



2012 Outdoor and Environmental Studies GA 3: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

The format of the 2012 Outdoor and Environmental Studies examination gave a clear indication of the depth of answer required for each question, as did the key words in the questions. Words such as 'explain', 'describe', 'outline', 'analyse', 'discuss', 'name' and 'evaluate' indicated the type of answer required. Students need to ensure that they understand these, and other, key terms and what is required for each.

Students need to use their examination time efficiently, including using the reading time to ensure that they understand each question.

Students must ensure that they read each question carefully so that they accurately interpret what is required in their answer. There are a number of spaces within the examination booklet that can be used for this. A plan enables students to outline the main ideas they will cover and to order their response before they start.

Some questions asked for a specific number of responses. These responses were assessed in the order presented and extra responses were not taken into account; students who gave additional responses did not receive additional marks. If a student thinks of a better response after finishing their initial answer, they should cross out the answer that they feel is the weakest and add the extra response. If there is insufficient room in the answer space, additional space is given at the end of the booklet. Students must ensure that responses continued at the end of the booklet are clearly labelled. A number of students did not score full marks in some questions as they listed a variety of responses when only one was required. Students are advised to choose their responses carefully and fully describe them, rather than just giving a list of all possible responses.

In preparing for this examination, students need to be familiar with a range of outdoor environments and with varying types and levels of human impact. When asked to identify or select a specific outdoor environment, Indigenous community, influence, movement, practice, conflict or issue for a particular question, the choice is critical – it must be one that will enable the student to thoroughly address the question.

Students need to understand study-specific terms such as 'biosecurity', 'contemporary', 'nation-building', 'actions', 'management strategies', 'decision-making processes', 'policies', 'influences', 'relationships', 'commercialisation', 'impacts', 'movements', 'biodiversity', 'sustainability', 'discourses' and 'methods'. Clarification of terminology used in the *VCE Outdoor and Environmental Studies Study Design* can be found in the Advice for Teachers (page 31). Teachers are also advised to consult previous assessment reports, as well as this one, to obtain a broad range of possible examples of these study-specific terms. Students need to be able to use these terms in the context of specific questions and to give appropriate examples rather than just quoting general definitions. Students are advised to be specific and to enrich their answers with suitable examples to indicate the depth and breadth of their knowledge. Sweeping, generalised statements are not appropriate and do not attract marks. Students should avoid giving rote-learned answers and ensure that they have carefully read and understood each question before answering.

SPECIFIC 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 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	17	9	9	9	12	16	29	3.6

Two marks were awarded for describing each of three key characteristics. As part of the description, students needed to name each of the characteristics. Students seemed to have trouble identifying the specific key characteristics, despite the fact they are named in the study design.

The following is an example of a possible response.

- Biological isolation: Australia separated from Gondwana millions of years ago due to continental drift; therefore, flora and fauna were isolated from other continents, thus adapting in a unique way.
- Geological stability: Australia has low tectonic, volcanic and glacial activity. There are few mountain ranges and the landscape is generally flat, making it prone to floods and erosion, and therefore affecting the survival of flora and fauna.

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- Climatic variation: Flora and fauna needed to cope with hot and dry conditions, and even drought at times. At other times they needed to cope with bushfires and floods as the climate is erratic.

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	3	2	5	11	20	23	36	4.6

Students needed to choose a specific Indigenous community, although there were no marks allocated for this. This was common throughout the exam, and it is important that students used these parts of their responses to set the context for their answers.

Three marks were awarded for a general description of the Indigenous community's relationship (inclusive of any combination of perceptions, interactions and/or impacts). Three further marks were awarded for an accurate and specific description in relation to the selected Indigenous community. Students could only gain these three marks if a specific Indigenous community was identified. 'Aboriginals' was not accepted as an appropriate Indigenous community.

A possible response would be: Prior to European settlement, the Girai Wurrung tribe had a very close spiritual connection with the land of Tower Hill. They believed it was created in the dreamtime by spirit ancestors and believed they were part of the land and that the land was their mother. This tribe hunted and gathered in the Tower Hill region, which led to reduced numbers of kangaroos, koalas and emus. They also led a nomadic lifestyle in which they constantly moved settlements. This allowed the flora and fauna in Tower Hill to continue to flourish.

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	11	10	17	18	21	12	12	3.1

Three marks were awarded for a general description of the changed Indigenous relationship (inclusive of any combination of perceptions, interactions and/or impacts). Three further marks were awarded for an accurate and specific description in relation to the selected Indigenous community. As in Question 2a., students were only eligible for these three marks if a specific Indigenous community was identified.

