from the 2004 assessment were retained and new items developed for the 2007 assessment. The coverage of the Assessment Domain by the item set was monitored closely.

A more comprehensive rotation of items through the test booklets was in place for 2007 than had been implemented in 2004, involving 7 test booklets at both year levels.

Data on student background characteristics and participation in civics and citizenship activities were also collected. Some new questions were added to those used in 2004, including some about students' actual participation in civics and citizenship activities at school.

Following data collection, expert online marking of all constructed responses was conducted, and school reports were prepared based on summary data. Data analysis and scaling were then undertaken. In 2007, the analysis included equating between cycles (that is between 2004 and 2007) as well as equating between year levels.

Reporting Student Achievement in Civics and Citizenship

Student achievement was reported on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, which was based on that constructed in the 2004 assessment. Year 6 and Year 10 were scaled separately.

To elaborate the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, detailed descriptions of each of the levels were developed by examining the skills and understanding students needed to respond to the items located at that level. Sample items were presented for each level and the content and difficulty of items were examined, with reference to typical student responses. The sample items were selected to illustrate the full breadth of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, the range of items included in the assessment and the Assessment Domain.

Main Characteristics of Student Achievement in Civics and Citizenship

Student achievement in the second cycle of the National Assessment Program-Civics and Citizenship 2007, at or above the levels of their respective Proficient Standards, was 54 per cent for Year 6 and 41 per cent for Year 10 students. This represents a minimal improvement from the achievement reported following the first cycle of the 2004 assessment of 3 per cent for Year 6 students and 2 per cent for Year 10 students.

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

Items that appeared in Level 1, for instance, were characterised in Chapter 3 as:

... demonstrating a literal or generalised understanding of simple civics and citizenship concepts. Their cognition in responses to multiple choice items is generally limited to civics institutions and processes. In the few open-ended items they use vague or limited terminology and offer no interpretation.

The issue of what holds back these students from making more complex

responses is an important one. The language such students used was commonly generalised, and it may be hypothesised that this was due to the students not having the concepts or having the concepts but not having the specificity of language that would enable them to respond in a more sophisticated way. In an area such as civics and citizenship, in which there is typically a low incidence of formal instruction, this necessarily inhibits the students' capacity to use the formal, precise language to express the required levels of response and it becomes an important matter.

Test items at Level 1 were generally multiple choice items, thus not requiring students to exercise their own choice of language. In the band below Level 1 all the items were multiple choice, but by Level 2 there were many items requiring students to choose their own text in responding to open-ended items and they showed they were more able to use the domain-specific language.

By way of comparison, items that appeared in Levels 4 and 5 were such that very few students at either year level were able to achieve success with them. It is important to note that there were many such items. The item response descriptors for these levels show clearly the civic knowledge (including the use of appropriate terminology) and complexity of the analytical interpretation needed to demonstrate achievement at higher proficiency levels. These were levels of knowledge, understandings, skills and dispositions that most students could not demonstrate.

The students who were able to achieve Level 4 proficiency were described in Chapter 3 as:

... consistently demonstrating accurate responses to multiple choice items on the full range of complex key civics and citizenship concepts or issues. They provide precise and detailed interpretative responses, using appropriate conceptually-specific language, in their constructed responses. They consistently mesh knowledge and understanding from both Key Performance Measures.

In Levels 4 and 5 are located the items which indicate those understandings and dispositions which require more focussed teaching and learning. The content and conceptual grasp required for these items included understandings about international agreements, about how a nation's identity is reshaped over time (in part by demographic changes resulting from immigration) and also principles of democracy. Since so very few students are able to achieve at this level, it is evident they need to be provided with more opportunities to learn and develop such understandings and dispositions. If these opportunities are provided, students may well be able to demonstrate higher performance in subsequent assessment cycles.

As in 2004, it was noted that many of the Year 10 students did not demonstrate the knowledge outlined in the assessment domain as being designated for Year 6. This was especially the case in relation to information about the constitutional structure of Australian democracy. Lacking such fundamental information will

restrict the capacity of students to make sense of many other aspects of Australian democratic forms and processes, and they may, therefore, be disadvantaged in their capacity to engage in meaningful ways in many other levels of civic action or discourse.

Despite these concerns about the relatively low levels of achievement, one of the most encouraging aspects was the fact that some students were able to achieve at higher levels than had been expected. Ten per cent of Year 6 students were able to perform at Level 3 and 7 per cent of Year 10 students at Level 4.

It is not possible to know whether these high levels of performance resulted more from particular teaching or from out-of-school experiences, but the specificity of knowledge and complexity of responses suggests that well taught students can indeed achieve well beyond the expected proficiency in civics and citizenship.

Differences in Performance between Year 6 and Year 10

Overall, the relative achievement of Year 6 and 10 students has not changed significantly from 2004 to 2007. Therefore, the same observations that were made in 2004 about the 'growth' that occurs in student learning between Years 6 and 10 can also be made in 2007. In both 2004 and 2007, student performance in Years 6 and 10 was centred on Levels 1 and 2, and Levels 2 and 3 respectively. Based on this, Year 10 performance can be considered to be approximately one performance level above Year 6 performance. As in 2004, caution should be exercised in interpreting these data as they are not comparing the same students over time.

The context described in Chapter 1 predicts that there would still be wide variations between schools in student understandings and dispositions. As observed in 2004, the concepts and thinking processes required for Levels 4 and 5 achievement require formal teaching to introduce or crystallise experiences and concepts that students may (or may not) have confronted in their daily lives. Therefore, it could be expected that more formal teaching would increase the difference in performance between Years 6 and 10.

Factors Associated with Student Achievement

The influence of various background characteristics, as well as participation in civics and citizenship related activities, was explored. Parental occupation had the largest influence of the background characteristics. The magnitude of this effect equated to a difference of approximately 130 scale points between the bottom and top occupational categories.

Students who attended school in Metropolitan locations performed better than students who attended schools in provincial areas (by approximately 20 scale points) and remote areas (by approximately 50 scale points). Students from provincial schools achieved higher mean scores than those from remote schools.

Indigenous students performed less well than non-Indigenous students by approximately 60 scale points.

There were only small and insignificant effects of language background. However, students born overseas scored below those born in Australia, by approximately 30 scale points at Year 10.

The difference between males and females was approximately 20 scale points in favour of females.

Participation in family discussions of current events by Year 10 students had the largest individual 'outside school' effect on student performance. Other things being equal, the difference in achievement scores between a Year 10 student who never or hardly ever engaged in such discussions and a Year 10 student who did so more than three times a week, was over 60 points.

Overall, participation in civics and citizenship activities, inside and outside school, including school governance, explained a substantial proportion of the variation in achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale. Although participation in individual citizenship activities at school had varied but mainly small effects on student performance, it appears that the influence of these activities is of a compounding nature. Participating in more than one activity has an influence greater than the simple addition of the influence of each activity. Students who participate in a number of school governance activities as well as civics and citizenship related activities outside school appear to gain knowledge about civics and citizenship that their non-participating peers do not acquire.

Trends between 2004 and 2007

Being the second cycle of the Civics and Citizenship assessment, it was possible to examine change over time in student achievement from 2004 to 2007. Overall there has been little change in either mean achievement or percentage of students at or above the Proficient Standard for either Year 6 or Year 10.

Year 10 students in South Australia showed a significant improvement in mean achievement and in the percentage achieving the Proficient Standard. Year 6 students in the Northern Territory showed a significant decline in mean achievement from 2004 to 2007 and in the percentage achieving the Proficient Standard. While there were some changes among the other States and Territories in the percentage of students achieving the Proficient Standard from 2004 to 2007, both improvement and decline, none of these were significant.

The lack of overall change in achievement was paralleled in the relative impact of background variables on achievement. Apart from the parental occupation variables no significant change from 2004 to 2007 was found for any background variable. The spread of mean achievement according to parental occupation group increased from 2004 to 2007. This was mainly due to a significant improvement in mean achievement for students in the highest group (i.e. with at least one parent who was a senior manager or professional). The mean achievement declined in all of the other parental occupation groups (although not significantly).

While there were some additional questions in 2007 about participation in civics and citizenship activities, there was enough overlap with the questions asked in 2004 to examine trends for these variables as well. Overall, the patterns of response to these questions, as well as the patterns of associations between these variables, were similar for both cycles. The relationship of these variables with achievement was also examined in both cycles. In 2007, the strength of association between these variables and student achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale was similar or slightly stronger than that in 2004.

Implications of Student Achievement in Civics and Citizenship

Student achievement at both year levels was very similar to that achieved in the first cycle, and thus in 2007, as in 2004, achievement for students at both years was lower than expected with 41 per cent of the Year 10 and 54 per cent of the Year 6 students achieving their designated Proficient Standard.

The experts who had the task in 2004 of establishing the two proficiency standards saw their task as identifying domain-specific levels of achievement, appropriate to the two stages of schooling, with a view to the skill and knowledge levels needed by students if they were to meet the National Goals for Schooling. The jurisdictional experts know the challenges in the delivery of Civics and Citizenship in classroom and schools, as they are those who implement the new curricula statements, and provide professional development programs. The National Statements of Learning in Civics and Citizenship may provide a focus for future work in curriculum development and support more effective delivery in schools.

The report has provided indicators of the kinds of opportunities and activities that schools should seek to provide. The findings which provide the clearest direction relate to civic activities and having the opportunity to participate in voting and in decision making at school. These civic-related activities have a unique and significant effect on achievement. Moreover the effect is a compounding one: the more opportunities that are taken up by students the greater the effect on civics and citizenship achievement.

