



2012

Industry and Enterprise GA 3: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

In the 2012 Industry and Enterprise examination, students were required to respond to seven compulsory questions in a question and answer book. They had the flexibility to answer the questions in any order and, therefore, should have planned this during reading time. The majority of questions contained a number of parts and some had stimulus material to guide students' thinking. The examination totalled 70 marks. Students need to manage their time to ensure that they have enough time to answer all questions in appropriate detail.

It was clear that many students had completed past examinations, consulted assessment reports and used the advice provided in these to prepare for the examination. While this is excellent preparation for the examination, students must also be able to adapt their knowledge to questions that ask for information in a different way or with a different emphasis. The more successful responses incorporated specific details to answer the questions that were asked, rather than providing rote-learned answers.

Students and teachers should take note of the following.

- Some students did not allocate their time efficiently, writing lengthy answers for questions that were worth relatively few marks and answers of a similar length for questions that were allocated significantly more marks.
- Students need to make sure that they respond to the operational or task word. Many questions require students to move beyond just describing to demonstrate higher-order understanding of the content prescribed in the study design. During the year, all students should complete a wide range of extended responses using operational terms such as 'compare' and 'evaluate'.

The *VCE Industry and Enterprise Study Design* (2012–2016) and other relevant documents are available on the VCAA website. It is important that students are familiar with all of the required key knowledge and key skills that are outlined in the study design and with the 'Characteristics of the study'. In particular, students and teachers should be aware of changes to the study design, such as the inclusion of the role of leadership and teamwork in developing an enterprise culture.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what the answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

Question 1a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	12	16	31	41	2.0

The majority of students were able to identify a stakeholder, other than an employee, of a community or work setting. Possible stakeholders included customers, clients, suppliers and shareholders. In addition, most students were able to outline the interest of that stakeholder in that community or work setting.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Stakeholders have a vested interest in community and work settings and are impacted by the decisions and actions of that work setting. A stakeholder for the majority of work settings are customers. In general the customer is motivated by a desire for a high quality product or service at a fair price. In addition many customers now want the work setting to operate in an ethical and environmentally friendly way.

Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	25	23	25	16	11	1.7

Students could have selected from the range of enterprising behaviours that are identified on page 13 of the study design. These include embracing change, managing risk, creating ideas and resolving conflict. A number of students merely described the behaviour and did not develop their answers to explain why the behaviour was enterprising.

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The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

An enterprising behaviour is the ability to show initiative by identifying opportunities. My manager encouraged her workers to initiate and develop ideas and responses to work based problems. This was enterprising because it showed that she valued and trusted us and believed that we could contribute to the work setting. Her behaviour combined many of the elements of an enterprise culture. She clearly and passionately communicated her approach, listened carefully to our ideas and then supported us to develop them – for example with training and time. This open approach inspired us to think more about our potential to contribute. As a team we made decisions on which ideas to implement and then worked together to ensure that they were effectively introduced. Not only did the quality of service increase but we felt more committed to our work and each other.

Question 1c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	28	40	21	11	1.2

Many students did not have an accurate understanding of leadership and confused it with management. An essential quality of leadership is the ability to motivate and inspire others to achieve objectives.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Leadership is the ability to motivate people to move towards a desired goal. In order to develop an enterprise culture leaders must understand the different parts, for example open communication and problem solving, of enterprise. Leaders are seen as the symbol in the work setting so they must act in an enterprising way and support others to be enterprising. My supervisor was a leader as she modelled enterprise in her work and encouraged and supported us to develop our enterprising capabilities.