The focus of this question was on the Indigenous relationship; however, many students misinterpreted this and answered in the context of the European relationship, which was not awarded any marks.

A possible response would be: After European occupation, the Girai Wurrung tribe's perceptions more or less stayed the same; they believed they were custodians of the land rather than owners. Yet their interactions with the land began to change. They would now hunt introduced species such as cattle and sheep. They would often raid European settlements for goods such as flour and tobacco. Their nomadic lifestyle began to diminish as many of their food sources were in one particular area. The Europeans also banned firestick farming so the Girai Wurrung would no longer use it. This improved the vegetation in the area, but subsequently led to bigger and more intense bushfires.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	19	11	15	14	15	12	14	2.9

Students needed to identify two key influences from the list provided and use these as the basis for their response. Three marks were awarded for an accurate explanation of each influence, including reference to a specific outdoor environment and any combination of perceptions, interactions and/or impacts.

The focus of the question was on historical relationships; however, many students seemed to confuse this with contemporary influences and subsequent contemporary relationships. Student responses that focused on a contemporary context could not be awarded any marks.

A possible response (for the influences of Industrialisation and Nation Building) could be: Industrialisation saw extensive industrial processes take place, as the environment was seen as a resource that could be harnessed and used in the process of timber harvesting. This encouraged perceptions of the environment being subservient to humans. Interactions such as logging and land clearing occurred in the Otways and these materials were used to generate profits. Impacts such as pollution from industrial smog, general waste and chemicals leeching into the waterways of the Otways would have occurred and reduced the health of the environment.

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Nation-building was a period where Australia was viewed as a canvas on which to build and establish a nation. This encouraged perceptions that the environment was ours and we had to take care of the raw materials of the Otways in order to build and develop a nation. The creation of the Great Ocean Road, Otway Lighthouse, Otway National Park and the roads and infrastructure damaged some parts of the environment. But it also resulted in greater access to, and further protection of, significant parts of the Otways.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	7	21	40	32	2

Students needed to choose an environmental movement from the list provided and use this as the basis of their response. Three marks were awarded for an accurate explanation of how the chosen environmental movement brought about a change in relationship (inclusive of any combination of perceptions, interactions and/or impacts).

A possible response (for The Wilderness Society as the environmental movement) would be: Through activities such as the Franklin River Campaign, The Wilderness Society altered people's perceptions of the environment from seeing it as a resource (for example, for electricity production) to seeing it as a temple or cathedral and a place to be appreciated and protected. People's interactions are therefore more conservation-based and their impacts are reduced, reflecting a changed perception of the environment.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	16	8	21	21	34	2.5

Students needed to identify a conservation practice and a recreation practice and use these as the basis of their response. Two marks were awarded for accurately outlining how each practice affects society's relationship with outdoor environments (inclusive of any combination of perceptions, interactions and/or impacts).

The term 'practice' referred to an interaction or activity; therefore marks were not awarded for groups (such as VNPA), people (such as a land manager) or places (such as a national park). 'Farming' was not an accepted conservation practice; students needed to be more specific, for example, planting trees as windbreaks to prevent soil erosion. Answers that referenced individuals rather than society were also not awarded full marks.

A possible response (for rehabilitating climbing sites and rock climbing as the conservation and recreation practices) would be: Rock climbing enables society to use the environment for pleasure and adventure. Through rehabilitating rock climbing sites, society can continue to use these areas in the future.

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	25	8	16	13	16	10	12	2.6

Students needed to select an environmental issue, either from the list provided or another that they had studied throughout the year, and use this as the basis of their response.

Three marks each were awarded for identifying two discourses (arguments or viewpoints) and providing an accurate analysis of how these arguments/viewpoints influence contemporary relationships (inclusive of any combination of perceptions, interactions and/or impacts).

The question focused on the subsequent contemporary relationships; however, many students focused their answers simply on the discourses. While students needed to be able to provide basic information about discourses in order to articulate why particular arguments or viewpoints existed in their analysis, the majority of the answer needed to centre on the influence on the contemporary relationship.

A possible response (for climate change as the environmental issue) would be: There are many arguments for and against climate change. Arguments for climate change focus on human causal factors and information about the ocean temperature rising, erratic weather and hotter summers, which we have seen recently. This could influence relationships by encouraging people to take better care of the environment by using less energy, using fewer cars, recycling material and planting trees. However, there is also the argument that climate change is a naturally occurring process and that we don't have enough data over a long period of time to say that these changes are caused by humans. This could influence

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contemporary societal relationships by leading people to believe that there is no need to care for the environment and that climate change will happen regardless of what we do, so they will not change the way they live.