If schools do not wish to provide a detailed or conventional civics and citizenship curriculum to all their students, thereby adding to the students' civic knowledge,

this report's findings indicate that worthwhile gains will come from a governance model which allows decision making by students in the school. Furthermore, another finding is that, as currently experienced by students, being on an SRC or School Council does not have a unique significant effect on civics and citizenship achievement. This may indicate that an alteration to how these civic institutions operate within schools is desirable, if the purpose is to provide opportunities to learn decision making. There are many other ways in which such opportunities can be opened up to more students.

The major support for civics and citizenship programs in schools in recent years has been the *Discovering Democracy* program, funded by the Australian Government and implemented by the States and Territories. This program has now finished and alternative funding for civics and citizenship programs appears relatively limited. If teachers are still not confident with teaching in this domain, perhaps the requirement to implement the Civics and Citizenship Statements of Learning will encourage schools to develop relevant programs; some of them knowledge-based and others experiential.

The 2007 results, as in 2004, provide a powerful incentive for schools and policy makers: students who achieve better than their peers are those who demonstrate knowledge and understanding of both Key Performance Measures. This report's findings suggest that students need to be taught explicit civic knowledge about how democracy works, and be provided with opportunities to take part in discussions and to become actively involved in decision making at school. Students so taught are more likely to be the 'active and informed citizens' sought by the National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century; equipped to act as engaged and effective citizens.

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Appendix 1 Assessment Domain

MCEETYA PMRT Civics & Citizenship Assessment Domain: Domain Descriptors

Yr 6 Civics & Citizenship Key Performance Measures

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

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

Within primary schooling this KPM anticipates that students can:

- 6.1:** Recognise key features of Australian democracy.
 - 6.2:** Describe the development of Australian self-government and democracy.
 - 6.3:** Outline the roles of political and civic institutions in Australia.
 - 6.4:** Understand the purposes and processes of creating and changing rules and laws.
 - 6.5:** Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens in Australia's democracy.
 - 6.6:** Recognise that Australia is a pluralist society with citizens of diverse ethnic origins and cultural backgrounds.
- KPM 2: Citizenship: Dispositions & Skills for Participation
- Understandings related to the attitudes, values, dispositions, beliefs and actions that underpin active democratic citizenship.
- Within primary schooling this KPM expects that students can:
- 6.7:** Recognise that citizens require certain skills and dispositions to participate effectively in democratic decision-making.
 - 6.8:** Identify ways that Australian citizens can effectively participate in their society and its governance.
 - 6.9:** Recognise the ways that understanding of and respect for, commonalities and differences contribute to harmony within a democratic society.
 - 6.10:** Understand why citizens choose to engage in civic life and decision-making.

Yr 10 Civics & Citizenship Key Performance Measures⁸

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

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

Within secondary schooling this KPM expects that students can:

- 10.1:** Recognise that perspectives on Australian democratic ideas and civic institutions vary and change over time.
- 10.2:** Understand the ways in which the Australian Constitution impacts on the lives of Australian citizens.
- 10.3:** Understand the role of law-making and governance in Australia's democratic tradition.
- 10.4:** Understand the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a range of contexts.
- 10.5:** Analyse how Australia's ethnic and cultural diversity contribute to Australian democracy, identity and social cohesion.
- 10.6:** Analyse Australia's role as a nation in the global community.

KPM 2: Citizenship: Dispositions & Skills for Participation

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

Within secondary schooling this KPM expects that students can:

- 10.7:** Understand that citizens require certain knowledge, skills and dispositions to participate effectively in democratic political and civic action.
- 10.8:** Analyse the role of a critical citizenry in Australia's democracy.
- 10.9:** Analyse the relationship between democratic values and social justice as an important aspect of Australia's democratic tradition.
- 10.10:** Analyse the reasons Australians make choices about participating in political and civic processes.

⁸ The Year 10 KPMs assume the Year 6 KPMs have already been achieved by students

MCEETYA PMRT Civics & Citizenship Assessment Domain: Professional Elaboration

Yr 6 Civics & Citizenship Key Performance Measures

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

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

Within primary schooling this KPM anticipates that students can:

6.1: Recognise key features of Australian democracy.

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

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

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

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

Basic values in a democratic society include the rule of law, freedom of speech, freedom of the media, freedom of religion, freedom of association. Everyone, including government, is subject to the law.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Understand that laws are designed to address issues in society.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

KPM 2: Citizenship: Dispositions & Skills for Participation

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

Within primary schooling this KPM expects that students can:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

6.9: Recognise the ways that understanding of and respect for, people from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds contribute to harmony within a democratic society.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yr 10 Civics & Citizenship Key Performance measures ⁹

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

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

Within secondary schooling this KPM expects that students can:

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

Identify key characteristics of a democracy and of democratic institutions.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Understand the part referenda play in changing the Constitution.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Understand how Australia interacts on governance issues with other nations.

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

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

Analyse reactions to Australian international policies and practises.

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

KPM2: Citizenship: Dispositions & Skills for Participation

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

Within secondary schooling this KPM expects that students can:

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

Understand the historical and policy context of a public issue.

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

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

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

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

Recognise that participation in political and civic institutions is an important way for citizens to exercise their responsibilities in a democratic society.

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

Understand the importance to effective democracy of informed and active citizens.

Understand that citizen engagement can be through a range of political and civic processes.

Understand the contribution that citizen engagement makes to Australian society and its freedoms.

Understand the impact on a democracy of a free, informed and critical media.

Appreciate the impact on a democracy of an active and informed citizenry.

Appreciate that the accountability of governments and parliaments can be enhanced through critical evaluation by citizens and the media.

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

Identify and appreciate the democratic values that underpin Australian democracy.

Explain how beliefs about social justice and democratic values developed in Australia and why they are still important today.

Recognise the ways in which these beliefs about social justice and democratic values can be affected by local, national and international events.

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

Identify ways in which Australian citizens can participate actively and effectively in political and civic processes.

Identify and analyse the reasons why some Australian citizens engage in political and civic processes while others do not.

Appendix 2

Student Background Survey

(including Assessment of Civics and Citizenship Opportunities)

STUDENT BACKGROUND SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT OF CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

In this section you will find questions about you and your family; what you do outside school; and your experience of school.

Please read each question carefully and answer as accurately as you can. You may ask for help if you do not understand something or are not sure how to answer a question.

If you make a mistake when answering a question, erase your error and make the correction, either by colouring in the correct bubble or writing the correct answer on the line.

In this section, there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. Your answers should be the ones that you decide are best for you.

Questions 1 to 12 were asked of Year 10 students only. This information was obtained for Year 6 students using the Online Student Registration System (OSRS).

Q1 Where do you live?

Please write the place name, State/Territory (eg NT) and postcode of your **permanent home address** (ie the last line of your home address).

(If you are boarding away from home, please think of your **permanent home address**.)

(If you have a PO Box, please think of your **home** rather than the PO Box address.)

 (Suburb name) (State/Territory) (Postcode)

Q2 Are you a boy or a girl? boy girl

Q3 How old are you? years months

Q4 Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

(Please colour in **only one bubble**.)

- No
 Yes, Aboriginal
 Yes, Torres Strait Islander
 Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Q5 In which country were you born?

Australia Other, please specify country: _____

Q6 Do you or your parents/guardians speak a language other than English at home?

(Please colour in **only one bubble** for each person.)

| | a) You | b) Your mother/ female guardian | c) Your father/ male guardian |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| No, English only | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Yes, please specify language: _____ | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Q7 What is your mother's/female guardian's main job? (eg school teacher, cleaner, sales assistant)

If she is not working now, please tell us her last main job.

Please write in the job title: _____

Q8 What does your mother/female guardian do in her main job? (eg teaches school students, cleans offices, sells things)

If she is not working now, please tell us what she did in her last main job.

Please use a sentence to describe the kind of work she does or did in that job:

Q9 What is your father's/male guardian's main job? (eg school teacher, cleaner, sales assistant)

If he is not working now, please tell us his last main job.

Please write in the job title: _____

Q10 What does your father/male guardian do in his main job? (eg teaches school students, cleans offices, sells things)

If he is not working now, please tell us what he did in his last main job.

Please use a sentence to describe the kind of work he does or did in that job:

Q11 What is the **highest** year of primary or secondary schooling your parents/guardians have completed? (Please colour in **only one bubble** for each person.)

| | Your mother/female guardian | Your father/male guardian |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a) Year 12 or equivalent | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b) Year 11 or equivalent | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c) Year 10 or equivalent | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d) Year 9 or equivalent or below | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Q12 What is the level of the **highest** qualification your parents/guardians have completed? (Please colour in **only one bubble** for each person.)

| | Your mother/female guardian | Your father/male guardian |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a) Bachelor degree or above | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b) Advanced diploma/diploma | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c) Certificate I to IV (inc. trade cert.) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d) No non-school qualification | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Q13 Outside of school, how often do you ... (Please colour in **only one bubble** for each activity)

| | Never or hardly ever | At least once a month | At least once a week | More than three times a week |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| a) read about current events in the newspaper? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b) watch the news on television? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c) listen to news on the radio? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d) use the internet to get news of current events? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| e) talk about political or social issues with your family? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| f) talk about political or social issues with your friends? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| g) participate in sport or music activities with others? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Please tell us what you do as part of these activities: _____ | | | | |
| h) participate in environmental activities? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Please tell us what you do as part of these activities: _____ | | | | |
| i) participate in community or volunteer work? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Please tell us what you do in this work: _____ | | | | |

Q14 At this school, students ...

| | Yes | No |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a) vote for class representatives. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b) i) are represented on Student Councils, Student Representative Councils (SRCs) or class/school parliament. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| ii) who are representatives contribute to decision making. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c) can contribute, in ways different from (b), to decisions about what happens at school. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d) can help prepare a school paper or magazine. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| e) can participate in peer support, 'buddy' or mentoring programs. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| f) can participate in activities in the community. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| g) can represent the school in activities outside of class (such as drama, sport, music and debating). | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Q15 At this school, I ...
*(If your school does not have these activities, please colour in **the bubble for 'No'.**)*

- | | Yes | No |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a) have voted for class representatives. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b) i) have been elected on to a Student Council, Student Representative Council (SRC) or class/school parliament. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| ii) believe that as a SRC representative I have contributed to school decision making. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c) have contributed, in ways different from (b), to decisions about what happens at school. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d) have helped prepare a school paper or magazine. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| e) have participated in peer support, 'buddy' or mentoring programs. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| f) have participated in activities in the community. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| g) have represented the school in activities outside of class (such as drama, sport, music and debating). | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Q16 At my school I have learned ...
*(Please colour in **only one bubble** for each statement)*

- | | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a) about the importance of voting in elections. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b) how to represent other students. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c) to understand people who have different ideas to me. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d) to work co-operatively with other students. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| e) to be interested in how my school 'works'. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| f) that I can contribute to solving 'problems' at my school. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

This is the end of Part A.

