

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM – CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

In October 2010 a sample of Year 6 primary students and a sample of Year 10 secondary students from across Australia will take part in a national assessment of civics and citizenship education. The assessment will include multiple choice, short response and extended response items. It will also include a short survey collecting information about attitudes and beliefs, as well as participation in civics and citizenship activities. In total, the assessment and survey will take no more than two hours. No prior study of civics and citizenship is required.

The assessment will focus on civics knowledge and understanding and the skills and values needed for active citizenship. Active citizenship promotes students as active and informed citizens with an understanding and appreciation of Australia's system of government and civic life.

This is the third time that a national Year 6 and Year 10 assessment of civics and citizenship has been held. The purpose is to inform schools, education ministers and the community about the achievements of Australia's students. It is part of a national plan to monitor and report student achievement in the areas identified in the *National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century*, which were agreed to by all state, territory and federal education ministers in 1999.

WHO WILL BE ASSESSED?

A sample of Year 6 students and a sample of Year 10 students will be assessed. Approximately five percent of the students for each year level across Australia will complete the assessment. Students have been selected by drawing a random sample of schools across Australia and then selecting a class of students within each of these schools.

All students who have been identified in the random sample will be expected to take part in the assessment. The assessment will be conducted in the classroom and administered by the students' regular teacher. Students should find that the procedures involved in this assessment are very similar to the procedures followed during other classroom assessments they are used to completing.

HOW WILL THE ASSESSMENTS BE CONDUCTED?

The students will do a paper and pencil test on a date selected by their school between the

- 11 and 22 October in Tasmania, Victoria, Queensland and the Northern Territory and
- 18 and 29 October in New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, South Australia and Western Australia.

Teachers will receive detailed instructions about how the assessment should be conducted to make certain that students are tested under the same conditions. The assessments will be marked by trained, expert markers.

HOW WILL THE RESULTS BE USED?

The main purpose of the *National Sample Assessment Program - Civics and Citizenship* is to monitor and report on the overall progress being made towards achieving high standards of civic knowledge and understanding and obtaining the skills and values needed for active citizenship.

Schools taking part in the sample assessment will receive reports summarising their students' results.

A national public report describing students' achievements in civics and citizenship education will be published. No individual schools or students will be identified in this report. The report will include comparisons of the achievements of various groups of students – for example, the relative achievements of

- boys and girls
- metropolitan students and rural students and
- students in each State and Territory.

If you have any questions about the Year 6 or the Year 10 national assessment of civics and citizenship education, please talk to your child's teacher or school principal.

Students are NOT expected to study for this assessment. The assessment is designed to assess your child's civic knowledge, understanding and values and citizenship participation skills. Last minute preparation is unnecessary.