

2018 VCE Industry and Enterprise examination report

General comments

The 2018 VCE Industry and Enterprise examination was the final examination for the 2012–2018 study design. Students demonstrated the ability to accurately respond to questions and prepare appropriate responses that demonstrated a grasp of the key knowledge and key skills. Most responses provided sufficient detail, used evidence from structured workplace learning and demonstrated study of current events and case studies.

Students are reminded that they need to:

- use the number of marks allocated for a question and the answer space provided as a guide to the length of their response
- carefully read and respond to all parts of a question. For example, in Question 3b. many responses did not provide a definition of an enterprising behaviour and simply wrote about how it had been demonstrated
- carefully consider all parts of a question before selecting examples, to ensure that the example is relevant throughout the question
- ensure ideas in extended responses are organised into paragraphs.

Many students struggled with the concept of enterprise. Students are reminded that the Characteristics of the Study section of the study design provides an overview of this term and its meaning in terms of the study. This should be referenced throughout the study of Units 3 and 4.

Specific information

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

The statistics in this report may be subject to rounding resulting in a total more or less than 100 per cent.

Question 1a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	4	38	58	1.6

The majority of students provided an accurate and detailed definition of work-related skills and supported this with an example that was related to the definition.

The following is an example of a possible response.

Work-related skills are a wide range of skills that employees are able to demonstrate in diverse work settings. These skills enable the employee to complete allocated tasks effectively both individually and as a team member. An example of this is problem-solving skills. An employee who

has developed this skill would be able to identify a problem, brainstorm possible solutions then select, and implement, the best solution.

Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	3	15	34	49	2.3

Most students handled this question well. To achieve full marks students needed to be able to identify work-related skills that they had demonstrated during their structured workplace experience and clearly show how they had demonstrated more than one skill. Some students identified and described a skill, but they did not show the application of the skill in the workplace.

The following is an example of a possible response.

I demonstrated communication skills by using email to make arrangements with a client regarding the details of an appointment and assisting the client on what they needed to bring. I ensured that I used an appropriate reference for the email and that the content was clear, grammatically correct and did not have any spelling mistakes. I demonstrated problem-solving skills when a mess had been made on the floor, where I needed to create a safety barrier, get together appropriate cleaning goods and mop up the mess. I also made sure that the OH&S person was notified and that the required paperwork was completed.

Question 1c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	5	25	34	35	2

This question required students to show their understanding of the relationship between change and work-related skills. Many students found this challenging. While most could identify, and often describe, a skill or a number of skills, many were not able to link work-related skills to an increased ability to cope with change.

The following is an example of a possible response.

If employees have a range of work-related skills they are more likely to cope with change. Adaptability is a work-related skill to cope with change because it will help employees understand the change.

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	45	42	12	0.7

Many students were confused about the essential elements of quality assurance. This suggested that while they were aware of the role of quality in the workplace, they did not have detailed knowledge of this type of quality approach. Quality assurance is a proactive independent system that awards an external certificate based on the identification of the steps and the process to be implemented to prevent issues from arising in the production of goods or services.

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	26	20	19	14	11	10	2

Many students did not answer this question well. To achieve full marks, responses needed to demonstrate knowledge of a quality process – for example, quality control – and an understanding of why it was enterprising. In addition, responses needed to focus on the impact of the response.

There were a number of issues with many, often brief, responses. They did not contain the required detailed knowledge of a quality process that had been implemented. Many responses did not specifically comment on why it was enterprising. The majority of responses described the quality process but did not explore the impact of that process. The command word ‘discuss’ required students to explicitly address the challenges and the opportunities of the process selected. Possible challenges included increased training costs and time as well as the possible need to refocus business priorities. Benefits mentioned included increased business reputation, the development of employee skills, decreased customer complaints and increased sales.

The following is an example of a possible response.

My structured work placement was at a business that provides a range of home help and maintenance services to clients who are elderly and clients who are disabled. The manager is very proactive and always looking for ways to expand. He designed and implemented an enterprising approach to the management of quality. He linked employees to specific clients so they could build a relationship and identify any special services the client might like. He also sought feedback from clients and employees on how best to meet client needs. This process had a number of impacts on the business. It was time-consuming and expensive to implement as staff needed training. However, it had a positive impact on the business as the number of clients and the number of services provided to the majority of clients increased.

Question 3a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	11	15	74	1.7

Enterprising behaviours demonstrated by Ben included problem-solving, acting proactively, using teamwork and the ability to work with technology. Most students were able to identify the enterprising behaviours demonstrated in the case study.

