

2019 VCE VET Hospitality written examination report

General comments

The 2019 VCE VET Hospitality written examination assessed the following five units of competency:

- SITHFAB004 Prepare and serve non-alcoholic beverages
- SITHFAB005 Prepare and serve espresso coffee
- SITHFAB007 Serve food and beverage
- SITHFAB016 Provide advice on food
- SITXFIN001 Process financial transactions

Students generally provided enough information in their responses and not many questions were left unanswered.

Responses that scored highly were those that answered the question specifically, used correct industry terminology, and provided examples.

Students were not awarded marks if they repeated the question as their answer or gave vague, non-specific or one-word answers.

Students should consider the steps they would take when handling customer questions or issues and think about the level of service to be provided to the customer as well as the necessary communication with the kitchen. While students did have reasonable knowledge, they were sometimes unable to clearly articulate processes and often provided similar or repeated responses.

Docket writing was an area of strength, with most able to score full marks for this question. Most students also performed well in the analysis of restaurant sales data.

It was encouraging to see that definitions were quite well handled and most students were able to obtain at least one mark for each of their descriptions.

Other items that were noted:

- Knowledge of additional cutlery required to suit a customer's order confused some students, who were unable to identify the errors and make the correct adjustment.
- The term 'froth'—students should instead describe a dense/thick 'foam'. Froth indicates separation of the milk and foam due to overheating.
- Many students did not know the name of the Hawthorne strainer and it was often referred to as a sieve, muddler, coffee strainer or various items of kitchen equipment.

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.

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	1	7	81	11	
2	7	31	30	32	Goods and services tax (GST) is applied to salad rolls as a filled roll is subject to GST. No GST is applied to bottled water, fresh fruit and vegetables or coffee beans (coffee only attracts GST when it is ready to drink).
3	16	35	40	9	Mango lassi is a traditional Indian drink, made with a combination of yoghurt and mango (it may also contain milk and spices); therefore, it would complement the Indian meal of rogan josh.
4	13	8	28	51	Adding the ice after the liquid ingredients has no bearing on whether the blender will overflow or the correct amount of ice being used. The correct ratio of liquid to ice is determined by measuring the ingredients correctly, not the order that they are placed in the blender. When ice is added to the blender first, it may freeze on the blender blades, requiring the blender to 'work harder' to mix the ingredients.
5	83	3	5	9	
6	8	8	3	82	
7	16	64	13	8	
8	20	22	28	30	Bouillabaisse is a seafood-based soup; all the other soups are vegetable-based.
9	54	1	13	32	
10	45	16	37	2	Increasing numbers of food trucks and street vendors is a food service trend. The other three responses relate to meeting customer needs/demands rather than a trend in food service.
11	5	9	2	85	

Question	% A	% B	% C	% D	Comments
12	1	77	1	21	Many students selected B. By placing the order alteration into the point of sale (POS) system, the attendant is already informing the chef about the alteration. The alteration would be clear in the POS system as it is typed in (unlike a hand-written docket, which you may need to explain/clarify). The correct answer is D as before taking the meal from the pass you would be required to check that the requested alteration has been made.
13	1	25	1	74	
14	41	5	46	8	Many students selected C but the correct response is A as you collect the dishes in the opposite order that you want to place them on the table (i.e. the last plate you pick up is the first one to be placed on the table).
15	15	17	30	39	Unlike guests' individual plates, share plates can be removed from the table as soon as they are finished. There is no point in leaving an empty plate in the centre of the table or waiting until all the plates have been cleared; in fact, the space may be required to place more share plates on the table.
16	10	72	11	6	
17	3	23	72	3	
18	14	4	74	8	
19	68	30	1	1	
20	91	4	2	3	
21	5	58	2	36	
22	96	3	1	0	
23	59	38	3	0	
24	19	4	12	66	
25	1	9	83	7	

Section 2

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

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	4	16	49	29	3.0

Responses needed to identify four of the following (for four marks):

- making an online booking
- an example of a special request (e.g. highchair, birthday, window seat, groups)
- pre-ordering of food and beverages
- placing a review / reading restaurant reviews
- type of licence (e.g. is it BYO?)
- address/location and contact details
- opening hours
- food and beverage menus / service style (e.g. a la carte, buffet)
- dietary requirements
- pricing and special offers, set menus (e.g. functions, promotions / special events / gift vouchers)
- policies related to customer service / terms and conditions (e.g. responsible service of alcohol policy, bookings policy).