Question 7a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	7	3	10	11	25	16	29	4.1

Two marks each were awarded for the identification and accurate explanation of each cause. Causes that were similar in nature, such as constructing roads, building infrastructure and making footpaths were not awarded full marks. Where multiple answers are required, students should aim to provide responses that are notably different.

A possible response would be

- timber harvesting has resulted in fewer native species being present
- the introduction of pest species has led to native species being overrun and their numbers reduced
- urban development has led to decreased habitats and thus decreased biodiversity.

Question 7b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	15	26	36	23	1.7

Three marks were awarded for accurately identifying the ways in which native fauna may have been affected by changes in native vegetation.

A possible response would be: Native fauna has been negatively affected, as there is a decrease in their habitat, their food sources may have been taken over by introduced species and they may also be preyed upon. This may force them to move locations in search of habitat or food, and may also reduce their numbers overall, possibly leading to extinction.

Question 7c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	9	13	30	25	24	2.4

Two marks were awarded for naming and describing an appropriate action that could be undertaken to improve the health of the environment. Two further marks were awarded for evaluating the chosen action.

Students who described multiple actions could only be awarded marks for the first named action. Many students did not evaluate the action as the question required.

A possible response would be: Tree planting – a community group could undertake weed removal to make way for native tree planting to help ensure native plants remain in the area. Removing weeds and planting native vegetation promotes the health of outdoor environment.

Question 7d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	20	20	34	17	9	1.8

Four marks were awarded for a discussion about the concept of sustainable development, identification of what this might lead to (such as an action, impact, behaviour or interaction) and how it manages the environment.

A possible response would be: Sustainable development is about using resources conservatively to serve the needs of the current generation, while also allowing these resources to continue to exist in the future for following generations. It can include the creation of areas of land that are protected and reserved, like the Victorian Parks and Reserves system. This means certain species are protected from habitat fragmentation, some human interactions are restricted and people have a minimal impact in these particular areas. This means Melbourne's environment is maintained and sustained for the future.

Question 8a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	5	5	16	19	54	3.1

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Students needed to name an outdoor environment and use this as the basis for their response. Two marks each were awarded for naming and accurately describing two indicators of the health of an outdoor environment. The amount of vegetation was not an acceptable answer as it was already stipulated in the question.

A possible response would be

- water quality – if the water quality is clear, free of algae and drinkable this would suggest that the environment is healthy. The environment at Wilson's Promontory is healthy as the streams are clear and the water is drinkable
- biodiversity – if the environment can sustain a wide range of biodiversity it is a good indicator that it is healthy. Wilson's Promontory supports a vast range of flora and fauna, from kangaroos, wombats and birds to tea-trees and eucalypts, suggesting it is a very healthy environment.

Question 8b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	10	22	30	38	2

One mark each was awarded for accurately outlining three reasons why it is important for society to maintain the outdoor environment in a healthy condition. The reasons given needed to pertain to society, rather than individuals.

The following are possible points that could have been made.

- scientific research – nature holds medicines and remedies to cure illness
- aesthetic value – society needs the outdoor environment to be happier and escape from daily urban lifestyles
- economic value – environments provide jobs for the tourism industry and more money for our country

Question 8c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	13	22	66	1.6

One mark was awarded for accurately identifying each of two management strategies. Student responses that referred to following codes of conduct, such as taking rubbish home, were not accepted, as these are individual actions rather than management strategies that can be applied by land managers.

The following is an example of a possible response.

- zoning – focus on sectioning the environment for various uses like recreation, wilderness and conservation in order to minimise impacts across the environment
- limiting the number of people – restricting the amount of people who can enter or use an environment will cause less impact on the environment and is more sustainable

Question 9ai.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	7	4	16	15	58	3.1

Students needed to identify a conflict from the list provided and use this as the basis of their response. Two marks were awarded for accurately identifying each group involved and giving their point of view. Students were expected to know about their chosen conflict in detail; therefore, broad groups such as the 'government', 'protestors' or 'greenies' were not accepted.

A possible response (with marine national parks and sanctuaries [Victoria] as the conflict) would be: The Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) was in favour of the national parks and sanctuaries being created as they wanted to maintain the biodiversity and conserve the environment so that activities such as snorkelling and swimming could take place.

The commercial fishing industry was against the parks being created as they would have a loss of fishing due to no longer being able to fish in the areas that parks and sanctuaries would take up.