Question 3b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	5	13	30	30	22	2.6

Students needed to provide an accurate definition of one of the enterprising behaviours identified in the previous question; however, a number of students were not able to provide this definition. Responses needed to precisely outline how Ben demonstrated this behaviour. In general, high-scoring answers used two examples of the behaviour outlined in detail, explicitly referencing the scenario and showing precisely how Ben’s actions demonstrated the behaviour.

Question 3c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	14	24	33	29	1.8

Some responses skilfully demonstrated the application of the student's structured workplace learning to explain the benefits of developing enterprising behaviours. While the majority of responses outlined benefits to themselves, responses could have explained benefits to any stakeholder or combination of stakeholders. Low-scoring responses tended to not answer the question, with students instead writing about how they demonstrated the behaviour, or responses lacked sufficient detail.

The following is an example of a possible response.

My structured workplace learning at a local cafe gave me the opportunity to develop my enterprising behaviours. For example, I learnt new computer programs to take orders and was taught to use the coffee machine. There are a number of benefits of using developing enterprise behaviours. For me, I was better able to understand and complete tasks in my job and the capabilities are all transferable to future work. My employer was able to trust that I could work with minimum supervision but still seek assistance if I was unsure. This meant that she could be more focused on completing other tasks. As my co-workers were also developing their capabilities, we were able to assist each other.

Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	30	34	36	1.1

Many students struggled to outline an example of changing patterns in the use of natural resources. Students could have outlined changes including in the use of water or fossil fuels, increased emphasis on sustainable resource use in the building or agriculture, forestry and fishing industries.

Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	26	8	13	18	14	10	10	2.6

To be awarded full marks responses needed to be detailed, address an industry's response to both the pressures and opportunities provided by the changing patterns of natural resources, and provide a well-informed conclusion supported by the body of the response. The majority of students did not address at least one of these elements.

The following is an example of a possible conclusion.

It is very difficult to make an overall judgment about the response of the industry to pressures and opportunities presented by changing patterns in natural resource use, as the industry is made up of a large number of often small businesses who have not responded in a uniform way. In general, the businesses who have responded have focused on increasing the sustainability of our resource base. Their actions have included waste minimisation, building more energy- and water-efficient structures and using sustainable products during the construction phase. However, these actions are dependent on individual businesses and are not uniform across the industry.

Question 5a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	25	29	26	21	1.4

The pattern of trade shows the structure of trade between a country and the rest of the world. It provides an overview of the types of goods and services imported and exported and of the countries this trade occurs with. In general, high-scoring responses commented on the overall pattern and used specific examples to support their outline. Low-scoring responses tended to take a historic approach and provided a general outline of the changes in the composition of Australia's trade.

The following is an example of a possible response.

There has been increasing demand for Australian exports, particularly from Asia. China has been a prominent export partner of Australia in the last decade. In 2015, Australia's top export markets included China, Japan, the US and South Korea. Primary products have continued to be a large part of Australia's export trade, while education services showed a significant increase in the period. We have continued to import a variety of manufactured goods, vehicles, petrol and computers.

Question 5b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	25	15	11	20	19	11	2.3

Students were generally able to indicate knowledge of the pressures and opportunities to be internationally competitive. However, many did not develop points made or provide evidence to support their responses. The majority of responses struggled to evaluate the action taken by the industry.

Question 5c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	21	11	21	24	23	2.2

The majority of students discussed the impact of the response on employees and employers. Students are reminded that there are a number of other stakeholders that they could consider. These include customers, owners, shareholders, the community, contractors and suppliers. Some students missed out on marks because they did not address the benefits and challenges for each stakeholder. High-scoring responses included a discussion of both benefits and challenges for each stakeholder.

Question 6a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	7	19	37	37	2

Students generally performed well in this question. Their responses described a large number of recent technology-focused innovations. These included drones, robotics, cloud-based platforms and web conferencing.

The following is an example of a possible response.

In Victoria drones are used in fire prevention. As well as monitoring planned burns while they are taking place and post-process mapping, drones evaluate an area prior to the planned burn in terms

of topography, hazardous trees, nearby infrastructure, and vegetation types and densities that could lead to the crossing of containment lines.

Question 6b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	10	29	40	22	1.7

Full marks were awarded if students gave an accurate and detailed explanation of the impact of the technology mentioned in Question 6a. on work tasks. High-scoring responses explicitly showed how the technology had impacted on tasks performed or the way these were performed. Low-scoring responses were simplistic and short.

The following is an example of a possible response.

