



## 2010 Industry and Enterprise Studies GA 3: Written examination

### GENERAL COMMENTS

In general, students performed well on the 2010 examination. Many comprehensive and well-written papers clearly communicated a sound knowledge and understanding of the study and its relationship to contemporary Australia. As has been commented on previously, the role of work placement is crucial in the study design. Students skilfully applied learning from work placement to a variety of questions.

It was apparent that many students had prepared for the examination by reading previous assessment reports.

#### Advice to students

- Respond to the question asked; do not write prepared answers. As this is such a vital examination skill, students should practise it regularly during the year. Students must read the question carefully to decode its key elements. They need to take a structured approach to questions. A logical starting point is for the student to answer each part of each question in order. This will reduce the chance of overlooking parts of a question.
- Understand the implications of common instructional terms (for example, 'describe', 'explain' and 'evaluate') and be able to apply information to the specific term. For example, in the second part of Section B.
- Finally, students are frequently asked to define terms used in the study and then give an example of them. It is, therefore, vital that in addition to demonstrating an understanding of terms, students are able to provide the example required.

### SPECIFIC INFORMATION

**Note: Student responses reproduced herein have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.**

For each question, an outline answer (or answers) is provided. In some cases, the answer given is not the only answer that could have been awarded marks.

#### Section A

##### Question 1a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	1	10	21	21	20	18	9	3.4

Students were required to give a clear and direct definition of the terms 'flexible learning', 'teamwork' and 'quality assurance', and apply each term to a workplace context. A large number of students failed to provide an example, and others gave examples that were not firmly based in the workplace, such as stating that a Heart Foundation tick on a consumer product was an example of quality assurance in a workplace.

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

*Flexible learning is a form of learning that allows the learner to study at their own pace at a time that suits them. This method is tailored to the needs of the learner. For example, through e learning trainees can access modules at a time and place that suits them.*

*Teamwork occurs when workers combine together to achieve a goal. They understand each other and the process to achieve the goal. At Bakers' Delight team members work co-operatively to complete their individual tasks to the best of the ability. This means that the quality of the bread and the customer service are of the best quality.*

*Quality assurance is a process where a third party independently certifies that a product or service meets a consistent standard of quality. An example is where automotive repairers are audited and the quality of their services are given RACV certification. This provides an assurance of quality for the consumer.*

##### Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	8	6	24	19	42	2.8

Some students seemed confused by this question. Teachers and students are reminded that the study design provides detailed comment on enterprise skills, employability skills and key competencies, and this information can be used to help clarify the area for students. Of those students who selected relevant skills, many merely described the skill and did not explain how the skill was beneficial for participation in the workplace.

# 2010 Assessment Report



The following is an example of a student's explanation of the enterprise skill 'accepting responsibility'.

*Accepting responsibility – requires the worker to understand their job description and monitor their work performance so that they can recognise achievements and take appropriate action to improve. This allows the worker to improve themselves and the quality of their work. This will help them to progress in their career and assist the workplace to achieve high productivity and quality.*

## Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	44	27	30	0.9

Students needed to define the term 'sustainable resource use'; however, a number of students were unable to distinguish between sustainability and environmental responsibility. A common element in definitions is the idea that sustainable resource use involves the use of resources so that the supply is not compromised in the future. The 1987 United Nations Brundtland Commission Report states that 'Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (page 43).

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

*Sustainable resource use refers to a method of using resources in a way which means they will be available for future generations. For example, through using green power such as using solar power we can ensure that oil and coal are used in a way and at a speed which means they will still be available for future generations.*

## Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	37	16	24	9	14	1.5

Students were required to identify an industry, not an individual workplace, and then comment on the positive and/or negative impacts of the pressures that sustainability posed in that industry. Students who had considered the link between the issue and an industry of which they had personal knowledge performed well and many wrote detailed and often innovative responses.

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

*Sustainability has impacted on the automotive sector of the manufacturing industry. During the past decade consumer preference has shifted to an increased demand for vehicles that are more environmentally friendly in terms of emissions and fuel use. In general this sector of the industry has responded by seeing the pressure as an opportunity. Many manufactures have conducted extensive research and development in the area. This has led to the production of smaller and frequently hybrid vehicles. Another way that sustainability has impacted is by changes made to the production process. For example, Toyota Australia has decreased water consumption by more than 5% since 2003 despite an increase in production.*

## Question 2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	35	21	21	11	13	1.5

Students were required to analyse how the industry, or sections of it, had responded to the pressure identified in 2b. Students needed to show the link between coursework and examples.