Please do NOT turn the page until told to do so.

Appendix 3

Sample Characteristics by State

This Appendix describes the background characteristics of the participating students at Year 6 and Year 10, nationally, and also at the State and Territory level.

Chapter 2 of the report presents sample characteristics nationally (see Table 2.3), with 'age' the only background variable that is reported by State and Territory (see Table 2.2). This Appendix provides more detail than Table 2.3, by reporting the other background characteristics (gender; geographic location; Indigenous status; language background; country of birth; and socioeconomic background – parental occupation) by State and Territory, as well as the percentage of missing data for each State and Territory.

The data presented in the following tables were collected by means of the Online Student Registration System (OSRS) for Year 6 students and the Student Background Survey for Year 10 students. The data have been weighted to allow inferences to be made about the student populations. However, it is critical for readers of the Appendix to appreciate that the sample was designed only to be representative of student characteristics at the national level, not at the state or territory level. Therefore, in the tables in Appendix 3, there may be some differences from expected distributions at the State or Territory level. That is, due to the level of uncertainty surrounding such estimates, there is always a margin of error. For example, while the estimated percentage of Year 6 female students in Victoria is 49 per cent, it is expected that the actual percentage of Year 6 female students is likely to fall within 44 per cent and 58 per cent. In the small States and Territories this margin of error may be even larger resulting, for example, in a possible range in the Australian Capital Territory of between 39 and 55 percent for Year 6 students.

In addition, the large amount of data missing from that provided by OSRS, particularly for some States and Territories and for the parental occupation variable amongst all the States and Territories for both Year levels, must be acknowledged particularly when making inferences about the Year 6 data presented in these tables. When the magnitude of the missing data is judged to be too great, no comment will be made about the findings from Year 6 for that State or Territory, or the background variable.

Gender

Table A3.1 presents the percentages of Year 6 and 10 students in the sample, nationally, and by State and Territory, by gender (compare with Table 2.4).

Table A3.1: Gender – Percentages of Students by Year Level, Nationally and by State and Territory

| | AUST % | NSW % | VIC % | QLD % | SA % | WA % | TAS % | NT % | ACT % |
|----------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| Year 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 52 | 52 | 51 | 51 | 54 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 |
| Female | 48 | 48 | 49 | 49 | 46 | 50 | 49 | 48 | 47 |
| Missing data | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Year 10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 49 | 46 | 51 | 50 | 51 | 54 | 49 | 57 | 53 |
| Female | 51 | 54 | 49 | 50 | 49 | 46 | 51 | 43 | 47 |
| Missing data | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Table A3.1 shows that there were almost equal numbers of males and females in the sample, with males comprising 52 per cent of Year 6 students and 49 per cent of Year 10 students. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in 2006 males made up 51 per cent of the population at both year levels.¹⁰

The table also indicates that there was a slight over representation of males in Year 6 in South Australia (54%), in Year 10 in the Northern Territory (57%) and Western Australia (54%); while in New South Wales, females were slightly over represented (54%).

Socio-economic background – parental occupation

Missing data nationally, for father's and mother's occupation ranged between 9 and 12 per cent respectively for Year 10. However, the combined variable had an acceptable 2 per cent missing data. The Year 6 student data had 50 and 46 per cent missing for father and mother's occupation respectively, and 43 per cent missing for the combined variable, thus, no comment can be made for Year 6.

Table A3.2 presents the percentages of Year 6 and 10 students in the sample, nationally, and by State and Territory, by Parental Occupation (compare with Table 2.4).

¹⁰ From *Schools Australia, 2006*, Australian Bureau of Statistics

Table A3.2 Parental Occupation – Percentage of Students by Year Level, Nationally and by State and Territory

| Highest occupation level of either parent | AUST % | NSW % | VIC % | QLD % | SA % | WA % | TAS % | NT % | ACT % |
|--|--------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|------|-------|
| Year 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Senior Managers and Professionals | 24 | 25 | 23 | 25 | 17 | 27 | 21 | 34 | 42 |
| Other managers and associate professionals | 26 | 26 | 28 | 29 | 23 | 22 | 22 | 23 | 31 |
| Tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff | 26 | 27 | 24 | 26 | 25 | 29 | 24 | 26 | 13 |
| Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff | 15 | 15 | 13 | 15 | 18 | 17 | 20 | 10 | 7 |
| Not in paid work in last 12 months | 9 | 7 | 11 | 6 | 17 | 5 | 13 | 8 | 7 |
| Not stated or unknown | 43 | 55 | 19 | 53 | 45 | 45 | 18 | 88 | 32 |
| Year 10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Senior Managers and Professionals | 23 | 26 | 26 | 18 | 20 | 17 | 17 | 28 | 32 |
| Other managers and associate professionals | 37 | 37 | 33 | 37 | 39 | 37 | 39 | 36 | 39 |
| Tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff | 24 | 22 | 22 | 29 | 22 | 30 | 21 | 23 | 23 |
| Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff | 15 | 14 | 17 | 15 | 18 | 15 | 21 | 11 | 5 |
| Not in paid work in last 12 months | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Not stated or unknown | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 |

Table A3.2 shows that one per cent of Year 10 students reported that their parents were not in paid work in the last 12 months. Fifteen per cent reported that their parents' highest occupation was in the group of unskilled manual, office and sales staff. Twenty-four per cent of Year 10 students reported that their parent's occupation was that of a tradesperson or skilled office, sales or service person, while thirty-seven per cent stated their parents were managers or associated professionals. A further 23 per cent of Year 10 students reported that they had parents in the senior manager or professionals group.

The table also shows that the Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory have the highest rates of Year 10 students whose parents are senior managers and professionals (32% and 28% respectively, compared with half of the other states

who have about 20% in this occupational category). Queensland and Western Australia have considerably more Year 10 students with parents in trade, office, sales and service occupations (around 30%) compared with the rest of the states whose rates sit around the low-20 per cent range.

Indigenous status

Table A3.3 records the percentages of Year 6 and 10 students in the sample, nationally, and by State and Territory, by Indigenous status (compare with Table 2.4).

Table A3.3: Indigenous Status – Percentages of Students by Year Level, Nationally and by State and Territory

| | AUST % | NSW % | VIC % | QLD % | SA % | WA % | TAS % | NT % | ACT % |
|----------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| Year 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Indigenous | 4 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 71 | 1 |
| Non-Indigenous | 96 | 98 | 97 | 93 | 96 | 94 | 92 | 29 | 99 |
| Missing data | 12 | 6 | 15 | 12 | 19 | 16 | 17 | 43 | 4 |
| Year 10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Indigenous | 3 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 14 | 1 |
| Non-Indigenous | 97 | 97 | 99 | 96 | 98 | 96 | 94 | 86 | 99 |
| Missing data | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |

Table A3.3 shows that four per cent of the Year 6 students and 3 per cent of the Year 10 students sampled identified themselves as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders. The amount of missing data at Year 6 was strikingly higher in the Northern Territory than the other States and Territories, therefore inferences should not be made about Indigenous rates here. There was little variation among most of the States and Territories at Year 10, except in the Northern Territory, where 14 per cent of students identified themselves as being Indigenous, and in Tasmania, where 6 per cent of students did so.

Language Background – language other than English spoken at home

Table A3.4 records the percentages of Year 6 and 10 students nationally, and by State and Territory, by language background (compare with Table 2.4).

Table A3.4: Language – Percentages of Students by Year Level, Nationally and by State and Territory

| | AUST % | NSW % | VIC % | QLD % | SA % | WA % | TAS % | NT % | ACT % |
|-----------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| Year 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Language other than English | 16 | 17 | 20 | 10 | 15 | 14 | 3 | 43 | 17 |
| English | 84 | 83 | 80 | 90 | 85 | 86 | 97 | 57 | 83 |
| Missing data | 16 | 7 | 22 | 12 | 22 | 29 | 2 | 79 | 4 |
| Year 10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Language other than English | 22 | 27 | 30 | 14 | 17 | 14 | 6 | 22 | 22 |
| English | 78 | 73 | 70 | 86 | 83 | 86 | 94 | 78 | 78 |
| Missing data | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |

Table A3.4 shows 16 per cent of the Year 6 students and 22 per cent of the Year 10 students came from homes in which languages other than English were spoken (in place of or in addition to English). Tasmania had the smallest percentage of students from such homes at both Year 6 and Year 10 (6 and 3 per cent of students respectively). Victoria had the largest percentage (30 per cent) of Year 10 students from homes in which languages other than English were spoken. No jurisdictional comparisons should be inferred for Year 6, due to the large amount of missing data.

Country of birth

Table A3.5 displays the percentages of Year 6 and 10 students in the sample born in Australia, and overseas, nationally, and by State and Territory (compare with Table 2.4).