The introduction of drones in fire prevention has had a positive impact on both work tasks and work processes. Drones are used to respond more quickly and cheaply to outbreaks of fire. In addition, they give firefighters fast access to live weather information, pre-incident plans, navigation and maps of hydrants, electricity, gas and drainage while en-route to emergencies. Perhaps most importantly, drones can be sent into areas too confined or dangerous for people. This will reduce the risk for firefighters.

Question 6c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	16	20	30	24	10	1.9

A significant number of responses simply described a new form of technology in a business or industry. Responses needed to address the opportunities and challenges created by technology in the selected industry. High-scoring responses provided specific facts and evidence to support the discussion. In general, technology provides a number of opportunities; these include cost savings, increased productivity, increased quality of goods or services produced and the creation of new jobs. Many responses made only a brief mention of the challenges. The challenges of technology can include expense in purchasing the technology, time for research and development as well as the time to implement and monitor, and the need to train and possibly hire new employees. It may also include employee resistance to the change and the time required by management to plan for and implement the new technology thus reducing focus on other areas of the business.

The following is an example of a possible response.

The introduction of the new technology has created a number of challenges in the industry. Many employees were fearful of the technology as they thought that their work duties would change a lot and that they would have to have to learn lots of new and difficult tasks and processes. Some employees were afraid that they would lose their jobs and as there is high unemployment in the industry that they would not be able to find other work. Employers worried that they would not have the knowledge and skills to select the best type of technology to respond to the opportunity. The cost of introducing the technology and of training and supporting the workers was also a concern for some.

Question 7a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	17	36	47	1.3

The majority of students accurately responded to this question, providing a logical outline of the benefits of innovation for Australian industry. These reasons could have included maintaining

employment in the industry, creating a niche market, increasing exports and maintaining market share. Students are reminded to carefully read the question as some students did not frame their responses in terms of benefits for Australian industry.

The following is an example of a possible response.

Innovation is important to Australian industry because it provides a mechanism to maintain and grow businesses. It can give them a comparative advantage and increase their ability to be productive and compete internationally.

Question 7b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	20	35	45	1.3

Students generally handled this question well. To be awarded full marks responses needed to accurately describe the graph. High-scoring responses incorporated specific data from the graph to support comments.

The following is an example of a possible response.

The trend shows that since 2008, business expenditure on research and development has declined from approximately 1.2% of GDP to 1.0%. Government expenditure during the same period was fairly constant, at about 0.6% of GDP, but from 2016 has dipped.

Question 7c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	36	30	35	1

High-scoring responses showed an understanding of the link between research and development and innovation. Students should be able to grasp links between various elements of the study design. Innovation is a new or improved idea, product or process, while research and development is a systematic investigation of the feasibility of an innovation.

The following is an example of a possible response.

Innovation relies on research and development to grow the innovation. If the decline in expenditure on research and development continues then we can expect the level of innovation in Australian industry to decline, and this will impact on productivity and international competitiveness of Australian industry.

Question 7d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	16	1	7	13	20	20	23	3.7

The majority of responses identified two logical work-related skills that future employees would need. These could have been selected from any listed in the Characteristics of the Study section of the study design. The major issue in responses was that many did not address all requirements of the question and many did not provide either a description of the work-related skills or a justification stating why this skill would be necessary in the future. High-scoring responses identified, described and justified two work-related skills.

The following is an example of a possible response.

Planning and organising is one skillset that employees will need in the future. This means the employee has the ability to make decisions and manage their workload while completing tasks

effectively. This skill, as an enterprise capability, is an essential skill as employees will need to be effective team members and leaders to cope with the uncertainty and change in fast-changing workplaces.

Initiative and enterprise skills is another set of linked skills that will be vital. These skills aid personal and business performance. Employees should be able to see emerging issues and anticipate the implications. Employees who have developed these skills will be able to see opportunity and will be prepared to take managed risk to act on it.

Question 7e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	18	17	28	25	12	2

Students needed to demonstrate explicit knowledge of both innovation and enterprise culture and demonstrate significant and or a variety of links between the two. High-scoring responses included a discussion of benefits and challenges of innovation for the development of an enterprise culture. Lower-scoring responses tended to lack detail or did not explicitly state how innovation can assist the development of an enterprise culture.

The following is an extract from a possible response.

If an enterprise culture is present, the business will be proactive and actively seek to seize opportunities and turn challenges into opportunities. This type of business is more likely to see the opportunity to innovate. Innovation usually requires employees to work collaboratively, with different employees showing leadership at different times in the process, to take managed risk and problem-solve as they move through the phases of innovation. If employees are to work in this way they will need to have developed a range of enterprise skills. Therefore, enterprise culture and innovation strengthen and reinforce each other.