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

*Sustainability has had a significant impact on automotive industry in that the demand for more fuel efficient and resource friendly cars will increase; by 2020 it is suggested that electric cars and other green vehicles will account for about one third of total global car sales. Toyota is one company that has quickly responded to this by developing a new range of cars. These may give the firm a comparative advantage as they will be in a position to meet the changes in consumer demand. The pressure to be more sustainable has also required automotive manufacturers to be more careful of where they sources their resources from and what impact their production and transport processes have on the environment, other industries and other resources. Many car manufacturers have reduced their model range focusing on a smaller number of variations or begun using universal chassis components for the different cars in their range (where things like chassis, engines, components etc of several models is the same despite their appearances being different). This allows components to be manufactured more cheaply thus keeping costs down but also allows for a more effective use of resources by avoiding costly and wasteful and unnecessary duplication.*

# 2010 Assessment Report



## Question 3a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	15	85	

It was pleasing that many students were able to provide strong definitions of innovation.

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

*Innovation is the generation of new ideas, or better uses for existing ones. This promotes productivity.*

## Question 3b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	13	33	54	

A significant number of students did not accurately explain one reason why innovation is important in the workplace and merely described the reason without reference to its importance.

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

*Innovation is important because without it industries cannot progress and develop. Innovation can foster efficiency and effectiveness and assist in maintaining the viability of individual firms as well as the whole industry.*

## Question 3c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	20	17	26	37	

Most students were able to describe an example of an innovative work practice; however, a number of students did not justify why they considered this practice innovative.

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

*In a local dairy farm they have introduced a robotic milker. The process replaces hand milking by attaching the cow to a machine which extracts the milk. This practice is innovative as it reduces labour costs. In addition it is a more time effective and efficient way of milking the herd.*

## Question 3d.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	26	30	44	

Students were required to explain how the innovation they described in 3c. affected the work practices of their selected workplace. It was not appropriate to write that nothing changed in the way work was carried out.

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

*Robotic milkers have affected the way that work is carried out as it provides more workplace flexibility. Not as many workers are needed, they do not need to be as skilled and the hours of work are more open. In addition when the cows are on the machine workers can perform other tasks.*

## Question 3e.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	21	35	44	

The most frequent responses to this question outlined how meetings might encourage workers to be innovative. Although this was a correct answer, and some students wrote skilfully, students should consider the wider range of workplace practices that may be more effective at encouraging innovation.

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

*The way a workplace, like Woolworths in Cobram, can encourage its workers to be innovative is to offer rewards, incentives and recognition for individuals that come up with new or improved ways of doing things. This program could be promoted at regular meetings that management has with employees and could also be used as a forum for celebrating the contribution of workers and thus increasing their commitment and loyalty.*

# 2010 Assessment Report



## Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	15	11	29	18	27	2.3

In addition to enterprise skills, students identified a wide range of enterprising culture characteristics. These included the ability to manage change, high levels of funding in research and development and training.

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

*An enterprising culture is one in which the underlying beliefs, values and attitudes create and sustain an atmosphere where stakeholders are encouraged to respond to issues and situations in a creative, positive and flexible way. One characteristic that you would expect to find is problem solving where workers accept the responsibility to seek solutions, either individually or as part of a team, to problems as they arrive. These workers will then show initiative and commitment. For example, at my workplace there was a problem that the fillings fell out of the wraps at the point of sale. A worker found that a new way of wrapping the product reduced the chances of this happening. She mentioned this to the manager and it was adopted as a work practice. Another characteristic is ongoing training. At my workplace in addition to induction training workers are trained to introduce new skills and reinforce existing skills. This training is delivered both on and off the job and workers have the ability to nominate areas where they feel that training would be beneficial.*

## Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	23	23	31	23	1.6

Students were required to write a detailed answer showing a grasp of tactics that could be used to develop an enterprising culture. A large number of students struggled to write more than a simple identification of how meetings, for example, might somehow generate and sustain an enterprising culture. Given the fundamental nature of enterprise to the study, it is concerning that many students were unable to do this. A few creative and skilfully written responses were given to this question.

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

*A workplace could provide processes to seek input from employees. An example of this is the use of quality circles as these foster dialogue, innovation and creativity. This will increase understanding and enthusiasm in the workplace as well as the maintenance of a team culture. Training could be used to support the quality circles. This training could include personal development to increase the leadership skills of all.*

## Question 4c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	16	23	36	26	1.7

This question gave students scope to comment on benefits of working in an enterprising workplace. Many used their workplace effectively to write relevant and informative responses. Students generally wrote logically on this topic and showed that the course had allowed them to develop their understanding of issues at work and their role in the workplace.

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

*A benefit is that the employee will be more highly trained and will understand the workplace more. This will increase the employee's job satisfaction. In addition it should allow the employee to access promotions within the work place or in another workplace as many of the skills and attitudes they acquire will be transferable.*

## Section B

Question chosen	None	1	2	3
%	3	18	41	38

### a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	3	6	18	32	40	3



b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	9	8	15	17	15	12	25	3.6

Most students were able to complete this section of the examination well. Students wrote detailed responses and gave good examples to support points they made in this section. However, many students did not apply their knowledge to come to a conclusion about the effect of the practice in the workplace. Students are strongly advised to complete evaluation questions as part of their study.

#### Question 1a.

Most students demonstrated knowledge of the meaning of workplace flexibility and successfully described various types of workplace flexibility in a workplace context.

