



2012 VCE VET Information Technology GA 2: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

In general, students coped well with the 2012 VCE VET Information Technology examination and attempted many questions. However, a large number of students attempted only a small number of questions, usually with responses that lacked sufficient detail for full marks.

Some students merely reworded or rewrote questions without adding any new information. Those who did reword or rewrite the question could have better spent their time elaborating on the answers that they did know. Some students began their answers by copying or rephrasing the question. This technique wastes valuable examination time.

Students need to ensure that they read the question carefully. Some students recognised a key word or two and presented a factual answer related to those words that was out of context and did not address the question. Students need to ensure that they answer the question.

Students displayed above-average knowledge and understanding of many topics, such as safety issues. However, a significant number of students were unable to apply their knowledge effectively to the scenarios presented. This was evident when students could provide an overview of what to do in a particular scenario, but could not describe specifically how to do it.

Questions that required analysis proved challenging for students and a number of responses lacked sufficient detail or were only vaguely related to the situation presented in the question. In contrast, a few students gained full marks when they produced unexpected answers that were valid and well thought out.

In questions that ask for more than one point, only the required number of points will be considered; any correct answers in addition to these will not earn marks.

In general, questions based on the ‘Apply occupational health and safety procedures’ and ‘install and optimise operating system software’ competencies were handled best, followed by the ‘Provide advice to clients’ competency. However, some students appeared to have difficulty suggesting solutions to questions in the ‘Create user documentation’ competency, particularly when they were required to apply their knowledge.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section A – Multiple-choice questions

The table below indicates the percentage of students who chose each option. The correct answer is indicated by shading.

Question	% A	% B	% C	% D	Comments
1	4	88	4	3	
2	81	7	8	4	
3	18	13	64	4	
4	47	17	4	31	
5	53	8	20	19	Option A (review by users) was incorrect – users’ recommendations are subject to review by their supervisors (team leaders).
6	33	8	2	57	
7	3	8	6	82	
8	17	43	29	10	
9	91	2	0	6	

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Question	% A	% B	% C	% D	Comments
10	26	43	24	8	Option C was the only correct answer; fixed (i.e. unchanging) date is not appropriate in a template. Structure is not relevant to a general purpose template.
11	7	51	28	14	
12	8	45	41	6	
13	7	41	1	50	Option B was incorrect – virtual memory is not RAM.
14	10	61	25	4	
15	3	4	1	92	
16	66	14	6	13	
17	7	47	15	31	
18	5	5	76	14	This question showed that the answer to a computer problem is not always technical. Answer C was incorrect. Network faults were eliminated by the facts that Joseph could not make a similar laptop work at his workstation, nor could he make his laptop work at a different workstation. Similarly the evidence provided in the question eliminated options A and B, leaving only option D.
19	25	17	7	50	
20	13	22	23	40	Although 'sit at least an arm's length away from the monitor' and 'centre the monitor directly in front of you' are good OH&S policies, they are irrelevant to glare, so the only correct answer was option C.

Section B – Short-answer questions

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.–b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	37	12	16	36	1.5

Most students who attempted part a. gained the mark, but a surprising number of students did not give an answer. The majority of answers given for part b. were correct.

Question 1a.

Drivers

Question 1b.

Any two of

- media provided with equipment (CD, DVD or USB)
- internet
- from within the device.

Question 2a.–b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	11	77	13	1

Question 2a.

Either of

- report the virus detection to the appropriate person – Help Desk, supervisor, etc.
- shut down the computer so no further damage is done.

Although the competency standard makes it clear that when detecting a virus you should 'report identified viruses to an appropriate person', this was not a common answer.

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Question 2b.

Any one of

- delete the file
- quarantine the file
- restore the file from a backup.

This question was answered well, with almost all students correctly indicating that the infected file should be deleted or quarantined.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	35	32	33	1

Any two of

- fault log
- client log
- daily running sheet
- software register
- inventory
- maintenance contracts
- training details
- installation guides
- user guides
- technical reference manuals
- FAQs
- feedback register.

