

## The Graduate Test Explained

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(an occasional contributor)

Through the courtesy of the Minister's office I am able to set out an explanation of the coming Graduate Test, and to provide some examples of the questions that will be asked.

It needs to be understood from the beginning that the test is no longer intended to replace undergraduate education itself. It is true that an early version of the test was designed in the belief that its adoption would save the Government five or so billion dollars a year through the consequential 'folding in' of the higher education system.

That plan was reluctantly put to one side when it was realised that the test could not cover all disciplines at a sufficient level of detail. The outcome has been a much more 'student friendly' test, which explores the basic intellectual understanding of each student and his or her preparation for working life.

Because the necessary generic skills are so well revealed by the test, however, it will now be possible to 'integrate' all undergraduate education so that it will take place in the first semester of each year, with graduate professional education taking place in the second semester. Selection for postgraduate research will be based solely on the Test.

The change, which will be introduced in 1999, will produce an estimated three billion dollars in savings, which will in turn allow a \$0.5 million addition to the funds of the Australian Research Council, and an much-needed \$75 000 increase for CUTSD, to be spent on Test-related projects.

The questions (the answers to which are shown on page X) should not be rushed. As in all examinations, a period of quiet reflection and thought is the best preparation for writing. The answers should come well within the experience of all right-thinking Australian students. As a final comment, there is no point in cramming for a test like this. You either have the necessary intellectual skills, or you don't.

*Question 1 (Mathematical reasoning)* You are driving a bus from Sydney to Melbourne with a contingent of students bound for a Young Liberal Convention. There are 38 women students and 45 men students. At Goulburn you pick up 6 women students, and lose a male student who has been taken ill. At Albury two women and one man fail to return from The Sizzler. At Wangaratta you collect four male students and a woman friend of one of them who is not herself a student. At Seymour a woman student complains about the noise and leaves the bus at the railway station. What is the name of the driver?

*Question 2 (Critical thinking)* Complete the following syllogism:

Feathers are light  
Light comes from the sun

....

*Question 3 (Geography)* A plane has crashed exactly on the border between New South Wales and Queensland. In which State are the survivors buried?

*Question 4 (English expression)* Which of the following statements is correct?

- (a) The yolk of the egg **is** white
- (b) The yolk of the egg **are** white

*Question 5 (Civic awareness)* Which is the correct choice of venue for the next Young Liberal Convention?

- (a) The Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra
- (b) The Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras in Sydney
- (c) Somewhere in Melbourne
- (d) Wherever it was held last time

*Question 6 (Numeracy)* How many beans make five?

*Question 7 (General reasoning power)* Why did the chicken cross the road?

[Answers:

Q1 Your own name, unless you actually knew the driver.

Q2 Since it is still not conclusively proved that feathers do in fact come from the sun the syllogism is best left incomplete.

Q3 The survivors would certainly wish to exercise their power of choice, and would doubtless avoid burial in any State in which private health care was inadequately available.

Q4 Under the Coalition's primary industry policy there has been a wholehearted attempt to avoid an unhealthy yellow colour in eggs, so that alternative (a) is correct.

Q5 Alternatives (c) and (d) are to be preferred. Choice of either of the first two would indicate shallow, adolescent thinking patterns.

Q6 This is a trick question. The bean (*P. vulgaris*) is incapable of making anything other than wind. Answers of this kind would gain high marks, while critiques of the kind 'make five what?' would also score well.

Q7 The chicken failed to recognise that 'cross now' was not in fact a **core** promise, and its unfortunate demise, while regrettable, was not due in any way to the Government's election policy.