

# 2020 VCE VET Hospitality examination report

## General comments

The 2020 VCE VET Hospitality 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.

It was encouraging to see that most students attempted all questions and were able to provide multiple responses where required. Most students were able to provide sufficient details to gain some marks for their responses. There were very few questions left unanswered, which indicated good overall knowledge.

The use of correct industry terminology, being specific in responses, the provision of examples to support explanations and addressing the question asked were the hallmarks of high-scoring responses.

Knowledge of dietary requirements, such as allergies and intolerances, was an area of strength, with most students scoring well in these questions. Most students also performed well in the area of transaction types and addressing the procedures when dealing with issues related to the out-of-service cash register.

Questions asking for sensory descriptions or identifying the steps to follow through on resolution of a customer complaint scored less well.

Sometimes responses did not clearly articulate definitions and processes, or included similar or repeated information as provided previously, or left out crucial information.

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

Other items that were noted by examiners:

- There was a lack of knowledge of cleaning processes related to the espresso machine and the milkshake maker. When describing cleaning, it is important to consider the steps in the cleaning process required to clean an item hygienically (i.e. wash with warm soapy water / wipe with a clean damp cloth, rinse and air dry / dry with a clean tea towel).
- The term 'froth' was used rather than 'a dense/thick foam'. Froth indicates separation of the milk and foam due to overheating.
- Many responses did not adequately identify the industry service standards and provide specific examples of actions related to each stage in the order of service.

## 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.

### Section A – Multiple-choice questions

Question	Correct answer	% of responses correct	Comments
1	B	95	
2	C	91	
3	A	33	When pickling items, vinegar is added so the flavour profile will be sour, not sweet. The pickling liquid softens the vegetables slightly, so they will be firm but not crunchy.
4	D	92	
5	B	85	
6	A	87	
7	C	70	
8	B	38	Hummus is made from chickpeas and tahini. Tahini is a paste made from ground and toasted sesame seeds; therefore, it is unsuitable to those with sesame and nut allergies.
9	D	87	
10	C	87	Buffet service is where guests serve themselves from a selection of foods. Large platters in the middle of the table would be classified as family service or shared/sharing plates. Response B relates to silver service and response D relates to plate service.
11	B	84	
12	B	75	
13	D	98	
14	A	71	
15	A	79	
16	C	9	When using the three-plate carrying technique, three plates are carried in the non-dominant hand. An additional plate may be carried in the dominant hand.
17	C	61	

Question	Correct answer	% of responses correct	Comments
18	C	65	
19	D	96	
20	C	97	
21	B	94	
22	B	88	
23	A	34	A receipt for sales made in the hospitality industry must be supplied to a customer on request. For example, if you were serving coffee in a cafe, you would not necessarily provide a receipt for each customer but would provide one if asked.
24	C	93	
25	D	91	

## Section B – Short-answer questions

### Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	1	11	54	34	2.2

Responses needed to include one answer that related to greeting/welcoming/seating/checking if they have a booking: welcome / greet them / make eye contact / assist with the door / check if they have a booking / seat them at the appropriate table.

Responses needed to include two answers relating to them being very wet, for example:

- ask to take any umbrellas / raincoats / wet jackets and store them / hang them up
- direct them to the bathroom for hand-dryer / hand towels
- offer paper towels / offer towels
- offer seating near a fireplace or heating
- offer a warm drink.

### Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	15	12	20	31	12	2.1

One mark was given for colour: purple/red/pink/blue from the berries, white from the coconut or brown from the nuts/muesli (one only needed).

One mark was given for flavour: sweet/ripe berry/banana or fruity flavour / nutty/toast flavours (e.g. from almond milk, peanut butter, coconut).

Two marks were given for consistency and texture. Responses needed to identify crunch and texture from the toasted muesli or coconut and smooth/soft texture of banana, juicy berries or creamy almond milk.

Students needed to focus on the sensory characteristics listed in the question (colour, flavour, consistency and texture) and describe ingredients from the breakfast bowl using these sensory characteristics. Some responses did not link the sensory description to an ingredient (e.g. what was crunchy, what was soft).

### Question 3a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	24	76	0.8

Correct responses were milk, ice cream, flavouring/syrup/topping (e.g. chocolate). Most students were able to correctly identify the ingredients of a milkshake. Some students mentioned adding ice, but the milkshake machine does not crush ice.

### Question 3b.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	44	56	0.6

It was correct to say adding all the ingredients and blending/mixing together until thick and smooth.

Strong responses referred to the ingredients being added to the cup. The cup is then attached to the milkshake machine and the ingredients mixed together by the spindle until thick and smooth.