Table A3.5: Country of Birth – Percentages of Students by Year Level, Nationally and by State and Territory

| | AUST % | NSW % | VIC % | QLD % | SA % | WA % | TAS % | NT % | ACT % |
|----------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| Year 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Australia | 91 | 93 | 88 | 92 | 87 | 88 | 95 | 96 | 92 |
| Overseas | 9 | 7 | 12 | 8 | 13 | 12 | 5 | 4 | 8 |
| Missing data | 18 | 7 | 12 | 14 | 16 | 78 | 5 | 91 | 4 |
| Year 10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Australia | 88 | 89 | 88 | 87 | 92 | 83 | 96 | 89 | 88 |
| Overseas | 12 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 8 | 17 | 4 | 11 | 12 |
| Missing data | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

The magnitude of missing data disallows comment being made on this table for Year 6. However, the table does indicate that 12 per cent of Year 10 students were not born in Australia. The proportion of Year 10 students born outside of Australian varied from four per cent in Tasmania to 17 per cent in Western Australia.

Geographic location

For the purposes of this appendix, ‘geographic location’ refers to whether a student attended school in a metropolitan, provincial or remote zone (Jones, 2000).

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

Table A3.6 presents the percentages of Year 6 and 10 students in the sample, nationally, and by State and Territory, by geographic location of school (compare with Table 2.4).

Table A3.6: Geographic Location – Percentages of Students by Year Level, Nationally and by State and Territory

| | AUST % | NSW % | VIC % | QLD % | SA % | WA % | TAS % | NT % | ACT % |
|----------------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| Year 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| Metropolitan | 71 | 72 | 72 | 64 | 76 | 78 | 43 | 0 | 100 |
| Provincial | 27 | 28 | 27 | 30 | 20 | 15 | 54 | 50 | 0 |
| Remote | 3 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 50* | 0 |
| Missing data | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Year 10 | | | | | | | | | |
| Metropolitan | 72 | 74 | 72 | 72 | 72 | 74 | 47 | 0 | 100 |
| Provincial | 27 | 26 | 28 | 28 | 28 | 24 | 53 | 69 | 0 |
| Remote | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 31* | 0 |
| Missing data | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

* Note: The Northern Territory sample includes very remote schools, to better reflect its whole school population (see Technical Report).

Table A3.6 shows that approximately 70 per cent of the students in the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship attended school in metropolitan areas. Almost 30 per cent lived and/or attended school in provincial areas, while only 1 to 3 per cent lived in remote areas.

As might be expected, there were some variations among the States and Territories in the distribution of students across metropolitan, provincial and remote areas. On the basis of the weighted data, all students in the Australian Capital Territory

lived in metropolitan areas, compared with 43 per cent of Year 6 students and 47 per cent of Year 10 students in Tasmania and none in the Northern Territory, as Darwin was classified as a provincial city.

The Northern Territory had the greatest number of students in remote areas (50 per cent at Year 6 and 31 per cent at Year 10), followed by Western Australia (7 per cent at Year 6 and 2 per cent at Year 10).

Summary

The sample of students who completed the National Assessment Program – Civics and Citizenship 2007 was diverse and spanned the range of the Australian school populations in Year 6 and Year 10. The data in Chapter 2 and this appendix indicate that the Year 10 cohort was a representative sample in terms of the characteristics about which data were gathered. Unfortunately, the large proportion of missing data which resulted from using the Online Student Registration System (OSRS) to collect this information from Year 6 students means no definitive statement should be made on the representativeness of the Year 6 sample. Generally, within the Year 10 sample there were some differences in background characteristics among States and Territories and some of these characteristics were associated with Civics and Citizenship achievement. For that reason it is valuable to analyse differences between jurisdictions in Civics and Citizenship achievement in ways that take account of differences in student characteristics as well as reported overall differences. These analyses (undertaken for Year 10 only) have been reported in Chapter 4 of the main report.

Appendix 4

Percentage Correct by Score Code for Sample Items in Chapter 3

Table A4.1: Percentages of Year 6 Students Responding at Each Item Score Code Level for the Sample Items

| Sample items | Figure code | % Score code level 0 | % Score code level 1 | % Score code level 2 |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Choosing a Class Captain Q1 | 3.2 | 12 | 88 ⁰ | |
| Secret Ballot Q2 | 3.3 | 25 | 75 ¹ | |
| Online Information Service Q1 | 3.4 | 28 | 72 ¹ | |
| SRCs Q1 | 3.6 / 3.13 | 50 | 25 ² | 25 ³ |
| SRCs Q3 | 3.7 / 3.18 | 44 | 48 ² | 8 ⁴ |
| Compulsory Voting Q1 | 3.8 / 3.22 | 59 | 35 ² | 6 ⁴ |
| SRCs Q2 | 3.14 | 23 | 59 ¹ | 18 ³ |
| SRCs Q4 | 3.15 | 68 | 27 ³ | 5 ⁴ |
| Good Citizen Q1 | 3.16 | 60 | 40 ³ | |
| Community Dvt Advisory Committee Q3 | 3.21 | 87 | 9 ⁴ | 4 ⁴ |
| Online Information Service Q2 | 3.23 | 85 | 12 ⁴ | 3 ⁵ |

⁰ Item score code located below Level 1 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

¹ Item score code located in Level 1 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

² Item score code located in Level 2 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

³ Item score code located in Level 3 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

⁴ Item score code located in Level 4 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

⁵ Item score code located in Level 5 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

Table A4.2: Percentages of Year 10 Students Responding at Each Item Score Code Level for the Sample Items

| Sample items | Figure code | % Score code level 0 | % Score code level 1 | % Score code level 2 |
|----------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Secret Ballot Q2 | 3.3 | 13 | 87 ¹ | |
| Global Citizen – Overseas Aid Q1 | 3.5 | 24 | 76 ¹ | |
| SRCs Q1 | 3.6 / 3.13 | 23 | 24 ² | 53 ³ |
| Compulsory Voting Q1 | 3.8 / 3.22 | 27 | 63 ² | 10 ⁵ |
| Compulsory Voting Q2 | 3.9 | 31 | 34 ² | 35 ³ |
| Compulsory Voting Q3 | 3.10 / 3.12 | 23 | 37 ² | 40 ³ |
| Federal Budget Q1 | 3.11 | 33 | 67 ² | |
| SRCs Q2 | 3.14 | 14 | 45 ¹ | 41 ³ |
| Independent Judiciary Q1 | 3.17 | 50 | 50 ³ | |
| Australian Constitution Q1 | 3.19 | 66 | 34 ⁴ | |
| Hijab Wearers Q1 | 3.20 | 10 | 65 ⁰ | 25 ⁴ |
| Online Information Service Q2 | 3.23 | 63 | 29 ³ | 8 ⁵ |

⁰ Item score code located below Level 1 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

¹ Item score code located in Level 1 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

² Item score code located in Level 2 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

³ Item score code located in Level 3 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

⁴ Item score code located in Level 4 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

⁵ Item score code located in Level 5 of the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale

Appendix 5

Percentage Distributions

‘At and above’ Proficiency Levels

(for Year 6 and Year 10)

In viewing the Year 6 data in this appendix, the margin of error referenced in both the report (See Chapter 2) and in Appendix 3 should be taken into account. The tables below summarise the percentage of Year 6 and 10 students achieving or exceeding each proficiency level according to State and Territory, gender, Indigenous status, language background, geographic location and parental occupation group.

Table A5.1 Percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 Students at and above each Proficiency Level, on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, Nationally and by State and Territory

| State or Territory | Proficiency Level | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----|-------------------|------|-------------------|------|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | Level 1 and above | | Level 2 and above | | Level 3 and above | | Level 4 and above | | Level 5 and above | |
| | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI |
| Year 6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| NSW | 93.5 | 2.4 | 64.2 | 6.3 | 13.9 | 3.0 | 0.5 | 0.6 | – | – |
| VIC | 92.1 | 2.5 | 58.6 | 5.5 | 10.4 | 2.4 | 0.1 | 0.3 | – | – |
| QLD | 83.0 | 3.8 | 41.2 | 5.9 | 6.4 | 2.6 | 0.1 | 0.3 | – | – |
| SA | 85.6 | 3.9 | 43.4 | 6.8 | 7.3 | 3.1 | 0.2 | 0.4 | – | – |
| WA | 82.0 | 3.4 | 39.6 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 2.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 | – | – |
| TAS | 84.8 | 4.4 | 52.5 | 6.9 | 11.7 | 4.7 | 0.4 | 0.8 | – | – |
| NT | 57.5 | 8.3 | 27.7 | 6.6 | 4.7 | 2.2 | 0.1 | 0.2 | – | – |
| ACT | 91.4 | 4.3 | 59.9 | 8.7 | 14.8 | 5.8 | 0.5 | 0.8 | – | – |
| AUST | 88.7 | 1.3 | 53.4 | 2.8 | 9.9 | 1.2 | 0.3 | 0.2 | – | – |
| Year 10 | | | | | | | | | | |
| NSW | 97.0 | 2.9 | 84.6 | 5.0 | 52.2 | 5.1 | 12.6 | 3.8 | 0.4 | 0.5 |
| VIC | 95.6 | 3.3 | 78.9 | 5.9 | 39.6 | 4.8 | 5.2 | 1.7 | 0.2 | 0.4 |
| QLD | 96.9 | 2.1 | 77.7 | 5.4 | 30.4 | 5.0 | 2.8 | 1.6 | – | – |
| SA | 96.6 | 2.3 | 83.1 | 6.7 | 42.9 | 7.8 | 5.8 | 2.9 | 0.1 | 0.5 |
| WA | 94.2 | 4.1 | 75.1 | 7.2 | 33.4 | 6.9 | 3.6 | 1.7 | – | – |
| TAS | 93.8 | 3.2 | 73.9 | 5.2 | 37.8 | 5.8 | 6.2 | 3.4 | 0.3 | 0.5 |
| NT | 91.2 | 5.8 | 75.6 | 11.9 | 32.5 | 10.9 | 3.7 | 3.4 | 0.0 | 0.2 |
| ACT | 95.7 | 3.1 | 84.6 | 5.9 | 50.1 | 7.5 | 10.6 | 3.1 | 0.2 | 0.4 |
| AUST | 96.2 | 1.4 | 80.4 | 2.8 | 41.5 | 2.6 | 7.1 | 1.4 | 0.2 | 0.2 |