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

*Workplace flexibility covers a wide range of work practices that provide flexible arrangements for carrying out work tasks. This impacts on both employers and employees in my work with the local earth moving company. Employees need to be able to drive a wide range of equipment including graders and bulldozers. In addition they need to be available for shifts of different lengths of time in a range of locations any day of the week often on short notice. As some of the jobs are commercial and others for households employees need a variety of customer service, including clerical, skills.*

#### Question 1b.

Most students were able to describe the impact of workplace flexibility on employees; however, the question asked students to evaluate that impact. Students are again reminded of the need to carefully read and respond to the question asked. Some answers were limited to a narrow description of the ability of employees to organise work as a secondary activity to family commitments. Students must develop a broader knowledge of workplace flexibility, including how it relates to employers. They should use this knowledge base to evaluate the impact of that flexibility on stakeholders.

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

*This has a number of advantages for the employees. As they can perform a variety of tasks the work is not as boring as it might be. The increased training they do can lead to pay bonuses and importantly, it builds their resume and increases their employability. However it does have some disadvantages as they may need to undertake increased training which although beneficial may be in their own time. The main disadvantage for employees in this workplace is that there are no set days of employment and workers can be called in on short notice. This can make it difficult to organise their family life and means that their income is uncertain. The main advantage for the employer is that he does not have to have staff working full time when there is no work. This reduces his wages expense and gives him options when organising rosters. There are a number of potential disadvantages for the employer. He has to provide extensive and costly training for employers and runs the risk that the uncertain work hours will mean that employees will seek alternative work.*

#### Question 2a.

The majority of students who answered this question demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of technology in the workplace. They were able to identify and describe the use of the technology in the workplace.

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

*Technology involves the adaption of science to achieve a commercial or industrial objective. It is often in the form of a new product, like a computer, but can also be a new process. It is the use of tools and techniques to achieve outcomes at work in a faster, better and or safer way. Australia Post is one workplace where technology has had a significant impact. This is especially true in the mail processing centres. For example during the processing of mail Australia Post will barcode the postcode on all items. This appears as a thin line and means that the mail is sorted more quickly with greater accuracy. Therefore this simple process assists the enterprise to achieve its objectives in terms of speed, it can process 36 000 letters per hour, and accuracy. It is complimented by other technology that helps identify difficult to read addresses and a tray management system that moves and directs a large volume of mail at a very quick rate.*

#### Question 2b.

There were a number of impressive responses to this question. However, some students who had sound knowledge of the area did not score well because they did not evaluate the impact of technology on the workplace as required by the question. Students are reminded that an evaluation requires the application of key knowledge to a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the focus statement. Students should then draw a logical conclusion on the statement.



*The innovation in the use of technology at Australia Post has had a significant impact in all areas of the enterprise. In terms of work organisation Australia Post had to develop a range of policies and procedures. In particular the enterprise had to increase training for staff so that they could operate the new technology. More IT support staff were hired so that they could monitor the use of the new machines and make minor repairs. Some re classification of positions occurred. However overall the size of the workforce could be reduced, as less staff were needed in other areas.*

*The work practices changed as the physical layout of the organisation needed to be adapted to accommodate the new machines. Many of the machines did not need to be manually operated so this meant that some staff were retrained. The work site became quieter and safer than before. However it has in some ways isolated staff, as there are not as many people on the floor and opportunities for interaction are reduced.*

*Overall now that the technology has been in place for some time, the efficiency of the enterprise has increased and the initial staff stress has decreased for most workers to be replaced by higher levels of teamwork and motivation.*

**Question 3a.**

Students, in general, were able to define training and to discuss the methods of training used in a particular workplace. It was pleasing to note that many students were able to make links between the types of training used in the workplace and the theory of training they had learnt during the year.

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

*Training is the systematic development of skills, knowledge and attitudes required by employees to complete tasks and manage situations. At 'fist2face', where I completed my workplace management used a variety of training methods. When an employee starts they go through an induction process. This involves a combination of on-the-job and off-the-job training. The new worker is given a mentor to make them feel comfortable and to be the first person they seek assistance from. In addition they complete OHS training on line from home and then in the workplace. Another type of training they offer is regular up dates on a range of areas including customer service and use of the computer system. This training is completed on the job. Employees also have the opportunity to complete off the job training at TAFE in retail operations and management and short courses in areas like first aid.*

**Question 3b.**

As was the case with other responses for part b of this section, a number of students simply described the impact of training and did not evaluate it.

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

*Training is vital in every workplace. Employers benefit in a number of ways. Firstly they have increased confidence that their staff will be able meet all demands in the workplace and provide a quality service to clients. This will encourage clients to return to the business in the future. Secondly they are able to adapt the training to the needs of their business. This makes it more cost effective. While I do not think it is a disadvantage the employer has to devote resources, especially time and money, to organising suitable training and at times releasing staff from the workplace to undertake it.*