



2008 Outdoor and Environmental Studies GA 3: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

The format of the 2008 Outdoor and Environmental Studies question and answer booklet gave a clear indication of the depth of answer required for each question, as did the bold key words in the questions. Words such as 'list', 'explain', 'describe', 'outline', 'analyse' 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.

Some students appeared to have insufficient time to complete the paper. Students need to use their examination time efficiently, including using the reading time to ensure they have an understanding of each question. When answering the paper, students should not rewrite the question as this wastes valuable time. However, the use of key words from the question in the answer is advised, as this often helps to keep the response on track.

Students should also use the marks allocated for each question and each part of each question as a guide to the length of time they should spend working on that part, as well as an indicator of the depth of response expected. For example, a question worth four marks will require a significantly more detailed answer than one worth only one or two marks.

Students must ensure that they read each question carefully so that they accurately interpret what is required in their answer. Where a longer answer is required, students are strongly advised to complete a brief plan first. There are a number of spaces within the booklet that can be used for this, and students may ask for an additional script book if needed. A plan enables students to outline the main ideas they will cover and order their responses before they start.

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 a specific outdoor environment or issue for a particular question, the choice is critical – it must be one that will enable the student to thoroughly address the question.

Some questions asked for a specific number of responses. These responses were marked in the order presented and extra responses were not taken into account, therefore 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 an additional script book may be used, as long as the response is clearly labelled. A number of students failed to score maximum marks in some questions as they had listed a variety of responses when only one was asked for. Students are advised to choose their responses carefully and fully describe them rather than just giving a list of all possible responses.

Students need to understand study specific terms such as 'strategies', 'management strategies', 'processes', 'policies', 'influences', 'relationships', 'perceptions', 'views', 'commercialisation', 'impacts', 'movements', 'biodiversity', 'sustainability' and 'methods'. Clarification of terminology used within the *VCE Outdoor and Environmental Studies Study Design* was published in the February 2008 edition of the *VCAA Bulletin*. This can be accessed on the VCAA website at <www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/studies/outdoor/outdoorindex.html>. Teachers are 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 also need to be able to use these terms in the context of specific questions and give appropriate examples rather than quoting general definitions. Students are advised to be specific and to enrich their answers with suitable examples where possible and appropriate 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 answers and ensure that they have carefully read and understood the question before answering.

Students are not marked on their spelling, but incorrectly spelt words can, at times, distract from the intended meaning. Students should aim to develop and practise this ability if needed.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Question 1

1ai.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	27	29	43	1.2

Students needed to include a description of a pattern of interaction over time, giving two clear points (for one mark each) about the activity.

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A possible response for a student choosing canoeing on the Murray River could have been: Canoeing has occurred for several thousand years in this area, initially by indigenous people such as the Yorta Yorta (one mark) and in more recent years as a recreational activity (one mark).

Patterns of interactions over time could include:

- increasing or decreasing participation over time, or other longer term trends
- seasonal changes, or other cyclic variations.

1aii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	20	13	26	41	1.9

Students needed to identify a suitable factor that could have influenced the pattern described previously (one mark), and then explain this factor, including two clear points (for one mark each), at least one of which needed to include an explicit reference to the influence of this factor on the pattern of interaction. The explanation needed to indicate why the factor could have influenced the pattern of interaction.

A possible response for a student continuing with a canoeing response (see example in Question 1ai.) could have been: Developments in technology (one mark) mean that instead of removing bark from local trees to create canoes (one mark) we use resources from more distant places like fibreglass and plastic materials (one mark).

Factors that could influence patterns of interaction may include:

- technology
- media
- education
- cultural background
- increased environmental awareness
- increased standards of living
- increased leisure time
- commercialisation of experiences.

Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	6	27	67	1.6

Students should have made an assessment including a judgement of the student's personal impact (one mark) and a supporting statement justifying the judgement (one mark).

Possible response: I took all of my packaging and compost material home with me where most of it was recycled, and practised minimal impact techniques (one mark). As a result I think my impact was very low, and may even have been positive (one mark).

Question 1c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	6	32	62	1.6

Students should have made an assessment including a judgement of the group's impact (one mark) and a supporting statement justifying the judgement (one mark).

Possible response: Overall we had a low impact (one mark). We made sure we did not light any fires and we entered the water only at the designated canoe launching sites (one mark).

It was expected that the response to this question would differ from the responses to Question 1b. A restatement of the response to Question 1b. was not enough to gain two marks.

Question 1d.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	11	36	53	1.4

Students should have made an assessment including a judgement of the overall impact (one mark) and a supporting statement justifying the judgment (one mark).

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Possible response: The traditional method of making canoes out of bark sheets was usually done in a way that did not kill the tree and had only a small impact on it. Although modern canoes use plastics and fibreglass along with glue and other chemicals (one mark), the overall impact of canoeing is probably relatively small (one mark).