As the question specified 'documents', an answer that referred to a search engine, such as Google, did not gain a mark. Students who answered with an unqualified 'spreadsheet' or 'database' did not receive marks.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	30	25	23	22	1.4

Point 1

One of

- to improve speed of access to these items in an emergency
- so the right type of extinguisher for the job can be found
- so staff/new employees/visitors know where to find them.

Point 2

One of

- advanced knowledge of this information should minimise confusion in an emergency
- to provide information for emergency services (pre- and post-arrival)
- to provide a choice of destination/route depending on the circumstances.

Point 3

Either of

- to provide easy access in an emergency
- so staff know who to call.

Many students merely repeated part or all of a question, without giving a reason why the items need to be on the Safety Map.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	54	17	29	0.8

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To gain full marks, students needed to describe two specific procedures, such as

- bending the knees
- lifting with the legs/knees
- keeping abdominals tight
- keeping a straight back when lifting
- keeping items being lifted close to the body
- using a trolley or wheeled table for transport
- getting someone to assist if items are heavy.

No marks were awarded for general statements, such as ‘training him how to lift’ or ‘giving him the OH&S manual’.

The following is an example of a good response.

Proper posture when lifting – knees bent and straight back, lift with the knees.

Question 6

Marks	0	1	Average
%	20	80	0.8

Any one of

- Option 1: Ensure that Help Desk staff are polite and friendly.
- Option 2: Make sure that Help Desk staff do not make unrealistic or unachievable commitments.
- Option 3: Simplify the language used so that people understand what Help Desk staff are talking about.

For option 2, some students offered ‘give better time estimates’, which did not gain a mark. The majority of students chose option 3 and answered it adequately, if not always succinctly.

Question 7a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	66	24	10	0.5

Scan or retype hard-copy information and documentation, and convert to PDF, HTML or other format files.

Some students gave general answers relating to the format of documentation, missing the point that this question was about converting existing hard-copy information and documentation to online electronic information and documentation. The question clearly stated that the documents to convert were hard copy, not soft copy, and that some of the documents were not from in-house sources. Answers that referred to using the original soft-copy files did not gain marks.

The following is an example of part of a good response.

Have all information converted to a text form by converting scanned words into actual text, correcting where necessary.

Question 7b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	31	32	37	1.1

Any two of

- improved security of files
- reduced printing cost
- most recent version always available
- easily accessible.

This part of the question was answered much better than part a.

Question 8a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	34	66	0.7

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A second copy of all data can be stored on an external hard drive.

The following is an example of a good response.

The external hard drive acts as a safety net ... in case of a corrupt file or hard disk failure.

Question 8b.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	63	37	0.4

Students' answers needed to cover security needs: protecting the data against both theft and disaster. The hard drive should be stored off-site, so that if the business suffers physical damage, the data is safe. Alternatively, use an on-site safe, which must be fireproof.

Many students suggested 'in a cupboard, cabinet or shelf, somewhere on-site, away from the computer', but those locations are insufficiently secure.

The following is an example of a good response.

The hard drive should be stored at an off-site location, e.g. Sachin's house, to reduce chances of both drives being damaged or stolen at the same time.

Question 8c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	35	39	26	0.9

One mark was awarded for a schedule: ideally, a daily full backup or daily incremental backup or differential backup with weekly full backup. A few other less rigorous schedules were accepted, but not those recommending only a three- or six-monthly full backup. One mark was awarded for the explanation: as data is constantly being updated, frequent backups are needed. This backup procedure should minimise the risk of data loss if there is major damage to the main business site.

The following is an example of a good response.

A backup should be performed daily to ensure minimal data loss – one full backup a week and a differential backup on other days.

Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	28	20	47	5	1.3

This question required the student to discuss the processing of the feedback forms following its design through to the completion of the evaluation. Any three of

- proofread it
- trial it
- provide instructions for the completion/return of the survey
- distribute the survey (any method)
- collect/act on/evaluate the responses.

Some students suggested questions for the already designed feedback form and gained no marks for these suggestions.

Question 10a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	51	49	0.5

Fragmentation

Some students offered 'defragmentation', which is the exact opposite, and were not awarded the mark. A large number of students did not answer this part of the question, but provided reasonable answers for part b. and part c.