Table A5.2 Percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 Students at and above each Proficiency Level, on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Gender

| Gender | Proficiency Level | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | Level 1 and above | | Level 2 and above | | Level 3 and above | | Level 4 and above | | Level 5 and above | |
| | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI |
| Year 6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Male students | 86.3 | 1.9 | 49.9 | 3.3 | 8.9 | 1.7 | 0.3 | 0.3 | – | – |
| Females students | 91.2 | 1.6 | 57.2 | 3.4 | 11.0 | 1.6 | 0.3 | 0.3 | – | – |
| Year 10 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Male students | 95.1 | 1.8 | 76.6 | 3.8 | 37.9 | 3.7 | 5.6 | 1.7 | 0.2 | 0.4 |
| Females students | 97.3 | 1.3 | 84.1 | 2.8 | 45.1 | 3.4 | 8.5 | 2.1 | 0.2 | 0.3 |

Table A5.3 Percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 Students at and above each Proficiency Level, on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Indigenous status

| Indigenous status | Proficiency Level | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|------|-------------------|------|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | Level 1 and above | | Level 2 and above | | Level 3 and above | | Level 4 and above | | Level 5 and above | |
| | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI |
| Year 6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Non-Indigenous | 89.5 | 1.4 | 53.7 | 3.1 | 9.7 | 1.4 | 0.3 | 0.2 | – | – |
| Indigenous | 63.0 | 11.6 | 26.2 | 13.8 | 2.8 | 4.5 | – | – | – | – |
| Year 10 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Non-Indigenous | 96.7 | 1.3 | 81.4 | 2.7 | 42.3 | 2.6 | 7.2 | 1.4 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Indigenous | 85.9 | 8.0 | 52.6 | 9.6 | 18.5 | 8.1 | 2.5 | 3.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

Table A5.4 Percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 Students at and above each Proficiency Level, on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Language Background

| Language Background | Proficiency Level | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | Level 1 and above | | Level 2 and above | | Level 3 and above | | Level 4 and above | | Level 5 and above | |
| | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI |
| Year 6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| English Only | 89.3 | 1.5 | 53.8 | 3.2 | 9.7 | 1.4 | 0.3 | 0.3 | – | – |
| Language other than English | 86.3 | 4.8 | 48.9 | 7.8 | 8.6 | 3.6 | 0.1 | 0.3 | – | – |
| Year 10 | | | | | | | | | | |
| English Only | 97.2 | 0.9 | 81.9 | 2.7 | 42.5 | 3.0 | 7.2 | 1.7 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Language other than English | 93.7 | 3.6 | 76.4 | 6.2 | 39.4 | 5.6 | 6.7 | 2.7 | 0.3 | 0.6 |

Table A5.5 Percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 Students at and above each Proficiency Level, on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Geographical Location of school

| Geographical Location | Proficiency Level | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------|-------------------|------|-------------------|------|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | Level 1 and above | | Level 2 and above | | Level 3 and above | | Level 4 and above | | Level 5 and above | |
| | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI |
| Year 6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Metropolitan | 90.5 | 1.5 | 56.6 | 3.3 | 11.1 | 1.6 | 0.3 | 0.3 | – | – |
| Provincial | 86.2 | 3.2 | 47.9 | 5.9 | 7.5 | 2.3 | 0.1 | 0.3 | – | – |
| Remote | 67.0 | 11.4 | 28.3 | 11.6 | 2.1 | 2.3 | 0.0 | 0.1 | – | – |
| Year 10 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Metropolitan | 96.7 | 1.6 | 82.2 | 3.2 | 43.3 | 3.2 | 8.0 | 1.9 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Provincial | 94.9 | 2.5 | 75.9 | 6.2 | 37.0 | 7.1 | 4.7 | 2.2 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| Remote | 87.4 | 19.1 | 60.7 | 17.4 | 23.5 | 12.1 | 1.6 | 3.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

Table A5.6 Percentages of Year 6 and Year 10 Students at and above each Proficiency Level, on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Parental Occupation

| Parental Occupation | Proficiency Level | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|------|-------------------|------|-------------------|------|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | Level 1 and above | | Level 2 and above | | Level 3 and above | | Level 4 and above | | Level 5 and above | |
| | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI |
| Year 6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Senior Managers and Professionals | 96.5 | 1.9 | 73.3 | 4.7 | 18.0 | 4.6 | 0.5 | 0.8 | – | – |
| Other Managers and Associate Professionals | 93.6 | 2.3 | 62.2 | 5.3 | 12.0 | 2.8 | 0.2 | 0.5 | – | – |
| Tradespeople & skilled office, sales and service staff | 91.1 | 3.0 | 49.7 | 5.1 | 7.2 | 3.0 | 0.2 | 0.6 | – | – |
| Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff | 83.0 | 5.0 | 38.2 | 6.7 | 3.7 | 2.3 | 0.1 | 0.4 | – | – |
| Not in paid work in last 12 months | 75.8 | 7.2 | 34.3 | 9.4 | 2.5 | 2.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | – | – |
| Year 10 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Senior Managers and Professionals | 98.5 | 1.1 | 91.1 | 3.0 | 62.5 | 4.7 | 15.4 | 4.0 | 0.5 | 0.6 |
| Other Managers and Associate Professionals | 97.3 | 1.2 | 85.1 | 2.4 | 45.4 | 3.8 | 7.2 | 2.1 | 0.2 | 0.4 |
| Tradespeople & skilled office, sales and service staff | 96.2 | 1.8 | 76.8 | 5.1 | 30.3 | 4.4 | 3.2 | 1.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff | 93.1 | 3.1 | 67.3 | 5.4 | 24.4 | 4.5 | 2.0 | 1.5 | 0.0 | 0.3 |
| Not in paid work in last 12 months | 73.8 | 27.7 | 33.2 | 23.1 | 8.6 | 10.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

Appendix 6

Year 6 Achievement on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale by Background Characteristics

The following tables provide Year 6 mean scores on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, as well as the Year 6 student percentages by Proficiency Levels according to student background characteristics. When making inferences from the tables, the large amount of data missing from the Online Student Registration System (OSRS) as referenced in Chapter 2 and shown in Appendix 3, must be acknowledged. It is noteworthy that these 2007 results are quite similar to those from 2004. This suggests that the data may be a close approximation of what would have been found had there not been the margin of error due to the large amount of missing data.

Table A6.1 shows mean scores on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale for Year 6 students according to parental occupation (based on the higher of the two parental occupations).

Table A6.1: 2007 Mean Scores for Year 6 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Parental Occupation Group

| Occupational group | Mean Score | CI |
|--|------------|------|
| Senior Managers and professionals | 455.5 | 10.3 |
| Other managers and associate professionals | 426.3 | 8.3 |
| Tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff | 401.6 | 8.7 |
| Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff | 367.7 | 15.5 |
| Not in paid work in the last 12 months | 349.4 | 21.0 |

Table A6.1 shows that there were differences in the mean scores among Year 6 students from each of these occupation groups, that the trend was linear, and that the difference was as expected on the basis of underlying socioeconomic differences as they typically present in national assessments and surveys.

Table A6.2 records the percentages of Year 6 students in each proficiency level by parental occupation group, with confidence intervals.

Table A6.2: 2007 Percentages of Year 6 Students at each Proficiency Level, at and above the Proficient Standard on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Parental Occupation Group

| Proficiency Level | Parental Occupation Group | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----|---|-----|---|-----|---|------|---------------------------------------|-----|
| | 1. Senior Managers and professionals | | 2. Other managers and associate professionals | | 3. Tradespeople and skilled office, sales and service staff | | 4. Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff | | 5. Not in paid work in last 12 months | |
| | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI | % | CI |
| Below Level 1 | 3.5 | 1.9 | 6.4 | 2.3 | 8.9 | 3.0 | 17.0 | 5.0 | 24.2 | 7.2 |
| Level 1 | 23.2 | 4.0 | 31.4 | 5.6 | 41.3 | 5.4 | 44.8 | 5.44 | 41.4 | 8.8 |
| Level 2 | 55.2 | 4.8 | 50.2 | 5.5 | 42.5 | 6.0 | 34.6 | 6.7 | 31.8 | 9.4 |
| Level 3 | 17.5 | 4.4 | 11.8 | 2.8 | 7.0 | 2.9 | 3.6 | 2.4 | 2.5 | 2.7 |
| Level 4 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 0.2 | 0.5 | 0.2 | 0.6 | 0.1 | 0.4 | – | – |
| Level 5 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| At or above Proficient Standard | 73.3 | 4.7 | 62.2 | 5.3 | 49.7 | 5.1 | 38.2 | 6.7 | 34.3 | 9.4 |

Table A6.2 indicates that in Year 6, for which the Proficient Standard was Level 2, 73 per cent of students with one or both parents classified in parental occupation group 1 achieved at or above the Proficient Standard. This figure was only 34 per cent for students with parents classified in parental occupation group 5.

Indigenous Year 6 students' mean achievement relative to that of non-Indigenous students is shown in Tables A6.3.

