

Australian Civics and Governance

Civics & Government · Answer Key · 18 Questions

1. Which of the following is a key principle of the Westminster system of government, adopted by Australia?

- A) A system where the head of state is directly elected by the people.
- B) A division of powers where the judiciary is supreme over the legislature.
- C) Responsible government, where the executive is accountable to the legislature.**
- D) A unicameral legislature where all laws are made by a single chamber.

2. The High Court of Australia's primary role involves interpreting the Australian Constitution and resolving disputes concerning its application. What is a significant power of the High Court in relation to federal law?

- A) It can appoint the Prime Minister.
- B) It can repeal legislation passed by the Parliament if it is deemed unconstitutional.**
- C) It has the sole authority to declare war.
- D) It can unilaterally amend the Constitution without parliamentary consent.

3. In the Australian federal system, which level of government is primarily responsible for education and healthcare?

- A) The Commonwealth (Federal) Government.
- B) The State and Territory Governments.**
- C) Local Government Councils.
- D) The High Court of Australia.

4. What is the significance of the 'separation of powers' doctrine in the Australian federal government?

- A) It ensures that the judiciary has the power to initiate legislation.
- B) It divides governmental power between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches to prevent the concentration of power.**
- C) It guarantees that the Prime Minister can dismiss any judge at will.
- D) It mandates that the Senate is directly elected by the Governor-General.

5. The Australian Parliament is bicameral, consisting of the House of Representatives and the Senate. What is the primary function of the Senate in relation to legislation?

- A) It has the power to introduce all money bills.
- B) It acts as a house of review, scrutinising legislation passed by the House of Representatives.**
- C) It is responsible for appointing the Governor-General.
- D) It directly advises the Prime Minister on foreign policy matters.

6. Australia is a constitutional monarchy. Who is the Head of State in Australia?

- A) The Prime Minister.
- B) The Governor-General, acting on behalf of the reigning monarch.**
- C) The Chief Justice of the High Court.
- D) The Speaker of the House of Representatives.

7. What is the name of the document that outlines the fundamental laws and principles of Australia's federal system of government?

- A) The Magna Carta.
- B) The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- C) The Australian Constitution.**
- D) The Bill of Rights.

8. Which of the following describes the system of voting used in Australian federal elections for the House of Representatives?

- A) First Past the Post (Plurality).
- B) Preferential Voting.**
- C) Proportional Representation.
- D) A lottery system.

9. What is the role of the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC)?

- A) To advise the government on economic policy.
- B) To conduct federal elections and referendums, and maintain the electoral roll.**
- C) To interpret laws passed by Parliament.
- D) To represent Australia in international trade negotiations.

10. The principle of 'rule of law' in Australia means that:

- A) Individuals can be punished without trial if deemed a threat.
- B) Everyone, including those in power, is subject to and accountable under the law.**
- C) The government can arbitrarily change laws without public consultation.
- D) Only elected officials are bound by legal statutes.

11. What does the term 'responsible government' mean in the Australian context?

- A) The government is responsible for its actions to the Queen.
- B) The executive government (Prime Minister and Cabinet) is accountable to the Parliament.**
- C) The judiciary is solely responsible for approving government policies.
- D) The public is directly responsible for all governmental decisions.

12. Which of the following is a function of Local Government in Australia?

- A) Establishing national defence policy.
- B) Collecting income tax.
- C) Providing local services like waste management and street lighting.**
- D) Conducting foreign diplomacy.

13. What is the purpose of a referendum in Australia?

- A) To elect a new Prime Minister.
- B) To change the Constitution, requiring a double majority vote.**
- C) To ratify international treaties.
- D) To appoint judges to the High Court.

14. The Governor-General of Australia is appointed by:

- A) The Prime Minister, with no other approval.
- B) The reigning monarch on the advice of the Australian Prime Minister.**
- C) The people through a national election.
- D) The Chief Justice of the High Court.

15. What is the significance of the 'division of powers' between the Commonwealth and the States under the Australian Constitution?

- A) It grants unlimited power to the Commonwealth government.
- B) It assigns specific responsibilities to the Commonwealth and reserves others for the States, as outlined in Section 51 and other sections of the Constitution.**
- C) It means the States have no legislative authority.
- D) It allows the States to override Commonwealth laws at any time.

16. The principle of 'parliamentary sovereignty' in the UK (which influences Australia) means that:

- A) The monarch is above the law.
- B) Parliament can make or unmake any law it chooses.**
- C) The judiciary can veto any Act of Parliament.
- D) The Executive Council holds ultimate legal authority.

17. In Australia, what is the term used for the group of Ministers chosen by the Prime Minister to lead government departments and advise the government?

- A) The Shadow Cabinet.
- B) The Parliament.
- C) The Cabinet.**
- D) The Judiciary.

18. Which of the following is a characteristic of a 'representative democracy' as practised in Australia?

A) Citizens vote directly on all laws.

B) Citizens elect representatives to make decisions on their behalf.

C) A single political party holds absolute power.

D) The head of government is determined by military force.