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Question 10b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	59	26	15	0.6

Files have bits all over the place/are non-contiguous/are broken up. This makes it more difficult for the computer to open/find/collate/use fragmented files and may cause it to operate more slowly.

This question showed those students who had a better understanding of how hard disk drives are used.

Question 10c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	35	46	19	0.9

Use a disk defragmentation tool, which takes the parts of a file and puts them together in sequence/makes them contiguous. It also groups frequently used files together, leaving no gaps.

Most students displayed basic knowledge of a defragmentation tool's actions and could gain one mark, but many lacked the detail required for the second mark.

Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	13	54	32	1.2

Both of

- saving a file to the hard disk
- scheduling the order in which tasks are completed.

Most students understood that 'saving a file to the hard disk' was a function of the operating system, but many were unsure which of the other options was correct.

Question 12

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	17	6	65	13	1.7

Possible fields included

- date problem entered
- time in
- job number
- client's name
- client's contact details
- description of problem
- location of computer
- computer specification/type
- priority
- status
- date completed

A small number of students duplicated answers or provided answers that were derivatives of other fields, such as start time, end time and elapsed time.

This question was handled well, although many students had difficulty providing nine different answers.

Question 13a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	59	41	0.4

A document standard is a list of requirements for producing documents that

- makes it easier for users to understand
- provides consistent layout.

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Question 13b.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	61	39	0.4

Either of

- standards change over time
- documents need to be updated due to changing industry standards or new technology.

Question 13c.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	70	30	0.3

Industry standards are common standards to meet the particular needs of a specific industry or group of industries.

Question 13d.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	32	68	0.7

Start with your company's document standards and update them with the industry standards.

This would be the fastest way to upgrade.

Overall, Question 13 was answered less well than expected. Some students seemed to confuse procedural standards with document standards.

Question 14

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	36	15	19	18	12	1.6

Any four of (from advantages and/or disadvantages)

Advantages

- cheaper service
- could have more consultants available to assist
- longer support hours
- greater resources (e.g. higher-level personnel, knowledge bases)

Disadvantages

- lack of local knowledge in both the customs and practices of the organisation
- the risk of confusion as the Help Desk could be providing help to many organisations and could get their information mixed up
- language barriers
- time delay between phone conversations and having someone meet with the client in person
- possible loss of confidentiality
- local staff demoralised due to lack of career paths
- loss of jobs
- hard/slow to diagnose/repair hardware faults

Other ideas were also accepted. However, a few students attempted to provide a result, typically 'cost', as both an advantage and disadvantage, gaining less than full marks. A small number of students answered from the point of view of the provider of the outsourced service. Relevant answers from this perspective were rewarded.

Question 15

Marks	0	1	Average
%	39	61	0.6

Any one of

- use a chair mat
- cover the hardwood flooring with carpet
- replace the plastic castors with rubber castors.

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Students were good at recognising the danger of the polished hardwood flooring and most suggested adding a mat or carpet. A few students offered accurate OH&S improvements that were unrelated to the question.

Question 16a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	27	49	24	1

There were multiple possible answers for this question. Commonly accepted answers included

- the weight of the equipment
- having two items to carry – cumbersome/awkward
- the batteries contain harmful chemicals that might leak – two large items means more/bigger batteries
- safety – the equipment could be potential targets for theft, thereby exposing staff to the risk of harm from a robbery
- poor laptop ergonomics.

Spilt toner was not accepted since toner is only used in laser printers, which do not operate from batteries. Spilt ink is not an OH&S issue.

Question 16b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	48	26	25	0.8

A wireless-enabled smaller device (e.g. palmtop, tablet or smartphone with an app) in place of the laptop, with prompt confirmation of the order via email or fax, either direct or via the head office.

Some students proposed methods that involved sending faxes or emails from the head office at the end of the day, but this was not a suitable alternative and neither was giving the staff writing lessons.

Question 16c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	48	31	21	0.8

Any two of

- weight improvement
- less cumbersome/awkward
- fewer batteries, with reduced potential harm from leaking chemicals
- improved image – presenting a modern image
- faster processing of a sale – takes less time to set up
- lower cost – fewer batteries, less paper, tablets are cheaper than laptops.

