

VCE Legal Studies: Task

Parliament

The resources for this task can be found on the Parliament of Victoria website: parliament.vic.gov.au

See the '[Roles of the Crown and Houses of the Victorian Parliament in Law-Making](#)' resource in the *Education Zone* under *VCE Legal Studies 1 & 4*.

Tasks

- (a) What is the role of the Legislative Assembly in law-making?
- (b) What is the role of the Legislative Council in law-making?
- (c) What is the role of the Governor in law-making?
- (d) Briefly describe the passage of a Bill through the law-making process in Victoria.

Watch the video '[How Parliament's Elections Work](#)'. This can be found under *Voting and elections* in the *Parliamentary System* section in *About Parliament*.

- (e) Explain why it can be said that the Victorian Parliament is representative of the people of Victoria.

Responses

(a) The government is formed in the Legislative Assembly with the party or coalition of parties holding power and the leader becoming the Premier. The Legislative Assembly's role is to make new law and update old law. Most Bills originate in the Legislative Assembly and only the Legislative Assembly may initiate money Bills. It scrutinises actions of government.

(b) The Legislative Council acts as a house of review. It debates Bills from the Legislative Assembly. It cannot reject money Bills. It rarely initiates legislation. The government does not require a majority in the Legislative Council.

(c) Once a Bill has passed both houses of parliament it is presented to the Governor for Royal Assent. On receiving Royal Assent it becomes a law.

(d) The passage of a Bill begins with a formal introduction, usually in the Legislative Assembly. The long title of the Bill is read and this is known as the First Reading. A statement of compatibility with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* is read. Some time later the Second Reading takes place when the purpose of the Bill is explained. There is then an adjournment for the Opposition to prepare its response. Debate then takes place, known as Consideration in Detail, and a vote is taken. If the Bill is supported by the majority of members it proceeds to the Third Reading which is usually a formality. The vote on the Third Reading concludes its passage in the originating house. The Bill is then passed on to the other house where it goes through the same stages. If it passes all stages in both houses it goes to the Governor for Royal Assent.

(e) There are 128 members of the Victorian Parliament. 88 are members of the Legislative Assembly and 40 of the Legislative Council. Each of the 88 members of the Legislative Assembly is elected by the voters in an electorate. From time to time electorate boundaries are amended so that all electorates have approximately the same number of voters. The candidate who wins the majority of votes in an electorate is elected to the Legislative Assembly. The political party or coalition of parties which wins the majority of electorates becomes the government.

For Legislative Council elections the state is divided into eight regions and the voters in each region elect five candidates who become that region's representatives in the Legislative Council.

Thus, the Victorian Parliament represents the people who live in 88 individual electorates and it represents the people who live in eight regions. As the government is formed from a representative parliament, it can be said to be a representative government.