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	25	31	16	12	17	1.7

Many students' responses did not fully answer this question. Some responses demonstrated a lack of understanding of the elements of quality. The most common cause of confusion was the nature of quality control, which is a set of procedures that are internal to the firm, to monitor aspects of production of a good or provision of a service, to ensure that it meets the required standard. In addition, the majority of students did not comprehensively compare the processes. A high-quality response addressed similarities, such as the desire to ensure a consistent and high standard, as well as differences, such as the fact that quality control is an internal procedure while quality assurance is external and provides independent certification.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Quality control is an internal process that monitors, checks and evaluates production to ensure that it meets the established acceptable standard. In comparison quality assurance is an external process where a work setting follows precise guidelines. These guidelines were developed by International Standards or Australian Standards. When a work setting meets these standards they are awarded certification by that external body. This certification is recognition that the product or service meets the external minimum standard. Both these processes are attempts to ensure that quality is a key driver in the organisation. They differ in that one is in the control of the work setting which can decide what that standard is while the other, quality assurance, has been established independently and will apply to a number of organisations.

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	37	22	18	10	11	1.4

This question required students to explain the relationship between the development of work-related skills and the management of quality processes. A number of students found this question very difficult. Successful responses approached the question in a variety of ways. Some students described each term and then used these definitions to develop an explanation of their relationship. Others used an example of the relationship to frame their response.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Developing work-related skills is vital in managing the work setting's quality processes. Workers need to have the required skills in order to complete their part of the production process. The introduction of a quality process means that the workers are more actively involved in the checking of production or service provision. This will further develop the workers' skills. At Brookfarm, a work setting growing and selling macadamia nuts, work related skills are used to identify and discard nuts which do not meet the quality standard. Workers must also monitor the speed of the conveyor belt and grade the nuts as they move along the belt. The worker then sorts the nuts according to quality. The worker needs to be able to identify any quality issues and then devise and

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use a strategy to solve it. A worker with highly developed skills is able to work at a consistent high standard and with other team members to minimise waste and guarantee that customers receive nuts of the required standard.

Question 3a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	39	14	32	15	1.3

Either numerical or functional flexibility was acceptable, depending on the feature commented on. In order to be awarded three marks, students were required to use their knowledge of the features of numerical or functional flexibility and apply it to the scenario. Responses needed to show where the selected flexibility was evident in the scenario.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

This is an example of functional flexibility. A feature of functional flexibility is that it allows a worker to work from an alternate location. The functional work arrangement illustrated here is telecommuting. This can be defined as working from home or another location that is not the normal work site. As Olivia is able to work from home using technology to link her to her workplace she will be telecommuting.

Question 3b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	10	30	29	31	1.9

The majority of students were able to explain a range of advantages to the employer of this type of flexible work arrangement. These advantages could have included improved relationships with workers and/or customers; enhanced reputation of the work setting; cost reduction as the need to recruit and train a new worker is eliminated; and retention of an experienced worker with excellent knowledge. Students need to read the question carefully as a number of responses addressed the advantages to Olivia (the employee) and not the employer, as required.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The first benefit, to Olivia's employer, is that he will not lose her as an employee. Olivia is a highly skilled accountant with a good knowledge of the work setting and the clients of the firm. Her termination would have a negative effect on the firm. In addition a new employee would be required to replace her. This would lead to significant financial and time costs in recruiting and then training them to the specific needs of that work setting. Another benefit is that by acting in an ethical way the morale and commitment of all workers in the firm may be increased.

Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	13	45	42	1.3

To be awarded two marks, students needed to provide a comprehensive definition of the term 'international competitiveness'. 'International competitiveness' refers to the ability of a work setting, industry or country to export goods and services at a rate that can compete with goods and services that are produced locally, or to its ability to compete with goods and services that are produced overseas and imported into the country. Price and cost are not the only factors when considering competitiveness; quality, speed of delivery and reliability of supply all contribute to competitiveness.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

International competitiveness refers to an industry or country's ability to compete in a global market. This can be done by controlling costs, increasing the quality of the good or service, or meeting a need that has not previously been identified or satisfied.

Question 4bi.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	18	16	27	17	22	2.1

Students were able to choose from a number of pressures, such as costs (e.g. retraining staff), finding suitable means of transportation for goods, improving the quality of the product and maintaining cost control in Australia's relatively regulated industrial environment. Opportunities that could be described included access to an increased market, adoption of new technologies and economies of scale in production.