Table A6.3: 2007 Mean Scores for Year 6 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Indigenous Status

| Indigenous Status | Mean Score | CI ^(a) | Number of Cases |
|--------------------|------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Non-Indigenous | 407.4 | 6.1 | 5531 |
| Indigenous | 300.8 | 43.9 | 393 |
| All ^(b) | 405.0 | 5.5 | 7059 |

Note: (a) 95 per cent confidence intervals associated with the percentages.
 (b) A number of students did not identify their Indigenous status

Table A6.3 indicates that the Year 6 Indigenous students did not perform as well as non-Indigenous students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale.

The percentages of Year 6 Indigenous and non-Indigenous students at each proficiency level are shown in Table A6.4 with confidence intervals.

Table A6.4: 2007 Percentages of Year 6 Students at each Proficiency Level, at and above the Proficient Standard on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Indigenous Status

| Proficiency Level | Indigenous status | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-----|------------|------|
| | Non- Indigenous | | Indigenous | |
| | % | CI | % | CI |
| Below Level 1 | 10.5 | 1.4 | 37.0 | 11.9 |
| Level 1 | 35.8 | 2.7 | 36.8 | 11.1 |
| Level 2 | 44.0 | 2.7 | 23.4 | 11.1 |
| Level 3 | 9.4 | 1.4 | 2.8 | 4.5 |
| Level 4 | 0.3 | 0.2 | – | – |
| Level 5 | – | – | – | – |
| At or above Proficient Standard | 53.7 | 3.1 | 26.2 | 13.6 |

Table A6.4 shows that at all proficiency levels except Level 1 and below Level 1, the percentage achievement rates of Year 6 Indigenous students were lower than the non-Indigenous percentages.

Table A6.5 compares the mean scores of Year 6 students who spoke a language other than English at home with students who spoke only English. The table also compares the mean scores of Year 6 students born in Australia with those born overseas. It is probable that many of the students who speak languages other than English are the same students as those who stated they were born overseas.

Table A6.5: 2007 Mean Scores for Year 6 Students on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Language Background and Country of Birth

| | Mean Score | CI |
|--------------------------------|------------|------|
| Language spoken at home | | |
| English | 406.7 | 6.4 |
| Language other than English | 392.8 | 18.5 |
| Country of birth | | |
| Australia | 410.1 | 6.5 |
| Overseas | 382.6 | 17.7 |

Table A6.5 shows that the Year 6 students who spoke a language other than English at home scored slightly lower than students who spoke only English at home. Table A6.5 also shows that the students born overseas scored lower than those born in Australia. No data were collected on how long these students had lived in Australia.

Table A6.6 shows the percentages and confidence intervals at each of the proficiency levels of Year 6 students who spoke a language other than English at home compared with those students who spoke only English.

Table A6.6: 2007 Percentages of Year 6 Students at each Proficiency Level, at and above the Proficient Standard on the Civics and Citizenship Literacy Scale, by Language Spoken at Home

| Proficiency Level | Language spoken at home | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----|--|-----|
| | Only English spoken at home | | Language other than English spoken at home | |
| | % | CI | % | CI |
| Below Level 1 | 10.7 | 1.5 | 13.7 | 4.8 |
| Level 1 | 35.5 | 2.8 | 37.5 | 6.1 |
| Level 2 | 44.1 | 2.8 | 40.2 | 7.1 |
| Level 3 | 9.4 | 1.4 | 8.5 | 3.6 |
| Level 4 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 0.3 |
| Level 5 | – | – | – | – |
| At or above Proficient Standard | 53.8 | 3.2 | 48.9 | 7.8 |

Table A6.6 indicates a similar pattern to that shown by Year 10 students in Table 4.14 (See Chapter 4). The proportion of students who speak a language other than English at home achieving proficiency levels 2, 3 and 4 was only slightly lower than the proportion of those who spoke only English at home achieving those levels.

Appendix 7

Regression Analysis

Methodology

A multiple regression analysis was undertaken in order to explain variance in performance on this scale, using a multiple regression model. It was conducted in two stages. The first stage regressed student achievement on student background characteristics alone (see Chapter 4 for the results of this stage). The second stage regressed student achievement on student participation in civics and citizenship activities in addition to the student background characteristics from the first stage (see Chapter 5 for the results). Due to missing data for Year 6 students the regression analysis was only conducted for Year 10 students.

The selected background variables were:

- Age (centered around the mean age)
- Gender (with girls coded as 0 and boys as 1).
- Country of birth (Australia or other, with Australian-born coded as 0 and other as 1)
- Indigenous status (with non-Indigenous coded as 0 and Indigenous as 1)
- Language background other than English (with speakers of English coded as 0 and others as 1).
- Parental occupation¹¹. Because parental occupation was coded in one of five groups it was represented as a set of dummy variables (coded as 0 or 1 to reflect whether the parental occupation was in that group). These five parental occupation groups were (1) senior managers and professionals, (2) other managers and associate professionals, (3) trades people and skilled office, sales and service staff, (4) unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff, (5) not in paid work in last 12 months. Most students are in the second category, which is therefore chosen as the reference group. The first four groups are compared to the second group in the block.
- Geographic location of the school. This was also represented as a set of dummy variables (coded as 0 or 1 to reflect whether the school was located in a regional or remote area). Metropolitan location was the reference category and the results reported are relative to students in a metropolitan location.

¹¹ The measure of parent occupation was provided by students for one parent or the higher-coded occupation in cases where data regarding two parents were supplied.

The selected variables about participation in civics and citizenship activities were:

- Six variables about participation in activities outside of school. Each of the variables was coded on a four point ordinal scale, reflecting frequency (0='never or hardly ever'; 1='at least once a month'; 2='at least once a week'; 3='more than three times a week'). The variables were:
 - reading about current events in the newspaper,
 - watching the news on television,
 - listening to the news on the radio,
 - using the internet to get news of current events,
 - talking about political and social issues with family, and
 - talking about political and social issues with friends.
- Three variables about participation in school governance activities. The variables 'yes' or 'no' questions and therefore were coded simply as 0, 1 with 1 indicating participation. The variables were:
 - I have voted for class representatives
 - I have been elected on to a Student Council, Student Representative Council (SRC) or class/school parliament
 - Have contributed, in ways different from (b), to decisions about what happens at school.

Students with one missing value on at least one of the variables were excluded, which resulted in excluding seven per cent of the students. Table A7.1 gives the distribution of these variables for the included students and the codes given to the categories.

The regression coefficients, standard error of the coefficients and the change in R-square attributed to each variable were presented in the Figures 4.7 and 5.8 and Tables 4.17 and 5.7 in Chapters 4 and 5. The regression coefficients for each variable were calculated from the full model for each stage, with all variables for that stage entered into the model.

In order to calculate the change in R-squared, firstly the total explained variance in performance was calculated for the full model. Then, each variable was excluded from the model, one at a time. The regression model was rerun for each exclusion and the unique explained variance attributable to each variable was computed by subtracting the amount of explained variance found for that variable from the total explained variance calculated for the full model. Subsequently, the variable was put back in the analysis and the next variable was removed and the process repeated.

Table A7.1: Independent Variables Included in the Regression Analysis (with Coding and Sample Distribution)

| Variable | Mean | Range | | | |
|--|---|---|------|------|------|
| Age | 0 (=15.8 yrs) | -2.84 (13 yrs)–3.33 (19.2 yrs) | | | |
| | Codes | Percentage Distribution According to Code | | | |
| | | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Gender | 0=Female 1=Male | 50.3 | 49.7 | – | – |
| Country of Birth | 0=Australia 1=Not Australia | 89.5 | 10.5 | – | – |
| Indigenous Status | 0=Not Indigenous 1=Indigenous | 96.0 | 4.0 | – | – |
| Language spoken at home | 0=English only 1=LOTE | 80.2 | 19.8 | – | – |
| <i>Parental Occupation: Senior managers & professionals*</i> | 0=Not in Group 1 1=In Group 1 | 76.9 | 23.1 | – | – |
| <i>Parental Occupation: Tradespeople, skilled office, sales and service staff*</i> | 0=Not in Group 2 1=In Group 2 | 76.0 | 24.0 | – | – |
| <i>Parental Occupation: Unskilled labourers, office, sales and service staff*</i> | 0=Not in Group 3 1=In Group 3 | 85.9 | 14.1 | – | – |
| <i>Parental Occupation: Not in paid work in last 12 months*</i> | 0=Not in Group 4 1=In Group 4 | 99.1 | 0.9 | – | – |
| <i>Geographic Location of the School: Provincial location**</i> | 0=Not provincial 1=Provincial | 73.3 | 26.7 | – | – |
| <i>Geographic Location of the School: Remote location**</i> | 0=Not remote 1=Remote | 96.6 | 3.4 | – | – |
| <i>Participation in C&C Activities Outside of School: reading about current events in the newspaper</i> | 0=Never or hardly ever 1=At least once a month 2=At least once a week 3=More than 3 times a week | 19.3 | 24.2 | 39.4 | 17.1 |
| <i>Participation in C&C Activities Outside of School: watching the news on television</i> | 0=Never or hardly ever 1=At least once a month 2=At least once a week 3=More than 3 times a week | 6.0 | 10.3 | 34.5 | 49.3 |
| <i>Participation in C&C Activities Outside of School: listening to news on the radio</i> | 0=Never or hardly ever 1=At least once a month 2=At least once a week 3=More than 3 times a week | 24.6 | 16.8 | 29.5 | 29.1 |
| <i>Participation in C&C Activities Outside of School: using the internet to get news of current events</i> | 0=Never or hardly ever 1=At least once a month 2=At least once a week 3=More than 3 times a week | 46.3 | 24.0 | 17.8 | 11.9 |
| <i>Participation in C&C Activities Outside of School: talking about political or social issues with your family</i> | 0=Never or hardly ever 1=At least once a month 2=At least once a week 3=More than 3 times a week | 35.8 | 29.9 | 24.0 | 10.2 |
| <i>Participation in C&C Activities Outside of School: talking about political or social issues with your friends</i> | 0=Never or hardly ever 1=At least once a month 2=At least once a week 3=More than 3 times a week | 52.9 | 25.2 | 16.5 | 5.4 |
| <i>Participation in School Governance Activities: I have voted for class representatives</i> | 0=No 1=Yes | 34.5 | 65.5 | – | – |
| <i>Participation in School Governance Activities: I have been elected onto a SRC</i> | 0=No 1=Yes | 80.3 | 19.7 | – | – |
| <i>Participation in School Governance Activities: I have contributed to decisions about what happens at school</i> | 0=No 1=Yes | 63.6 | 36.4 | – | – |

* The reference group for parental occupation is 'other managers and associate professionals', constituting 37.9% of the Year 10 student population.