This response should also have been different to the responses to Questions 1c. and 1d.

Question 1e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	10	6	12	23	48	2.9

Students needed to identify four distinct points detailing minimal impact strategies suitable for their chosen activity (for one mark each). Each point should have been relevant to the activity. Generic minimal impact strategies were not acceptable unless they were specifically linked to the activity.

The following is a possible response related to the canoeing scenario.

1. Always use a designated canoe launching site.
2. Use fuel stoves only – no fires.
3. Do not throw food or waste into the river.
4. Camp at least 50 metres from the bank.

Codes of conduct are voluntary principles and so any codes the students develop need to be realistic in this sense. Management strategies are not codes of conduct.

Question 2

2ai.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	4	4	7	7	18	9	18	9	23	5.1

For each description of an interaction, students needed to identify an interaction (for one mark) and then give an explanation of that interaction (for one mark).

A student choosing the Bogong High Plains could have included this response as a Pre-European interaction: Aboriginal tribes in the area were nomadic (one mark), moving up onto the High Plains in summer and then back into the valleys as it got cold (one mark).

A possible response of a Contemporary interaction could have been: Indigenous people act as education officers (one mark) teaching people about bush tucker and other traditional practices (one mark).

Pre-European interactions could include:

- nomadism
- hunting and gathering
- firestick farming
- rock art and cave painting.

Contemporary interactions could include:

- land management
- cultural heritage preservation
- education.

2aii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	23	24	30	23	1.5

Students needed to give an explanation that clearly identified a change in indigenous relationships over the time period (for one mark) and give two clear points that indicated how the interactions detailed in Question 2ai. demonstrated this change (for one mark each).

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Possible response: Indigenous people have continued to have a close and spiritual connection with the land in the area (one mark). Their early interactions before European settlement were based on survival and subsistence (one mark), whereas they now interact through managing the land and through helping to interpret it for others (one mark).

2aiii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	14	8	17	19	19	11	12	3.1

For each analysis students needed to identify an impact on the environment as a result of the interaction (for one mark) and give two clear points that supported the student's identification (for one mark each).

A possible response for a Contemporary interaction could have been: Acting as an education officer and teaching about bush tucker would probably have a low impact on the environment (one mark). They might be leading groups of students through the bush and creating a small amount of damage (one mark) but educating people about the environment, and what it means and how it works, would be a good thing (one mark).

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	6	4	22	14	54	3.1

For each description students needed to identify an interaction (for one mark) and give one point of explanation of that interaction (for one mark).

Question 2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	12	23	33	32	1.9

Students needed to identify the nature of their relationship with the environment (for one mark), and then give two clear points that described this relationship and/or linked their interactions towards explaining this relationship (for one mark each). Students should have made at least one link between their interactions and their relationship.

A possible response, assuming a recreation-based interaction was described in Question 2b., could have been: The recreational activities we were involved in treats the environment as if it was a gym (one mark). We did things that were physically challenging, like in a gym (one mark) and so the environment is just a place – a venue – where we can do this stuff (one mark).

Question 3

Question 3a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	6	20	74	1.7

Students needed to give a description of the damage that included two clear points of information (for one mark each).

A possible response by a student choosing Barwon Heads and the infestation of Bridal Creeper could have been: Bridal Creeper blocks out the light to other plants and prevents them from photosynthesising (one mark). It basically suffocates them (one mark).

Question 3b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	14	18	68	1.6

Students needed to identify a management strategy (for one mark) and include a description of that strategy (for one mark).

A possible response (following on from the Bridal Creeper example in Question 3a.) could have been: Spraying a fungal control out of a helicopter (one mark) is a strategy that has been employed by the Friends of the Barwon Bluff (one mark).

The strategy outlined here needed to directly relate to minimising the effect of the damage.

Question 3c.

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Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	18	18	63	1.5

Students needed to identify a management strategy (for one mark) and include an explanation of that strategy (for one mark).

Possible response: Weed suppression activities (one mark) like fuel reduction burns and clearing of weed species could be used to help maintain the health of the environment (one mark).

The strategy described here needed to be about maintaining the health of the environment and did not need to be directly linked with the damage noted previously.

Question 3d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	10	6	22	19	43	2.8

For each evaluation, students needed to include a judgement of the strategy's effectiveness (for one mark) and an outline that supported the student's judgement (for one mark).

A possible response for one evaluation (related to the Bridal Creeper strategy in Question 3c.) could have been: The fungal spray is only marginally successful (one mark) because Bridal Creeper is such an invasive and aggressive weed (one mark).

Question 4

4ai.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	6	25	69	1.7

Students needed to simply identify two possible interactions that could lead to the reduction in vegetation cover (for one mark each).

Possible response: Land clearing for farming and agriculture (one mark), and forestry practices like logging (one mark).