Students generally handled this question well. Where responses did not score full marks, it was generally because of repeated items such as phone number, address or location.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	22	26	35	17	1.5

Examples of correct answers are as follows:

Factor	Example
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • low light/candlelight/dim light sets an intimate mood • brighter/natural light for daytime
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formal restaurant: soft soothing / relaxing / easy listening • café: louder / more contemporary background music
Temperature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • open fire / heating in winter, air-conditioning / fans in summer
Décor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • theme and colour can help set the ambience, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – tropical (palm trees, cool colours such as green) – western (hay bales, wooden tables) – bright colours / shabby chic or industrial for a café – softer or darker colours for a restaurant.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – white and blue for beachside, suitable seaside decorations (lighthouses, boats, oars, lifebuoy, fish) • quality of furnishings to give a sense of luxury (e.g. plush chairs/ fittings to suit restaurant)
Layout and spacing (of the tables/furniture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formal restaurant: clothed tables, more spread out • café: informal dining environment, closer together / shared tables
Smell/aroma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBQ restaurant: the smell of the food cooking on the grill • café: the smell of freshly roasted/ground coffee • formal restaurant /hotel: signature scent

To achieve full marks, responses needed to provide a factor that positively affected the ambience and provide an example that matched the factor they selected. The most common responses from students were music, lighting and temperature. Some students were not able to articulate the positive factors that affect ambience by adequately describing the example they provided.

Responses in addition to those listed above were accepted as long as the student was able to positively describe the factor given.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	6	10	19	18	23	16	7	3.2

- Safety data sheet
 - the safety data sheet is for chemicals (or hazardous substances) (one mark)
 - the sheet would include information such as storage, use, first aid, environmental or personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements (one mark).

Some students appeared to confuse safety data sheet with an incident report.

- Crema
 - crema looks thick/velvety, golden/tan/honeycomb or it consists of coffee oils combined with air bubbles made when espresso coffee is ground and extracted correctly (one mark)
 - the crema is a layer on top of an espresso (one mark).

Most students were able to describe the crema as the golden, velvety layer on top of an espresso.

Responses using the word 'coffee' instead of 'espresso' did not achieve full marks.

- Mocha
 - espresso coffee base with chocolate powder (or syrup) added (one mark)
 - textured milk and layer of dense foam (one mark).

Responses using the word 'coffee' instead of 'espresso' did not achieve full marks.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	10	22	27	24	14	2	0	2.2

Responses needed to identify six of the following (for six marks):

- attend kitchen / front of house staff briefing / section allocation
- menu changes / shortages / price changes, daily specials / board, style of service
- booking information – additional bookings, VIPs, service requirements / special requests / dietary requirements
- check that service equipment is ready (must state e.g. buffet service gear / turn on bain-marie)
- prepare register / EFTPOS machine
- prepare food and beverage items (e.g. water, bread, butter, condiments)
- check the table settings are complete / correct / neat / haven't been disturbed or got dusty
- waiter's station items (e.g. service plates, cruets, menus, extra cutlery, glasses, docket books, waiter's friend).

Some responses did not answer the question adequately. The question stated that the tables had previously been set up and to not refer to bar set-up or tasks relating to the ambience of the restaurant.

Marks were not awarded for cleaning tasks such as mopping/sweeping floors or cleaning toilets or for attending to personal hygiene / grooming.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	28	52	21	1.0

One mark was awarded for politely informing the customer that the sitting times are strict and that the time for table turnover is 8 pm.

The second mark was awarded for suggestions as to how this could be achieved, given that only one-and-a-half hours remain. Suitable suggestions included:

- having the customer order quickly (e.g. take order for drinks and meals promptly, once seated)
- providing suggestions for quicker-to-cook items
- suggesting fewer courses (e.g. two instead of three).

If the student decided that they could not be accommodated, suitable suggestions included rebooking for another time, transferring to the 8 pm sitting (if available) and seating in the bar / other area with food and beverage options provided.

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	8	35	31	24	2.7

Correct answers were as follows.

Cutlery to add	Cutlery to remove
A. soup spoon	F. main knife

B. dessert spoon or A. soup spoon	E. entrée fork (fork not required with gelato)
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Many students scored two out of a potential four marks for this question. There appeared to be a lack of knowledge of the cutlery required for soup, that the gelato does not require a fork and that a pasta such as spaghetti requires a spoon (either dessert or soup accepted) rather than the main knife pictured.

Question 7a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	2	10	12	28	31	17	0	3.3

Correct answers were as follows.

