



**Constitution Education Fund Australia (CEFA)
Governor General's
Undergraduate Essay Competition Questions 2009**

Q1. Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states: *Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.*

Compare the protection of the freedom of speech in Australia to that in other nations.

Q2. What is the role of the Crown in today's working Australian Constitution? Has its role evolved since Federation?

Q3. There has been speculation in the media that the Federal Government could seize upon the blocking of legislation in the Senate to trigger a double dissolution election. Discuss the appropriate use of the double dissolution mechanism, taking into account Australian precedent.

Q4. Will Kymlicka, in his *Multicultural Citizenship* (1995), says "*Perhaps the most controversial demand of ethnic groups is for exemptions from laws and regulations that disadvantage them, given their religious practices*". To what extent, if any, should Australian Citizenship limit the practices of traditional cultures and religions?

Q5. "*[That change is one of the laws of life is] incontrovertible; but at the same time the tendency to change must be scrutinized to ascertain whether it is proceeding in a safe direction...*"

- Quick and Garran, *The Annotated Constitution of the Australian Commonwealth* (1901)
Discuss the strengths and limitations of s 128 of the Australian Constitution as a mechanism for regulating constitutional reform. You may wish to refer to contemporary debates about the constitutional entrenchment of compulsory voting or a bill of rights.

Q6. In recent times, a number of States and the Commonwealth have enacted laws enabling the imposition of controversial restrictions on individual freedoms (for example, anti-terrorism legislation providing for the making of control orders, so-called "anti-bikie" legislation providing for the making of non-association orders, and laws permitting the continuing detention of sex offenders). To what extent are such laws necessary or justified? In what circumstances, if any, should parliaments restrict individual freedom as a means to protect society as a whole?

Q7. Should Australia continue to contribute troops to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan? In your response, you may wish to consider issues relating to global security, regional stability and/or Australia's relations with other countries.

Q8. Discuss your view on what the role of government should be in addressing the Global Financial Crisis.

Q9. Does Chinese investment in Australia represent a threat or an opportunity for our nation?

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