While this question was only worth two marks and was mostly answered well by students, there was some confusion about which interactions would be appropriate and about interpreting the map. Students need to be careful not to apply rote-learned responses to any question, but to read the question and respond directly to it.

4aii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	13	12	29	17	29	2.4

For each description students needed to give two clear points of information that related the interaction to the contemporary state of the environment (for one mark each).

A possible response:

1. Land clearing interferes with soil quality and its ability to hold moisture (one mark) and this could lead to erosion, rising water tables and soil salinity (one mark).
2. Forestry and logging practices can lead to the removal of older, larger trees (one mark) that may hold hollows and habitats for nesting and breeding species (one mark).

A possible response including two points of information could have been: An identification of a specific impact (one mark) and an explanation of how the interaction leads to this impact (one mark). The impacts described may have related to forest/tree cover, but should refer specifically to the contemporary state of the environment.

Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	11	7	18	17	23	12	11	3.1

For each recommendation students needed to identify a management strategy or policy (for one mark) and give two clear points of support for that strategy or policy (for one mark each).

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A possible response for a recommendation could have been: Revegetation strategies (one mark) could be useful to establish wildlife corridors for animals to use (one mark) and for reducing soil quality problems (one mark).

Management strategies might include:

- park development
- management plans
- codes of conduct
- weed and pest species control
- fencing, signs and other infrastructure
- revegetation
- fire control.

Question 4c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	7	18	29	46	2.2

For each one of the three reasons, students needed to simply identify the reason (for one mark each).

Students' reasons needed to link in to the importance for human societies – so intrinsic values was not acceptable, unless students were able to then explain how this could benefit humans.

Possible reasons included:

- resources
- economic function
- biodiversity and ecosystem services
- scientific research
- medicines.

Question 5

Question 5a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	7	2	6	7	17	8	19	8	25	5.2

For each one of the four views, students needed to clearly identify the view (for one mark) and give a statement of description for this view (for one mark).

A student choosing the environment of the Bogong High Plains, and ski tourers and snow mobile riders as two user groups, could respond for one of the ski tourer's views with: A ski tourer may see the activity as an escape (one mark) from their everyday life as well as from the crowds of the downhill resorts (one mark).

The use of terms such as 'museum', 'gym', 'temple', 'adversary' and others were acceptable, as long as students explained the nature of these views. Other possible views could include:

- place for recreation
- place for study
- resource base
- place for appreciation and reflection
- source of inspiration
- challenge or opponent.

5bi.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	30	70	0.7

Students needed to identify a valid decision making process (for one mark).

Possible response: The managers of this environment may use zoning regulations to define what activities can be done and where you can do them (one mark).

Decision making processes included:

- consultative groups

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- use of management plans
- legislation
- litigation
- political processes including elections and referenda.

5bii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	29	15	27	30	1.6

Students needed to produce an evaluation that included a judgement about the effectiveness of the process (one mark) and two clear points that supported or discussed the student's judgement (for one mark each).

A possible response, using the zoning process chosen in Question 5bi., could have been: This process should be pretty effective (one mark) because each group basically has a place designated for their own activity (one mark). This would become a problem if one or other group decided they wanted to experience the places in other zones (one mark).

5ci.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	3	17	4	16	14	48	2.7

For each description students needed to identify a method (for one mark) and include an explanation of this method (for one mark).

Methods that influence decision making might include:

- direct action
- lobbying
- petitions, letters and postcards
- use of media
- research and publications
- meetings
- partnerships and coalitions.

5cii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	2	22	7	18	21	31	2.3

In making a comparison, students needed to describe the effectiveness of each method (for one mark each) and give a clear point that supported this (for one mark each). A comparison might also have included a judgement of one method over another.

Students might have noted that a particular method is/is not effective (one mark) in a particular scenario or with a particular group or under certain conditions (one mark), and then develop a similar analysis of the second method.

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average
%	6	2	5	7	10	9	11	10	11	8	8	5	5	2	1	6.4

Students needed to describe and compare the effects of two of the factors listed on contemporary relationships with Australian environments (seven marks for each factor).

Marks were awarded based on the following table.

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	Factor 1	Factor 2	Notes
Describing how the chosen factors are evident	Three marks	Three marks	Students' descriptions needed to include two clear points detailing how each factor appears in contemporary relationships with Australian environments. Students must have specifically made a useful reference to experiences or environments to be awarded three marks.
Comparing the effect of the factors on relationships	Three marks	Three marks	Students needed to include at least two clear points that demonstrated the effect of these factors on contemporary relationships. There should also have been a relevant attempt to compare the effects of these two factors. Students must have specifically made a useful reference to experiences or environments to be awarded three marks.
Evaluating the effect of the factors on contemporary relationships	One mark	One mark	Students should have included a judgement about each factor and its effect on contemporary relationships.