Menu item	Main ingredient/s	Cooking/preparation method	Origin of cuisine	Not suitable for	Example of variation to suit specific need
rockling	fish	fried	English	egg allergy	no sauce
Greek salad	salad	tossed	Greek	vegan	no feta
risotto	rice	absorption	Italian	vegetarian	mushrooms only
curry	vegetables	simmered	Indian	coeliac	no naan bread

Each correct item was worth one mark.

Students were mostly able to identify the removal of feta from the Greek salad, that curry was Indian and that they should remove the naan bread.

Question 7b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	5	19	33	11	32	2.5

Correct responses included two of the following (one mark for identifying each correct item plus a mark for the correct explanation):

- risotto – the rice portion and ingredients can be reduced as it is usually made to order
- linguini – the pasta portion and ingredients can be reduced as it is usually made to order
- calamari – as the calamari rings are individual, then they can be reduced or increased to change the portion size.

Students were mostly able to identify that risotto, calamari and linguini are the dishes most easily served in a smaller portion to become an entrée. The explanations needed to explain how the dish could be made smaller to be served as an entrée.

Answers that suggested the dish was light or not filling were not accepted.

Question 7ci.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	15	15	38	27	5	2.0

Responses needed to explain the dish using adjectives to provide the customer with a description that encourages them to order the dish. For example:

- the chicken is crumbed and pan-fried to golden (other adjectives such as shallow fried, gently fried, crumbed/crisp golden coating were accepted) (marks were not awarded to responses that referred to crispy deep-fried chicken)
- it is topped with rich/luscious/homemade/flavoursome Napoli sauce, with gypsy/succulent/smoked/off-the-bone ham and melted/grilled/golden-brown cheese
- it is served with a side dish from the menu or a more generic side dish (e.g. chips and/or salad). Responses needed to specify the side dish as the menu stated there was a side dish included.

Question 7cii.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	7	62	31	1.3

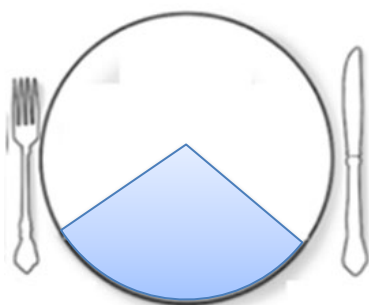
One mark was allocated for suggesting removing the cheese from the dish or replacing it with a lactose-free cheese. A second mark was given for offering/suggesting another meal option that does not contain dairy products.

Most responses scored a mark for this question.

Question 7ciii.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	42	58	0.6

Students were required to place the cross in the lower third of the plate or directly in the centre (as many establishments place the parmigiana on top of the chips in the middle of the plate). A cross placed anywhere in the shaded area below was accepted.



Question 7d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	1	5	3	11	81	3.7

Correct responses were as follows.

Quantity	Order	Covers
1	whitebait	1
2	falafel	2,4
1	saganaki	3
<hr/>		
1	(chicken) parma	1
1	steak (m)	2
1	pork (belly)	3
1	calamari	4
Table: 3	Covers: 4	Time: 6.30
		Waiter: Chris

Responses needed to include:

- all correct quantities
- all correct meal orders including medium (m) steak (entrees above the line and main below the line)
- correct cover numbers
- completed docket information.

This question was well answered by most students. Errors included mixing up or leaving out the quantity or cover numbers or not filling in the docket details at the bottom of the docket.

Question 7e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	37	40	18	5	1	1.0

For four marks, responses needed to include four examples such as:

- take and document order in a legible manner / write clearly / enter into POS correctly
- take orders clockwise around the table / take order from the right of customer
- collect menus as the orders are taken
- upsell / provide information/assistance/suggestions to customers about menu selections
- read back and confirm order to customers
- advise kitchen of changes, special/dietary requirements
- deliver order to kitchen in a timely manner
- follow establishment protocols when placing order (e.g. 'order in').

Marks were not awarded for information about accurate completion of the food docket; for example, placing entrée orders at the top and mains below.

Question 7f.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	27	44	22	7	1.1

For three marks, responses needed to include three examples such as:

- cutlery should be clean and polished
- use a service plate to carry cutlery
- start with cover one and work in a clockwise direction around the table
- don't reach across the customer to position cutlery / cutlery adjustment is performed from both the left and right-hand sides to avoid reaching over the customer / carry out the task with minimal customer disruption
- hold the cutlery so you don't leave fingerprints/don't hold by the part that will go in the customer's mouth
- remove any unnecessary cutlery.