Question 9aii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	12	8	28	14	38	2.6

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Two marks were awarded for accurately naming and describing each method used to influence decisions. The methods given needed to be appropriate to the conflicts the students had chosen; for example, the use of the internet and social media was not accepted for the Franklin River campaign.

A possible response would be: Use of media – VNPA made the public aware of the issue by contributing to articles in newspapers, in magazines, on TV and on the internet to make people understand the reasons why the parks should be created.

Direct action – the commercial fishermen protested and marched around the fishing areas where the marine parks were proposed, so the public became aware of the amount of money and the good fishing places they would lose.

Question 9aiii.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	18	23	59	1.4

Two marks were awarded for an accurate evaluation of one of these methods. Student responses could only be awarded full marks if one of the methods from part 9aii. was referenced or referred to.

A possible response would be: The media is very effective in gaining support as a clear message can be delivered to a wide audience in a short period of time. Advertisements may be expensive and not accessible by smaller groups.

Question 9b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	33	23	44	1.1

Two marks were awarded for accurately describing a process that has been, or could be, used to resolve this conflict. Multiple processes could have been described if they were appropriate to the selected conflict. Police action was not an acceptable decision-making process.

A possible response would be: Court system – could be used to resolve this conflict as it is used when existing laws are unclear or one law contradicts another. The benefit of this process is that it produces a definite outcome for all parties involved.

Question 10

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	17	22	30	30	1.8

Students needed to choose a management strategy or policy from the list provided and use this as the basis of their subsequent response. Three marks were awarded for providing an accurate description of the management strategy and how it assists sustainability. Student responses that included direct repetition of the question and/or broad and generic answers were not accepted.

A possible response (with Trust for Nature as the management strategy or policy) would be: It allows for the protection of native flora and fauna on private land. Trust for Nature issues covenants to private landowners who agree with conservation, aiming to protect native flora and fauna on the land. It provides the landowner with a set of restrictions, as well as education, to help protect native flora and fauna and ensure its health, wellbeing and sustainability. The covenants are legal documents and will remain even after the land has been sold, which ensures sustainability.

Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Average
%	5	2	5	7	9	10	12	9	12	9	8	6	5	6.5

Three marks were awarded for an accurate analysis of each of the four factors given in the question: development of technologies; commercialisation of outdoor environments and outdoor experiences; portrayal of the outdoors in the media, music, art, writing and advertising; and society's response to risk-taking. These factors needed to be analysed in the students' responses in order to be eligible for full marks.

Students often confused the concepts of real and perceived risk from Unit 1 with those of social responses to risk from Unit 3.



A possible response would be: The development of technology has influenced relationships in a positive way as it has enabled people to feel safer and more comfortable while partaking in outdoor activities. For example, developments in rock climbing safety gear, such as helmets or reinforced cables, have made more people feel more comfortable while participating in rock climbing. This enables more people to view the environment in a recreational light, as opposed to a place of danger, which therefore increases participation in outdoor activities. It also creates a greater appreciation for the outdoors and individuals wanting to care for the environment, so that they may be able to continue with this activity.

The commercialisation of outdoor environments and outdoor experiences has positively influenced contemporary societal relationships with environments as it encourages participation in outdoor activities by showing the outdoors and outdoor activities as a place to either relax or have fun and challenge yourself in. By encouraging people to perceive the outdoors in this positive way, they are more likely to participate in outdoor activities and have a better understanding of the outdoors. This will encourage people not to fear the outdoors, but to want to preserve it, in order to be able to keep participating in enjoyable activities. This also leads to minimal impacts on the environment and more people wanting to care for and preserve the environment.

The portrayal of the outdoors in media, music, art, writing and advertising can have both a positive or negative influence on relationships with the outdoors. If an incident such as the woman falling while rock climbing in Mount Arapiles occurs then the media is usually quick to portray the outdoor environment as a threat to safety and a dangerous place to be in. This can cause people to view the environment as a danger and decrease their participation in the outdoors. This also leads to people having a lack of understanding of the outdoors and having negative impacts on the environment as people no longer care for it, they just see it as a danger. However, if it is portrayed through music, art or media as a challenge and an adventurous place to have fun, then the opposite effect will occur and participation will increase, thus positively influencing relationships with the outdoors.

Society's response to risk-taking may have a negative effect on relationships if an incident occurs and someone sustains an injury or dies. Society may respond to an activity such as rock climbing by viewing it as a danger and something that is too risky. This would cause decreased participation and a lack of understanding of the environment due to fear. They may consider it a waste of taxpayers' money and resources to respond to emergencies and therefore lead them to believe that participation in rock climbing should be restricted in some way.