**The reference group for geographic location is 'metropolitan', constituting 69.9% of the Year 10 student population.

Appendix 8

Correlations and Factor Analysis for Civics and Citizenship-related Activities

Chapter 5 described the data and findings on student participation in civics and citizenship-related activities. The relationships between and clustering of opportunities for participation, actual participation and perceived learning provide information about the perceptions of students and, therefore, the impact of these opportunities for experiential learning in Civics and Citizenship. This appendix presents the tables of correlations mentioned in Chapter 5 and discusses the results of factor analyses in greater detail than in Chapter 5.

Associations between opportunities for civics and citizenship-related activities at school

Schools that encourage students to learn about decision making and school governance through participation could be expected to provide a number of ways for them to participate. In order to investigate whether opportunities to participate in governance and civics-related activities at school were associated with one another, correlations between the indicators were analysed. These data are recorded in Table A8.1. This correlation table indicates the strength of the relationships between the various questions concerning opportunities for civics and citizenship-related activities at school.

Table A8.1: Correlations Between Opportunities for Civics and Citizenship-related Activities at School*

| At this school... | Students are represented on Student Councils (SRCs) | | Student representatives contribute to decision making | | Students contribute, in ways different from SRCs, to decisions about what happens at school | | Students can help prepare a school paper or magazine | | Students can participate in peer support programs | | Students can participate in activities in the community | | Students can represent the school in activities outside of class | |
|---|---|-------|---|-------|---|-------|--|-------|---|-------|---|-------|--|-------|
| | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 |
| Students vote for class representatives | 0.35 | 0.22 | 0.05 | 0.07 | 0.17 | 0.15 | 0.07 | 0.09 | 0.08 | 0.12 | 0.10 | 0.09 | 0.10 | 0.10 |
| Students are represented on Student Councils (SRCs) | | | - | - | 0.21 | 0.24 | 0.09 | 0.15 | 0.07 | 0.18 | 0.12 | 0.20 | 0.11 | 0.22 |
| Student representatives contribute to decision making** | | | | | 0.20 | 0.28 | 0.08 | 0.14 | 0.10 | 0.15 | 0.09 | 0.20 | 0.06 | 0.14 |
| Students contribute, in ways different from SRCs, to decisions about what happens at school | | | | | | | 0.12 | 0.25 | 0.12 | 0.24 | 0.16 | 0.24 | 0.13 | 0.19 |
| Students can help prepare a school paper or magazine | | | | | | | | | 0.10 | 0.25 | 0.14 | 0.24 | 0.09 | 0.18 |
| Students can participate in peer support programs | | | | | | | | | | | 0.14 | 0.30 | 0.14 | 0.23 |
| Students can participate in activities in the community | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0.17 | 0.40 |

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

** These correlations apply only to the students who indicated that students are represented on a student council at their school

As can be seen from Table A8.1, the strongest correlation for Year 6 was the association between being able to vote for class representatives and having student representation on student councils ($r=0.35$). At Year 10, the strongest associations were between the opportunity to participate in activities in the community and opportunities to participate in activities outside the classroom ($r=0.40$), and opportunities to participate in peer support programs ($r=0.30$). For those questions that appeared in both the 2004 and 2007 surveys, the pattern of associations is very similar to that found in the 2004 cycle. In general the associations between the different activities were stronger at Year 10 than at Year 6.

Factor analysis of opportunities for civics and citizenship-related activities at school

A factor analysis¹² was conducted on the Year 6 and Year 10 responses to the 8 civic and citizenship-related activities in school items reported in Table A8.1.

For Year 6, the factor analysis indicated that the items concerned with opportunities for civic and citizenship-related activities in school formed two groups. The first group consists of three of the items that relate to the roles of students in school governance (vote for class representatives, represented on student councils and representatives contribute to decision making). The second group comprises three of the items that relate to participation in extra-curricular school civic and citizenship activities (participate in peer support programs; participate in activities in the community and participate in activities outside the classroom). An additional correlational analysis revealed that, as is typically the case with such factor analyses, the two constructs underlying these two groups of activities were correlated with each other ($r=0.49$).

The items concerning whether students at this school can contribute to decision making in ways different from student councils, and whether students can help prepare a school paper or magazine did not load on either of the 2 underlying factors. This indicates that they are not associated with any of the other items in the Student Background Survey, and thus appear to be separate elements.

It should be noted that, for Year 6 students this may be a difficult set of questions to respond to, given that they need to retain the stem of 'At my school, students...' for all eight items. In addition, the degree to which students distinguish between certain types of these activities within their school is likely to be highly influenced by their exposure and interest in them. Therefore, responses to these questions are likely to be confounded by interest, understanding and motivations, thus confusing any construction of meaning.

¹² All factors analyses reported were exploratory factor analyses conducted with *Mplus*. For further information on the method used, please refer to the NAP-CC 2007 Technical Report.

For Year 10, the factor analysis indicated that the items concerned with opportunities for civic and citizenship-related activities in school formed two groups. As with the Year 6 factor analysis, the first group consists of three of the items that relate to the roles of students in school governance (vote for class representatives, represented on student councils and representatives contribute to decision making). However, in Year 10, the second group differed slightly from that in Year 6. In Year 10, it comprised four of the items that relate to participation in extra-curricular school civic and citizenship activities (help prepare a school paper or magazine, participate in peer support programs; participate in activities in the community and participate in activities outside the classroom), with the fourth item being help prepare a school paper or magazine. Again the factors underlying these two groups of activities were found to correlate with each other ($r=0.6$).

The item concerned with whether students at this school can contribute in ways different from student councils, had a borderline loading with the second underlying factor concerning extra-curricular school civic and citizenship activities. Its borderline nature is further evidenced in Table A8.1, where correlation of this item with the other extra-curricular school civic and citizenship activities was modest.

Associations between participation in civics and citizenship-related activities at school

Students who learn about decision making and school governance through participation could be expected to do so through involvement in a range of activities. In order to investigate whether participation in certain types of governance and civics and citizenship-related activities at school was associated with participation in other activities, correlations between the indicators were analysed. These data are recorded in Table A8.2. This correlation table indicates the strength of the relationships between the various questions concerning participation in civics and citizenship-related activities at school.

Table A8.2: Correlations Between Participation in Civics and Citizenship-related Activities at School *

| At this school... | I have been elected on to a Student Council (SRC) | | I believe that as a SRC representative I have contributed to decision making | | I have contributed, in ways different from SRCs to what happens at school | | I have helped prepare a school paper or magazine | | I have participated in peer support programs | | I have participated in activities in the community | | I have represented the school in activities outside of class | |
|--|---|-------|--|-------|---|-------|--|-------|--|-------|--|-------|--|-------|
| | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 |
| Students vote for class representative | 0.23 | 0.19 | 0.03 | 0.05 | 0.17 | 0.17 | 0.06 | 0.09 | 0.13 | 0.14 | 0.08 | 0.17 | 0.10 | 0.13 |
| I have been elected on to a Student Council (SRC) | | | - | - | 0.27 | 0.27 | 0.10 | 0.20 | 0.11 | 0.16 | 0.10 | 0.20 | 0.12 | 0.14 |
| I believe that as a SRC representative I have contributed to decision making** | | | | | 0.12 | 0.33 | 0.10 | 0.07 | 0.09 | 0.17 | 0.12 | 0.16 | 0.02 | 0.15 |
| I have contributed, in ways different from SRCs, to decisions about what happens at school | | | | | | | 0.16 | 0.23 | 0.15 | 0.25 | 0.14 | 0.30 | 0.15 | 0.20 |
| I have helped prepare a school paper or magazine | | | | | | | | | 0.10 | 0.18 | 0.15 | 0.18 | 0.13 | 0.10 |
| I have participated in peer support programs | | | | | | | | | | | 0.11 | 0.24 | 0.13 | 0.16 |
| I have participated in activities in the community | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0.17 | 0.33 |

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

** These correlations apply only to the students who indicated that they had been a representative on a student council

As can be seen from Table A8.2, a moderate association at both Year 6 and Year 10 was found to exist between student council representatives and students who had contributed to decisions about what happens at school other than through student councils. This suggests that, in some schools at least, students felt that as representatives on student councils, or through other forms of decision-making, they were able to contribute meaningfully to decision making and school governance.

In general, the associations between the different activities were stronger at Year 10 than at Year 6. Other relatively strong associations (at Year 10) were between having represented the school in activities outside the classroom and participating in community activities ($r=0.33$); participating in activities in the community and contributing to school decision-making other than through a Student Council or Student Representative Council (SRC) ($r=0.30$); and student representatives feeling that they had contributed to school decision-making other than through a SRC ($r=0.33$).

The stronger relationships found at Year 10, and the particular associations mentioned, suggest Year 6 students participate in school governance and general school activities in a fairly broad way, whereas Year 10 students are more likely to participate in activities that suit their interests.

Factor analysis of participation in civics and citizenship-related activities at school

A factor analysis was conducted on the Year 6 and Year 10 responses to the elements reported in Table A8.2¹³.