Many students were able to state that cutlery adjustment should not disturb the customer and that the cutlery should be clean and polished. Answers that referred to adjusting cutlery only on the right-hand side were not accepted as cutlery is adjusted both on the right- and left-hand side.

Some students seemed to be unaware of service protocols and simply stated that the attendant should provide the correct cutlery, which repeated the question.

Question 7gi.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	5	95	1.0

Linguini was the least popular.

Most responses to this question were correct.

Question 7gii.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	24	76	0.8

Curry was the most consistent dish in sales.

Most responses to this question were correct.

Question 7giii.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	5	57	39	1.4

Calamari had a significant drop in sales.

An explanation could be, for example, colder months versus warmer months / seasonal preference of customers (but not fishing season as calamari can be sourced all year round) / customer preference for lighter/heavier meals.

Most were able to identify that calamari was the dish that had the most significant drop in sales; responses did not receive a second mark if they stated the reason for this was related to availability or seasonality of the calamari rather than the customer preference for seafood in the warmer months or a more hearty dish in the cooler months.

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	10	29	46	15	1.7

For three marks, three reasons were needed from the examples below:

- All meals on the docket at the pass are ready for that table/course.
- The dishes match the docket (e.g. special requests, dietary requirements have been accommodated, rare steak).
- The plates are clean.
- The food is well presented (e.g. appropriate plating, garnished).
- The same dishes look identical (e.g. same portion size).
- The hot food is hot and the cold food is cold.

Where full marks were not awarded, students often repeated tasks, especially in relation to dishes matching the docket, such as check that dietary requirements have been accommodated, check that special requests have been actioned.

Question 9a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	42	58	0.6

The attendant should ask the customer if anything was wrong with the meal / if they enjoyed their meal / for feedback.

Some students failed to relate their answer to checking if the customer was satisfied.

Question 9b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	34	45	21	0.9

It is important to get feedback from the customer as to why their steak is uneaten; this will highlight any issues or concerns they have / will assist in ensuring that the customer leaves happy/satisfied as the issue can be rectified. It provides an opportunity to resolve the issue by informing the kitchen so they can make improvements / can prevent it from happening again / gives feedback to chef (or front-of-house supervisor). It also maintains restaurant reputation / prevents poor reviews.

Question 10

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	12	24	39	23	3	1.8

Inform and apologise to the customer for the inconvenience / apologise and be upfront with the customer about the delay. To obtain the mark students needed to stated that the attendant apologises and explains.

Options included:

- replace hot desserts with cold dessert order that is able to be prepared/served quickly
- remove the desserts from the order and get the bill ready
- remove the desserts and provide complimentary coffee (with supervisor approval)
- suggest they return for dessert after the show and offer complimentary coffee (with supervisor approval).

Students often failed to provide alternatives or a choice for the customer as to what they would like to happen. Placing the food in a takeaway box was not accepted as this is not suitable for the theatre.

Advise kitchen or front-of-house supervisor the order is altered or cancelled / update order in POS.

Many students failed to state that they would advise the chef/kitchen as to what was happening (e.g. desserts cancelled or swapped to something else).

Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	1	3	39	58	2.6

One mark was awarded for each correct answer as follows.

Specific waste item	Bin colour
empty soft drink cans	yellow
used coffee pods	red
flowers from table vases	lime green

Most students did well on this question but some struggled with identifying that coffee pods went into general waste and are not recyclable

Question 12a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	34	66	0.7

Coffee should be stored in an air-tight or sealed container and in a cool, dark place,

Question 12b.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	25	75	0.8

This ensures freshness/quality of coffee. Coffee oxidises / goes stale quickly / flavour may be affected if not stored correctly.

Most students were able to achieve marks in this question.

Question 13

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	15	14	32	28	12	2.1

Responses were awarded two marks for two correct visual examples and two marks for two correct aural examples.

visually (looking)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • velvety / silken-smooth texture • fine bead of bubbles / no large air bubbles • whirlpool/vortex/swirling/rolling • foamy texture of milk being created / thick, dense foam / meringue-like/creamy/shiny • milk doubling in size / thickening • correct positioning of equipment (e.g. steam wand just under surface of milk)
aurally (listening)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • desirable sounds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – soft sound/hiss of air being drawn into the milk – gentle gurgling/rumbling noise – shhshh / tssk tssk noise / chirping / soft whistle sound – indicates the wand is in correct position • undesirable sounds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – no loud/splattering/sounds (milk surface too far away) – no sound at all (wand is too low / steam pressure too low) – no screeching (milk is too hot, lack of air in milk)

Students often had difficulty articulating what they were looking or listening for. Marks for visual examples were not awarded for responses that referred to froth: students needed to be specific (e.g. small, dense bubbles). Marks for aural examples were not awarded if responses identified an undesirable sound (e.g. screeching) without specifying that it was undesirable.

