

Appendix: The Questionnaire

Instructions:

The questions should be answered with your first reaction. You may wish to qualify your answer or to discuss it later. Answers seldom give your exact opinion, but should be understood as asking 'If you had to identify one choice as closest, which of the following...'

The scale of responses, unless otherwise indicated is from 'strongly agree' (1), 'agree' (2), 'neither agree nor disagree' (3), 'disagree' (4), through to 'strongly disagree' (5), or from (1) 'most important'. There are some 'yes or no' answers, some which require ranking answers in order of strength or preference, and some which require you to supply a word or two. Please feel free to write 'n.a.' if the question does not apply to you, to ask for further information, to decline to answer by leaving blank, or to add more suitable answers in the space marked 'Other'.

There are no correct or incorrect answers.

The questions are grouped to elicit your responses about how you perceive several distinct areas:

- A. Australian society and politics
- B. The role of Parliament
- C. Your role as an M.P.

The later questions are open ended to invite more detailed comment, but please do not hesitate to add other responses at any stage if you feel that to be appropriate.

Answers will be treated in strict confidence and care will be taken to avoid linking characteristics that might threaten this confidence. Participants will be offered access to the overall results.

A. Australian society and politics

(i) Politics in Australia is

1. about ideas in conflict
2. class-based
3. polarised left v right
4. about powerful interests
5. of little concern to most people
6. about the size of government
7. the best guarantee of freedoms
8. dominated by political parties

(ii) What is your reaction to the following statements?

1. trade unions have too much power
2. harsher penalties are needed to deter crime
3. there is too much poverty
4. taxes are too high
5. too many people are on welfare
6. marijuana should be legalised
7. the environment needs more protection
8. affirmative action programs have gone too far
9. land rights will solve Aboriginal problems
10. there is too much corruption in N.S.W.

(iii) Circle the number next to the response you feel most closely describes your political philosophy. Multiple answers allowed.

1. pragmatic
2. ideological
3. liberal
4. democratic
5. conservative
6. sectarian
7. left of centre
8. right of centre
9. moderate/ centre
10. constantly changing

(iv) Circle the number next to the response that most closely describes the most important influence in your political socialisation:

1. a crisis in the world, nation or community
2. a crisis in personal life
3. following family tradition
4. reacting against family tradition
5. wanting to follow an idol

(v) Circle numbers next to policy areas with a 'gender' component:

1. the arts
2. education
3. employment/ industrial relations
4. agriculture
5. sport
6. justice/ police/ corrective services
7. health
8. welfare

B. The role of Parliament

(i) The N.S.W. Parliament is

1. The focus of power in the State
2. the place where public policy is shaped
3. dominated by parties
4. dominated by the executive
5. a piece of theatre
6. an arena of conflict
7. just a charade

(ii) The effectiveness of parliament in various functions:

1. as a legislature
2. as a check on the executive
3. as a forum for discussion
4. as an information source for M.P.s
5. as support service for M.P.s
6. as a focus of leadership
7. as community safeguard

(iii) Formal contacts between M.P.s are best described as (Circle one):

1. hierarchical
2. egalitarian
3. ranked by seniority
4. largely partisan
5. regimented
6. anarchic
7. determined by personalities

(iv) Contacts with M.P.s across the chamber:

1. relations are amicable
2. contact is frequent
3. contacts are useful
4. there is common ground
5. enjoy their company socially

(v) Do you agree with the following statements?

1. In general, lobbyists and special interest groups have too much access to and influence around parliament.
2. The reception given casual visitors to parliament is efficient.

C. Your role as an M.P.

(i) Thinking about your working days as a whole, in your judgment, which activity consumes most of your time? (Circle one number).

1. sitting as a parliamentarian
2. serving the constituency
3. engaging in party work

(ii) Rate your effectiveness in each, high, moderate or low:

1. sitting as a parliamentarian
4. serving the constituency
5. engaging in party work

(iii) Which of the above do you perform most effectively?
Which least effectively?