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The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

A pressure facing the manufacturing industry as it strives to become internationally competitive is lower production costs in a number of other countries. These are lower due to much cheaper labour and limited requirements for environmental protection and worker safety. Australia is unable to compete on these as we have a guaranteed minimum wage and industrial agreements as well as regulations to protect the safety of workers and the environment.

One opportunity is to be innovative and develop new products at a high quality to appeal to international markets. To take advantage of the opportunity the industry or companies in it will need to carefully research their market and analyse their product range to identify any gaps in the market. They will then need to allocate funds, and perhaps seek government grants, to conduct product research and development to capture the identified market. This will turn the pressure into an opportunity and make the industry more internationally competitive.

Question 4bii.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	29	30	41	1.1

This question required students to expand on their previous answer by evaluating an actual response by their selected industry. Students need to ensure that they understand the meaning of the action word in the question. An evaluation requires students to comment on the positive and negative aspects of something and make a judgment about it. Many students merely described the response. There were a number of high-quality responses where students demonstrated detailed knowledge of specific industry responses by considering positive and negative effects for that industry.

The following is an example of a good response.

A response to the pressure by the automotive industry were the attempts by individual companies to develop hybrid cars which would appeal to consumers wanting lower running costs and less environmental impact. Through research and development individual companies developed environmentally friendly cars which they hoped would increase their market share in Australia and in other countries. This was time consuming and expensive. The success of the response varied greatly. Ford were unable to develop a car that was cost effective and appealing to the market while Toyota's hybrid was much more popular with consumers.

Question 4biii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	39	19	19	23	1.3

This question required students to comment on how effective the above response had been in achieving its objective. A significant number of students, while able to describe the response in the previous question, were unable to apply their knowledge to evaluate the response.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The response of the industry was very uneven. Toyota was able to develop its hybrid car and has maintained its market share in Australia and now exports the car. Other companies in the industry have not been so successful. Ford allocated funds and sought grants to develop a small fuel efficient car. They started this research after a number of other companies as they tried to maintain market share by keeping their emphasis on the Falcon, their traditional big seller, after the market had shifted towards smaller cars. Ford has been unable to produce the new vehicle at a competitive cost. This has meant that their market share has continued to decrease and they have reduced their workforce.

Question 5a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	8	36	56	1.5

Students were able to select any problem that they encountered or could have encountered in a structured workplace learning setting. However, they needed to make a choice that would enable them to respond to all parts of the question.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

During my workplace learning the ice cream machine was leaking badly onto the floor. The puddle it made could not be seen by other workers as they were working hard to quickly fill customer orders. The puddle was clearly a hazard and could cause injury to a worker if they slipped.

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Question 5b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	23	36	41	1.2

In this question, students were required to show how they used or could have used initiative to solve the problem they outlined in the previous question. Many students, however, were unable to describe how they used or could have used initiatives.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Although the ice cream machine was not my work station I decided that I needed to take action and accept responsibility. I had completed OH&S training as part of induction so followed procedure by placing a hazard sign near the spill. I also cleaned up the spill and placed an empty container under the machine. I entered the spill in the register and also found the shift manager and reported it to her.

Question 5c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	38	31	18	13	1.1

High-quality responses to this question frequently linked individual attributes of an enterprise culture to their actions and used these to evaluate their actions.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Rather than being reactive and waiting for a supervisor to tell me what to do I was proactive and took a risk to solve it myself. I felt confident because I knew the OH&S procedures. This contributed to the enterprise culture in the setting because it showed that as a worker I was aware that my role extended beyond simply doing what I was required to do. I was adaptable by showing leadership when I accepted the challenge and solved the problem. Other workers told me that I had done a great job. As I demonstrated some of the enterprise skills my actions contributed to the continued development of enterprise in my work setting.

Question 6a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	25	43	32	1.1

Accurate definitions focused on the ability to use resources carefully or seek alternatives to the use of scarce resources. The goals of this strategy are to minimise negative impacts on the environment and preserve resources for the future. Students are reminded to avoid using the word/term that they are defining in their definition. A number of students used an example to illustrate their definition.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

This term refers to the careful use of natural resources efficiently so they are not wasted and their use does not damage the environment. It also implies developing new approaches such as solar power to reduce the impact of resource use on the environment. In these ways the environment and its resources are preserved for future generations.