For Year 6, the factor analysis indicated that there were two groups of items concerned with civic and citizenship-related activities in school. The first group consisted of two items involving the roles of students in school governance (vote for class representatives and elected on student council). The second group included three of the items concerned with participation in extra curricula school activities (help prepare a school paper or magazine; participate in activities in the community and participate in activities outside the classroom). The constructs underlying these two groups of activities were found to correlate with each other ($r=0.55$).

The items concerning whether students contribute to decision making in ways different from Student Councils, and participation in a peer support or 'buddy' program did not load on either factor (school governance or extra curricula school activities). This indicates that they were not associated with the other questions in the Student Background Survey, and thus appear to be separate elements.

¹³ It should be noted that the item concerning whether student representatives feel that they have contributed to school decision making was taken out of the factor analysis, as this question only applied to a small number of students who were council representatives.

The results of the factor analysis conducted on the Year 10 responses to the elements reported in Table A8.2 differed somewhat from that of Year 6. Instead of indicating a two-factor solution, the Year 10 factor analysis clearly showed that the Year 10 responses to all seven items which related to opportunities for civics and citizenship activities at school reflected one single underlying dimension. This finding indicates that when Year 10 students agree that they have participated in one civics and citizenship activity, they are also likely to agree that they have also participated in the other related activities. It appears many Year 10 students experience a range of these civic and citizenship-related activities.

Associations between student views about learning about governance at school

It might be expected that student responses as to whether they agreed they had learned certain concepts about governance and civics and citizenship would correlate with one another. Almost all of the concepts about governance and civics and citizenship correlated moderately with one another, as shown in Table A8.3.

Table A8.3: Correlations Among Student Views About What Has Been Learned About Governance at School*

| At school I have learned... | How to represent other students | | To understand people who have different ideas to me | | To work co-operatively with other students | | To be interested in how my school 'works' | | That I can contribute to solving 'problems' at my school | |
|---|---------------------------------|-------|---|-------|--|-------|---|-------|--|-------|
| | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 |
| About the importance of voting in elections | 0.25 | 0.40 | 0.18 | 0.32 | 0.17 | 0.26 | 0.26 | 0.30 | 0.25 | 0.31 |
| How to represent other students | | | 0.25 | 0.42 | 0.25 | 0.35 | 0.30 | 0.41 | 0.30 | 0.40 |
| To understand people who have different ideas to me | | | | | 0.41 | 0.55 | 0.28 | 0.40 | 0.30 | 0.40 |
| To work co-operatively with other students | | | | | | | 0.30 | 0.41 | 0.31 | 0.40 |
| To be interested in how my school 'works' | | | | | | | | | 0.40 | 0.58 |

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

As Table A8.3 shows, there was a substantial association, at both Year 6 and Year 10, between whether students agreed that they had learned to be interested in how their school 'works' and whether they agreed that they had learned that they can contribute to solving 'problems' at their school.

Additionally, it was found that at both year levels, agreement to having learned to contribute to 'problem' solving at school correlated relatively strongly with the following three qualities: learning how to represent other students, to understand people who have different ideas to themselves, and to work co-operatively with other students. These three concepts were also relatively strongly correlated with learning to be interested in how their school 'works'. Agreement that students learn to work co-operatively with others correlated to a high degree with students'

agreement that they had learned to understand people who have different ideas to themselves.

In all these cases, the association was stronger at Year 10 than at Year 6. The correlations show that the average difference between the strength of the Year 6 associations and the Year 10 associations was 0.10, with most of the above-mentioned relationships having ≈ 0.3 correlation for Year 6, while Year 10 ≈ 0.4 . This indicates that amongst Year 10 students, agreement that they had learned a certain concept about school governance was more strongly related to the other school governance concepts they felt they had learned, than it was for Year 6 students. This pattern of associations is very similar to those found in 2004.

Factor analysis of student views about learning about governance at school

A factor analysis indicated that for both Year 6 and Year 10 students there was one underlying dimension for the responses to the six items on learning about voting and governance at school. This analysis demonstrates that the six items are all measuring the same or similar construct.

Associations between civics and citizenship-related activities outside school

It was considered possible that participation in one civics and citizenship-related activity outside school might be related to participation in other civics and citizenship-related activities outside school. Analyses were conducted to investigate associations between different civics and citizenship-related activities outside school.

As Table A8.4 shows, students who obtained access to news and current events in one form were likely to also obtain access to news in other forms (although the correlation coefficients were modest).

Table A8.4: Correlations Between Civics and Citizenship-related Activities Outside of School

| Outside of school, I ... | Watch the news on television | | Listen to the news on the radio | | Use the internet to get news of current events | | Talk about political or social issues with my family | | Talk about political or social issues with my friends | | Participate in sport or music activities with others | | Participate in environmental activities | | Participate in community or volunteer work | |
|---|------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------|-------|--|-------|--|-------|---|-------|--|-------|---|-------|--|-------|
| | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 | Yr 6 | Yr 10 |
| Read about current events in the newspaper | 0.29 | 0.39 | 0.25 | 0.27 | 0.29 | 0.30 | 0.29 | 0.31 | 0.20 | 0.26 | 0.15 | 0.19 | 0.09 | 0.14 | 0.10 | 0.13 |
| Watch the news on television | | | 0.24 | 0.28 | 0.14 | 0.20 | 0.23 | 0.28 | 0.14 | 0.17 | 0.12 | 0.11 | 0.09 | 0.08 | 0.05 | 0.09 |
| Listen to the news on the radio | | | | | 0.15 | 0.20 | 0.19 | 0.25 | 0.16 | 0.19 | 0.12 | 0.13 | 0.09 | 0.10 | 0.06 | 0.13 |
| Use the internet to get news of current events | | | | | | | 0.23 | 0.34 | 0.22 | 0.32 | 0.11 | 0.12 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.10 |
| Talk about political or social issues with my family | | | | | | | | | 0.45 | 0.58 | 0.14 | 0.09 | 0.17 | 0.20 | 0.16 | 0.17 |
| Talk about political or social issues with my friends | | | | | | | | | | | 0.11 | 0.09 | 0.17 | 0.18 | 0.16 | 0.15 |
| Participate in sport or music activities with others | | | | | | | | | | | | 0.17 | 0.12 | 0.11 | 0.11 | 0.15 |
| Participate in environmental activities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0.26 | 0.25 |

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

At both year levels the strongest correlation was between talking about political and social issues with family members and having the same discussions with friends ($r=0.45$ for Year 6 and $r=0.58$ for Year 10). Moderate to relatively strong correlations were found between most of the questions about accessing the media, and also with the two items related to talking about political and social issues.

Participation in environmental activities and participation in community or volunteer work were associated moderately with one another. The association between obtaining access to news and current events, and participation in community, volunteer, environmental, sporting or musical activities was weak. Text in the relevant sub-section of Chapter 5 referred to these findings.

In general, the correlations between activities at Year 10 were similar or slightly stronger than those found for Year 6. The 2007 correlations are similar to those from the 2004 cycle.

Factor analysis of civics and citizenship-related activities outside of school

A factor analysis showed that for Year 6, there were 2 constructs underlying the student responses to the questions about Civics and Citizenship-related activities outside of school, in the Student Background Survey. The first construct consisted of the four items related to accessing the media (for example, obtaining news from the newspaper, television, radio and internet). The second group also consisted of 4 items: talking about political and social issues with family; talking about political and social issues with friends; participation in environmental activities and participation in community or volunteer work.

It can be seen in Table A8.4 that participating in sport or music had only a very low correlation with any of the other items, and in the two-factor solution participating in sport or music does not load highly on either factor (accessing the media or social discussion and community participation). One explanation for this may be that in responding to the question Year 6 students did not consistently distinguish between in and out of school sport or music. Or, given the dominance of sport over music in students' responses to this item in the Student Background Survey, it may just be that sport transcends other activities in the minds and lives of Australian Year 6 students!!

Table A8.4 also shows that most of the stronger correlations were found to exist within the two constructs found by the factor analysis (accessing the media; and social discussion and community participation). Thus the results of the correlation analysis are consistent with the two-factor solution.

The results of the factor analysis conducted on the Year 10 responses to the elements reported in Table A8.4 differed somewhat from that of Year 6. The factor analysis showed that the Year 10 responses to all nine items about civic and citizenship-related activities outside of school on the Student Background Survey reflected three underlying constructs.

The first construct concerned access to the media (for example, obtaining news from the newspaper, television, radio). Unlike Year 6, the item about using the internet to obtain news was not associated with the other forms of accessing the media. This item did not load strongly onto either of the other factors; it is a separate element amongst this set of items. This suggests that the behaviour of using the internet to access current affairs, at least for Year 10 students, is influenced by something different (for example, a different motivation) than that underlying participation in the other listed activities. Table A8.4 provides support for this finding, displaying low correlations between this item and most others.

The second construct comprised the groups of items concerned with discussion of social and political issues with family and friends. The third construct consisted of items concerning participation in sport or music (unlike the Year 6 cohort, where this item did not load onto a factor); environmental activities, and community or volunteer work.

The differences in the configuration of factors according to year level suggests differences in the way students make associations between these types of activities and therefore, the degree to which they participate in them. At Year 10 the activities of participation in environmental and community or volunteer work appear to be peer-based social activities (possibly with a social activism motive, but driven by the peer group). However, at Year 6 the focus appears to be much more on the political and social issues aspects of these activities, perhaps through the influence of significant adults such as parents and teachers.

The measure of parent occupation was as provided by students for one parent or the higher-coded occupation in cases where data regarding two parents were supplied.

All factor analyses reported were exploratory factor analyses conducted with Mplus. For further information on the method used, please refer to the Technical Report.

It should be noted that the item concerning whether student representatives feel that they have contributed to school decision making was taken out of the factor analysis, as this question only applied to a small number of students who were student council representatives.



