

91279R



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Level 2 Social Studies 2025

**91279 Demonstrate understanding of conflict(s) arising
from different cultural beliefs and ideas**

Credits: Four

RESOURCE BOOKLET

Refer to this booklet to answer the questions for Social Studies 91279.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–9 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

YOU MAY KEEP THIS BOOKLET AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

THE NATURE AND CAUSE OF THE CONFLICT SURROUNDING AUSTRALIA'S 'RIGHT TO DISCONNECT' LEGISLATION

INTRODUCTION

On 26 August 2024, Australia introduced a 'right to disconnect' law, following significant amendments to the Fair Work Act (2009). This new legislation aims to establish clear boundaries around out-of-hours work communication.

There was much debate in the lead up to this law being introduced and also after it came into effect. The debate surrounds whether this law is truly needed, the motivation behind introducing it, and the economic and social impacts of it.

In a recent survey, less than half of Australian executives believe that the newly implemented right-to-disconnect legislation will deliver benefits to their organisations. Only 28% believe the legislation will improve work-life balance for employees.

Glossary

Compliance	Following rules, laws, or instructions. For example, when a company follows safety regulations, or a student follows school rules, they are showing compliance.
Legislating	Making laws. It involves elected officials creating rules that people in a country or state must follow.
Litigation	Taking a case to court to settle a legal dispute. It involves lawyers and judges deciding who is right or wrong in a conflict.
Phenomenon	Something happening or existing, especially something unusual or interesting. It can be an event, fact, or situation that people notice and try to understand.
Proliferation	Something increasing or spreading rapidly.
Social force	Driving people to take action or make changes within society. Social forces can impact on what people believe. This can lead to conflict or contribute to making a conflict worse.
Solidify	Making something stronger, more certain, or more permanent. For example, you might solidify a plan by making it more detailed and final.

- The reason for the contact.
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- The employee's personal circumstances, including family or caring responsibilities.

POINTS OF VIEW, VALUES, AND PERSPECTIVES OF THE INDIVIDUALS/GROUPS INVOLVED IN THE CONFLICT

RESOURCE B: Who is involved?

Andrew McKellar – Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI)

*A **business** perspective results in people prioritising the needs of business owners and financial success. People with this world view care about profit, productivity, and employer rights.*

Given it will be up to workers to push back if they think their bosses are overstepping on their 'right to disconnect', Australian employer groups believe those conversations would negate the need for this law.

Andrew McKellar believes the 'right to disconnect' law overrides common sense.

"It undermines productivity because businesses have to spend more time on compliance. They are going to have to go through, revise their policies, their workplace agreements, their employment contracts – that of course takes time."

Sarah Pirie-Nally – Founder and chief executive of Evolve X

*A **well-being** perspective prioritises the mental, physical, and social dimensions of people over other factors. People with this world view care about health, priorities, and balance.*

Well-being expert and founder and chief executive behind Evolve X (a platform designed to inspire transformation across families, businesses, and communities), Sarah Pirie-Nally, used to work in corporate banking.

Sarah Pirie-Nally believes the 'right to disconnect' law is a protective measure people need because they do not feel empowered to have those conversations at work.

"[The 'right to disconnect' law] would have been that little safeguard that would have given me permission to think you know what ... yes ... I can access my email from home, and that's a good thing if I'm wanting to work from home ... but it doesn't mean I always have to be on."

Alex Martin – Commercial litigation specialist

*A **legal** perspective understands laws, policy, and legal rights. People with this world view care about diligence, clarity, and respect for the law.*

Legal expert Alex Martin thinks that the new rights given to employees with the ‘right to disconnect’ law would only apply if the refusal was reasonable, which in itself is causing confusion.

Alex Martin believes the new ‘right to disconnect’ law would likely be actioned if a worker faced disciplinary action if they did not respond to an employer after hours.

“It is tough for employees because they are not sure what their rights are, and it is tough for employers because they will question whether they can ring their employees.”

Dr Claire Madden – Social researcher and author of *Hello Gen Z: Engaging the Generation of Post-Millennials*

*A **Generation Z** perspective involves people born between the late 1990s and the early 2010s. It draws on the shared experience of growing up with technology like smartphones, social media, and the internet, and the consequences of this. People with this world view care about change, rights, and the importance of technology when participating in society and connecting with others.*

Generation Z expert Dr Claire Madden said the ways in which younger employees spend their time outside of work might go some way to explaining why they have a particular enthusiasm for wanting to be able to disconnect from it.

Dr Claire Madden believes Gen Z have emerged in radically different times from older generations and, as a result, bring new expectations and approaches to the workforce.

“I think Gen Z are probably the ones realising they need those boundaries to be put in.”

SOCIAL FORCES THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE CONFLICT, AND THEIR EFFECTS

RESOURCE C: A growing importance on mental health and well-being

As people become more conscious of the importance of mental health, they are looking to reduce the negative impact that workplace expectations have on their well-being, and looking for support in prioritising the things that benefit their well-being.



Eurofound, the European Union agency for the improvement of living and working conditions, said in a 2023 study that workers at companies with a right to disconnect policy reported better work-life balance than those without – 92% versus 80%.

RESOURCE D: Generational change and attitudes

The opinions surrounding the 'right to disconnect' law expose the difference in workplace attitudes between generations. Younger generations have felt the impacts of employment boundaries being blurred during the COVID-19 pandemic and because of increased accessibility through technology, and they are now pushing for cultural and policy change.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

“... those who are younger will say: of course remote working has benefits, but also there are downsides to it, and so we need to erect boundaries.”

Acknowledgements

Material from the following sources has been adapted for use in this examination (accessed 8 May 2025).

Resource A

- Page 3: <https://www.forbes.com.au/news/careers/australias-right-to-disconnect-laws-explained/> (text)
<https://www.hcamag.com/au/specialisation/leadership/two-thirds-of-execs-say-right-to-disconnect-will-have-significant-impact-on-operations-survey/507764> (text)
<https://www.npr.org/2024/08/26/nx-s1-5089792/australia-right-to-disconnect-workers-respond-after-work> (text)

Resource B

- Page 4: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-08-26/what-right-to-disconnect-from-work-means-for-you/104234308> (text)
<https://www.abc.net.au/qanda/andrewmckellar-2023/102797890> (image)
- Page 5: <https://theabj.com.au/2024/10/08/evolve-x-pioneers-personal-growth/> (text)
<https://www.ovations.com.au/speakers/sarah-pirie-nally> (image)
- Page 6: <https://www.news.com.au/finance/work/right-to-disconnect-laws-unlikely-to-change-much-but-should-lead-to-a-shift-in-aussie-workplace-culture/news-story/de6e25d8c46c68e68a63c181cd261daa> (text and image)
<https://www.smh.com.au/national/is-the-right-to-disconnect-gen-z-s-workplace-legacy-it-s-complicated-20240214-p5f501.html> (text)
<https://www.saxton.com.au/speakers/claire-madden> (text)
<https://clairemadden.com/about> (image)

Resource C

- Page 7: <https://www.npr.org/2024/08/26/nx-s1-5089792/australia-right-to-disconnect-workers-respond-after-work> (text)

Resource D

- Page 8: <https://www.smh.com.au/national/is-the-right-to-disconnect-gen-z-s-workplace-legacy-it-s-complicated-20240214-p5f501.html> (text)