Question 17

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	39	26	35	1

Either of

- use a file/folder viewing tool and list files in descending order of date modified; last week's will be on top
- use a search tool with similar parameters.

Some students offered detailed, step-by-step instructions, but were not awarded marks if those steps failed to produce the list required. Others offered a solution that showed the files accessed, whether changed or not, and could not be awarded full marks.

Question 18

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	0	37	58	5	1.7

Acceptable answers included

- neck/back strain from bending forward/looking down
- tipping hazard from tilted chair
- pressure on back of thighs, possibly leading to deep vein thrombosis (DVT)

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- pressure on back of ankles
- strain on knees
- poor wrist angle for typing
- screen too far from eyes
- unstable laptop surface
- heat on legs from laptop.

Unacceptable answers included anything not shown in the diagram, whether valid or not.

Question 19a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	70	30	0.3

Tiffany will plug the card into an expansion slot/PCI slot/the motherboard. Unacceptable answers included a USB port or the power supply.

Question 19b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	65	17	18	0.6

Any two of

- a hex number display
- an LED(s)
- make beeps or other sounds.

The following is an example of a good response.

1. Its own system of beep codes
2. An arrangement of LEDs, or a single flashing one.

Question 19c.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	86	14	0.2

Tiffany would need to refer to the appropriate documentation in order to interpret the meaning of the LEDs, hex numbers or sounds.

Most students who got the marks referred to the printed documentation that was provided with the POST card. Looking the codes up on the internet was an acceptable alternative.

The following is an example of a good response.

Use a manual or search online to establish what each POST code corresponds to what problem (sic).

Question 19d.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	95	5	0.1

POST cards are usually designed to work with particular chip sets/motherboards, so Tiffany needs to ensure that she has the correct POST card for the computer that she is repairing.

Question 19 proved challenging to students, with most students not attempting all parts of the question. However, those who did usually scored well. Some students used their experience from other areas to extrapolate good answers to some parts of the question, with their answers to other parts showing their inexperience with POST cards.

Question 20a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	31	10	20	39	1.7

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Many students did well on this part of the question, with most getting at least a partial answer. The most common issues chosen and typical explanations were

- lighting – to prevent student eye problems
- ventilation – to ensure a comfortable workplace
- glare – to prevent student eye problems
- location of printer – to reduce noise and possible effects of toner
- types of chairs – proper support and safety
- restrooms – close to training room
- wide, flat screens – for maximum comfort and ease of multiple tasks
- fire extinguishers – in case of electrical and/or paper fires.

A few students gave a long list of issues with no explanations and did not gain full marks.

Question 20b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	34	15	23	17	11	1.6

The most common issues chosen and typical explanations were

- workstation equipment and quantities – so each student can work on their own
- shared resources, such as printer, network, internet – to save costs and provide access to external resources
- presenter and projector equipment – for ease of demonstration and learning
- application and operating system software – appropriate to the subject matter
- utility software, such as antivirus, firewall – to protect data
- licensing – to ensure legality of site
- room design and layout – prove good ergonomic environment.

Again, some students gave a long list of items with no explanations and did not gain full marks. Some students made additional OH&S recommendations, which were rewarded if they were different to those offered in part a.

Question 21

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	16	53	29	2	1	1.2

Acceptable answers included

- heading and subheading fonts inappropriate/too fancy
- body text should be in a serif font
- bullet point text is sans serif and too fancy
- first rows of columns two and three are misaligned
- last rows of columns one and two are misaligned
- first line indent or inter-paragraph spacing – not both
- last word in column one hyphenated and split over columns one and two
- first line of text is in capitals
- single line below picture in column two
- placement of picture in the middle of text is poor
- do not indent first line after subheading
- column width/point size combination is inappropriate – too much white space *or* make better use of hyphenation/word breaks *or* do not use justified text with given column width
- gears in diagram are not numbered – do not relate to text box
- text box background is too dark
- text box points are misnumbered
- text box too is wide for text.

Students had many ways of expressing these ideas. However, very few found more than a few of them. Answers such as ‘wrong font’, ‘looks messy’ or ‘not all in English’ did not gain marks. As the question specifically asked for faults shown in the layout, answers such as ‘lack of headers or footers’ went unrewarded.