Question 6b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	31	34	36	1.1

Students must ensure that they read questions carefully and then answer precisely. This question required students to describe the impact of the sustainable use of resources, not to describe the sustainable use itself (e.g. the use of alternative power sources, technology to monitor water use and audits of raw material use). It was pleasing that students described a wide range of positive impacts, such as a reduction in costs to the industry, increased environmental awareness and improved reputation of the industry.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The agriculture industry now uses the natural resource water more sustainably. A positive impact of this is that it brings cost savings to the industry as they are not forced to buy as much water in. The process of auditing water use has led my employer Astley's Nursery to find ways to reduce and recycle and just generally tune in to the implications of their decisions.

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Question 6c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	27	22	16	16	10	3	5	1.9

Responses to this question were generally poor. This was an extended-response question and a number of students did not write responses that provided enough detail. Students did not appear to have a clear understanding of the relationship between changing societal values and pressures for change.

One starting point for a response was to outline the change in social values and how it was expressed in decisions on consumption by many people in society. Students could then have explored the various responses that industry could have had to this, including making no changes at all. A high-quality start to this response could have been as follows.

Social values are the shared beliefs of the majority of people in society. In recent decades there has been a change in social values as people shifted their attitudes to ones which value the environment. For many people in society this change in values is reflected in their spending habits. Many firms and industries have responded to this change in consumer preference. This has occurred in a number of ways.

Question 7a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	13	30	57	1.5

The definition should have referred to innovation, a new or improved idea that came about through the development of new technology or the new application of an existing technology.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Technology focused innovation is dependent on creating a new product or process or significantly improving on an existing product or process through the use of technology. An example would be timing switches on powerpoints to automatically turn power off at the wall and save finite resources.

Question 7b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	20	39	23	18	1.4

Student responses needed to establish why the innovation was an example of an enterprising use of technology. The more successful responses linked the innovation to specific enterprise capabilities.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Sherrin saw a technology, GPS tracking, which could be used to improve their product and create a broader appeal for the product thus expanding its functionality and broadening the appeal of their product into new markets. This was enterprising as it showed a number of the enterprise capabilities. These included problem solving by analysing the use of their footballs and then being proactive in their use of technology.

Question 7c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	14	33	35	12	6	1.7

Most students were able to identify a reason for government support of innovation. However, many struggled to explain why the government might support Sherrin. Students are again reminded that they must provide sufficient detail in their answers and must respond to the operational or task word, which in this question was 'explain'.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Government might support this innovation because it has the potential to help the industry grow and expand its market possibly beyond Australia. The government could provide support by showcasing the innovation at trade fairs in overseas countries. This would assist Sherrin to take the product to a global market. Increased sales of the football would help Australia to become internationally competitive and would show other work settings that innovation and managed risk taking can bring financial rewards.

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Question 7d.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	23	24	53	1.3

Many students wrote detailed descriptions of a range of innovations. Many of these innovations were related to the students' workplace learning.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

The introduction of the automatic spraying machine in the automotive industry is an example of innovation. This machine ensures a consistent application of paint in a quicker time. The machine reduces waste, and therefore cost, and guarantees a more consistent and often higher quality finish.

Question 7e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
%	18	16	13	21	10	8	7	4	2.7

Many students struggled to respond to this question in detail. Successful responses demonstrated an understanding of technology, training and innovation. These responses then discussed how each assisted in the development of an enterprise culture. Many high-quality responses used an example to illustrate the key points made.

A sample start to a response follows.

An enterprise culture proactively meets challenges and continually seeks to improve all aspects of the work setting or industry. If a culture is enterprising all parts of the work setting will be enterprising. This is because the cultural norms will uniting the workers will value enterprise capabilities.

Technology is a tool or process which can help a work setting or industry achieve desired outcomes in a more efficient way or to a higher standard. Technology has an important role in the development and maintenance of an enterprise culture in that setting in a number of ways. On one level technology can enhance communication between stakeholders as well as increasing the flexibility of that communication.