(iv) Thinking about your activities during sitting times, describe your evaluation of the amount of time you spend in the following: (Too much, about right, too little).

1. in legislative debates
2. in committee work
3. in discussions in the chamber
4. researching/ being briefed
5. receiving constituents
6. making representations for constituents
7. attending party meetings
8. informal contact with colleagues
9. dealing with media
10. relaxing, personal arrangements

(v) Rate your effectiveness in these aspects of your sitting work

1. contribute to legislation
2. committee work
3. speaking in chamber
4. preparedness
5. making representations
6. influencing party room decisions
7. lobbying colleagues
8. scoring debating points
9. dealing with media
10. receiving delegations

(vi) Circle the number next to the most important factor enabling you to adapt to parliamentary life:

1. formal induction procedures
2. party discipline
3. informal contact with seniors
4. same date-of-entry cohort
5. parliament's administrative staff
6. personal staff

(vii) How effectively does the media report your participation in the following

1. debates in the chamber
2. committee work
3. party matters
4. constituency work
5. community work

(viii) How important do you think the job of an M.P. is

1. in general
2. as representative
3. as watchdog on government
4. as legislator
5. as team player
6. as role model
7. as symbol of democracy

(ix) Do you agree or disagree?

1. the public understand M.P.s' work

2. they appreciate M.P.s' efforts
3. M.P.s are well qualified
4. M.P.s work hard
5. Public respect for M.P.s is too low
6. Remuneration is too low
7. M.P.s see power as an aphrodisiac
8. M.P.s stay only if they have a sense of achievement
9. M.P.s have prestige individually but not collectively
10. M.P.s require a high sense of duty

(x) What characteristics apply to colleagues you respect most?

1. sit nearby in chamber
2. same gender
3. courteous behaviour
4. display ability
5. senior to you

(xi) Name the three colleagues you respect most.

(xii) Thinking about the colleagues you like most, what is the most important characteristic they are likely to have?

(xiii) Do you enjoy electioneering? Always sometimes rarely never (Circle one).

(xiv) Is each of the following an electoral asset?

1. integrity
2. dedication to hard work
3. a large circle of friends
4. a competitive nature
5. political cunning
6. stamina
7. support of a party leader
8. social standing
9. high media profile
10. plenty of money

(xv) How important were each of the following in motivating you to enter Parliament?

1. achieve an ideal
2. right an injustice
3. promptings of a mentor
4. sense of public duty
5. local government experience
6. saw it as your right
7. recruited by party
8. keep enemies out of power
9. naturally ambitious
10. financially lucrative

(xvi) How long do you intend to stay in Parliament? (Circle one). Indefinitely
no firm plans set number years until aims achieved

(xvii) How closely do the following describe your political ambitions?

1. be an effective backbencher
2. become expert in legislative procedures
3. specialise in one policy

4. be an effective committee member
5. join the front bench
6. go into federal politics
7. be Premier or Prime Minister
8. acquire skills to use in the private sector

(xviii) How important do you think the following factors are in determining whether you achieve your parliamentary ambitions?

1. skill as a legislator
2. how your colleagues perform
3. trends in politics generally
4. events in your personal life
5. performance as a party member
6. expertise in a policy area
7. media profile

(xix) Characteristics likely to advance the career of a N.S.W. M.P. are

1. intelligence
2. diligence
3. endurance
4. integrity
5. independence of mind
6. sensitivity
7. assertiveness
8. emotional resilience
9. ruthlessness
10. determination
11. cunning
12. charisma
13. handsome appearance
14. ambition
15. prosperous lifestyle

(xx) How highly do you personally rate the following qualities in a parliamentarian?

1. a logical mind
2. political idealism
3. ability to empathise
4. to speedily grasp the essence of an issue
5. emotionally robust enough to ignore insults
6. legal training and experience
7. other professional experience
8. physical stamina
9. sense of humour
10. honesty and integrity

(xxi) Do you see your role as a trustee relying on your own judgment, a delegate endorsed to do the electorate's bidding, or a politico to be influenced mainly by the priorities of your party? (Circle one).