Question 14a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	32	68	0.7

Most students were able to identify that a tropical fruit mocktail should be blended in order to break up the fruit pieces.

Question 14b.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	43	57	0.6

Appropriate glassware would be colada, hurricane. Most students were able to identify a suitable glass.

Question 14c.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	36	64	0.7

A wedge of pineapple, orange wheel, strawberry fan or other suitable fruit may be in a tropical mocktail. The garnish needed to be specified (e.g. slice/wedge/fan).

The question asked for a suitable garnish, therefore responses relating to decorations such as decorative straws, umbrellas or plastic toys were not accepted.

Question 15a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	60	40	0.4

The correct answer was Hawthorne strainer.

Question 15b.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	42	58	0.6

It is used for straining solids (pith, pulp, seeds, ice) from drinks (an example of what is strained was needed).

Question 15c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	18	33	49	1.3

Cleaning steps:

- rinse to remove fruit residue
- wash in warm/hot soapy water / scrub coil gently with brush / wash with a sponge to remove anything stuck
- rinse with warm water
- allow to air dry / dry thoroughly with a clean tea towel (two marks).

Most students did not know the correct name of the Hawthorne strainer. More were able to state that it was used to remove ice and solids, such as pips, flesh and pulp, from a drink when pouring into a glass. Many were able to identify at least one appropriate cleaning step. It was necessary for students to specify that warm/hot water is used for washing.

Question 16

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	13	24	43	17	3	1.7

For four marks, four reasons were needed, such as the examples below:

- orders sent directly to the kitchen or bar
- managing a customer's bill/alterations / enter or record orders
- processing transactions / totalling bill / calculating change / providing receipts / split bills
- reservations/bookings
- floorplans / table allocation
- stock control
- customer contact list
- sales trends/data
- revenue / total sales / GST breakdown / price look-up code.

Where students failed to achieve full marks, this was usually due to repetition of answers, especially in the processing transactions category, such as add up the bill, provide change, give receipt to the customer.

Question 17a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	21	56	23	1.0

For two marks, two reasons were needed, such as the examples below:

- quicker to take the order at the table / quicker than handwriting
- saves time / more efficient as you do not need to go to the kitchen to place the order
- account/bill is quicker to process as it has already been entered into system / avoids calculating errors
- kitchen staff do not have to decipher handwriting / order is clear

Students needed to explain their response; therefore, a word such as 'quicker' was not accepted.

Question 17b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	29	59	12	0.9

For two marks, two reasons were needed, such as the examples below:

- internet/power failure / dropouts
- device not charged / goes flat during service
- app/system issues (malfunction, no access)
- may have to use personal device (e.g. privacy issues, use personal data e.g. if restaurant wifi goes down).

Marks were not awarded for cost of setting up / installing the system. The question referred to using the electronic ordering system. Marks were not awarded for responses that related to staff not being trained properly.

Question 18

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	7	34	40	17	3	1.8

Responses needed to include:

- listen to / acknowledge the customer's request (students could apologise in this step but not essential)
- clarify—ask if the customer just doesn't like rare meat / ask if there is a dietary or cultural requirement that is associated with this request / clarify with the chef if they will make the change
- explain / educate them that the chef cooks the food in such a way to ensure maximum flavour and that cooking the steak to well-done will comprise the overall flavours/texture of the dish
- offer a suitable alternative / if customer insists ensure it is noted clearly on docket / chef is informed
- follow-up—check the correct meal collected from pass / delivered to customer, check customer satisfaction.

For four marks, responses needed to list four of the five points.

Two examples of possible correct responses are as follows.

- Listen to the customer's request and clarify if they simply do not like rare meat. Advise them that the beef is cooked rare to ensure maximum flavour and texture for the dish. Suggest another meat dish from the menu that can be cooked to well-done. Check the customer's satisfaction after the meal is served.
- Acknowledge the customer's request and advise them that the beef is cooked rare to ensure maximum flavour and texture for the dish. Tell them you will check with the chef if the change can be accommodated. Write the alteration on the docket and inform chef. Check that the meat is well-done when collecting from the pass.