(xxii) Thinking about what it is you represent how important are

1. a specific electorate
2. the community interest
3. the party machine and branches
4. yourself/ your conscience
5. parliamentary leadership

6. segment of society
7. special interest groups

(xxiii) In which policy areas do you specialise? Name up to 3, beginning with the most important.

(xxiv) How important are each of the following in determining your legislative priorities?

1. personal interest
2. representations by constituents
3. party agenda
4. media pressure
5. interest groups

(xxv) Rate the following features of parliamentary life according to the pleasure you derive from them.

1. defeating opponents
2. serving constituents
3. speaking in debates
4. committee work
5. helping shape laws
6. educating the public
7. meeting interesting people
8. status as a community leader
9. acclaim of colleagues
10. the salary
11. the hours
12. public criticism
13. atmosphere of the chamber
14. playing politics
15. compromise
16. conflict
17. attending community events

(xxvi) Rate your feeling of comfort in these areas of Parliament House:

1. own office
2. colleagues' offices
3. party room
4. the chamber
5. executive areas
6. Members communal facilities
7. Library
8. Public areas/ foyer/verandah
9. Car park

(xxvii) Circle the number next to the answer that most closely describes your attitude to the use of the 'gag' to end debates.

1. regard it as routine
2. is necessary in some circumstances
3. should be used as last resort
4. should not be used at all

(xxviii) Do these reasons explain the gender ratio in Parliament?

1. women do not come forward
2. voters distrust women
3. parties preselect more men

4. women put their families first
5. women are apolitical
6. women are not tough enough
7. media trivialise women M.P.s
8. parliamentary life is unsuitable for women
9. women lack training

(xxix) In your experience, do the following statements accurately describe differences between male and female M.P.s? Women

1. are more conscientious
2. prepare better
3. are better speakers
4. are more approachable
5. are better negotiators
6. are more loyal to party
7. are more ruthless
8. are more ambitious
9. are better listeners
10. concentrate on different issues

(xxx) Women M.P.s currently occupy about 15% Assembly seats and 33% Council seats. How many women should there be? (Underline one). Many more, some more, the present number, fewer, cannot tell.

(xxxi) Do you approve of affirmative action programs to increase the number of women in parliament? Yes no undecided. Describe your reasons.

(xxxii) Have you encountered any obstacles in seeking election and settling in to parliament? If yes, could you describe these?

(xxxiii) Have you ever disobeyed a party whip? If so, what was the occasion and why?

(xxxiv) Have you had any role models in NSW, Australian or international politics? If so, who?

(xxxv) Did you have any mentors in your political career? If so, who?

(xxxvi) Have you had any mentors since entering Parliament? If yes, who?

(xxxvii) Being elected is a great achievement. Have you achieved anything more satisfying since entering parliament? If yes, what?

(xxxviii) If you were able to introduce and have passed one piece of legislation as a private member, what would it be?

(xxxix) In contrast to your greatest achievement as an M.P. what has been your biggest disappointment?

(xxxx) Is There anything frustrating about being an M.P.? If so what?

(xxxxi) Would you do anything differently in hindsight?

(xxxxii) If a new M.P. approached you for advice on how to succeed in parliament, how to set priorities, allocate time, who to listen to, what is the most important suggestion you would make?

- (xxxxiii) Has being an M.P. affected changes in your personal life?
- (xxxxiv) From your knowledge of M.P.s generally, how important is a spouse?
- (xxxxv) Has anyone in the media shown any interest in your life outside politics?
- (xxxxvi) What has been the most significant change in parliament since your entry?
- (xxxxvii) Could services to M.P.s be improved? How?
- (xxxxviii) Is there anything else at all that affects your role and that we have not covered but you would like to add?