Where students were unable to achieve a mark for this question, it was usually due to their description of the milkshake machine as a blender. While the action of the milkshake machine is to blend or mix the ingredients together until thick and smooth, it is not a blender. A blender is a different piece of equipment.

### Question 3c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	10	34	43	13	1.6

To clean the milkshake machine:

- fill cup (tin) with warm soapy water, place on machine and turn on – this cleans the spindle (hygiene)
- turn machine off (safety)
- wipe spindle/whisk/blade/pole with clean, damp cloth (hygiene)
- remove cup and wash in warm soapy water, rinse and dry, or put in the dishwasher (hygiene)
- wipe body of machine with a clean damp cloth (hygiene)
- be cautious of blade when wiping/cleaning (safety)
- keep plug/machine away from water when cleaning (safety).

To obtain three marks, students needed to address both hygiene and safety in their response and identify that the cup (tin) has to be cleaned and the spindle cleaned or wiped.

Students should be familiar with the different components of the machine that need to be cleaned and how to describe both safety considerations and hygiene/cleaning steps in their response. The two main components of this machine that need to be cleaned for hygiene reasons are the cup and spindle. With reference to the cup/tin, students must always mention the word 'wash', not just rinse, to clean hygienically. Most students were able to identify safety elements such as turning off and unplugging the machine before wiping either spindle or body of machine with a clean, damp cloth. Students are reminded to avoid using incorrect terminology such as 'jug' or 'stick'.

## Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	5	8	17	26	20	21	4	3.3

**Shake and strain** is a mocktail (cocktail) method where the ingredients are shaken with ice in a cocktail shaker (or Boston shaker), then strained into an (appropriate) glass. Ice needed to be mentioned to achieve two marks.

Students should always use correct terminology when referring to equipment (e.g. Boston or standard shaker). Many students did not identify that the main reason to shake a beverage is to mix and chill the ingredients with ice. Most students were familiar with descriptions relating to straining a beverage.

The **steam wand** is the metal pipe/tube on the espresso machine. When turned on, it forces steam into the cold milk to heat/texture it.

Most students were able to recognise the purpose of the wand is to heat and texture milk using steam. Some responses did not achieve full marks because they used the word 'wand' instead of describing the wand as a metal pipe or tube on the espresso machine.

A **blue steak** is seared/charred at a high temperature very quickly to cook/brown/caramelize the outside. Inside, it will be raw / bright red / only just warm.

Students should be able to describe the steak visually using sensory language. The focus should be on making the steak sound enticing, so it is important to include words such as 'seared', 'charred' or 'caramelised' to describe the outside and use words such as 'rare' or 'bright red' to describe the inside. Students need to recognise that a blue steak refers to how thoroughly the steak is cooked and that the word 'blue' is not an accurate description of the actual colour of the steak.

## Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	15	29	42	15	1.6

Where the copy of the docket goes	Purpose of the copy of the docket
Kitchen or bar	So they know what is ordered / know what to make
Cashier/register/till	So the bill can be prepared / so that all items are charged
With the waiter (e.g. in docket book or waiter's side of pass / service area)	So the attendant can refer to it / so they have their own copy

Both the 'where' and 'purpose' responses needed to be correct to achieve a mark.

Students generally recognised that the kitchen and waiter need a copy of the written docket but often struggled to acknowledge the billing process and did not mention the cashier/register/till.

## Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	3	4	11	18	18	17	134	7	5	3	1	4.4

Two responses were required for each service step.

Step	Example
Deliver the drinks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check drinks for accuracy/presentation</li> <li>• Use drink tray</li> <li>• Serve drinks from right</li> <li>• Serve in a clockwise direction</li> <li>• Announce the name of the drink when serving / serve to the correct customer</li> <li>• Handle glasses by stem or base</li> </ul>
Take the food order.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe specials</li> <li>• Offer suggestions</li> <li>• Answer questions</li> <li>• Use cover (position) numbers</li> <li>• Start with cover one</li> <li>• Separate mains and entrees</li> <li>• Note any modifications or special requirements / allergies / dietary requirements</li> <li>• Read back order</li> <li>• Serve in a clockwise direction</li> <li>• Remove the menus after order taken</li> <li>• Use correct dish abbreviations</li> </ul>
Deliver the food.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announce the name of the dish</li> <li>• Three or four plate carry (carry using a professional technique)</li> <li>• Deliver the dish to the correct cover / pick up meals in correct order</li> <li>• Check condiments / side dishes</li> <li>• Place meal with main component in front of customer</li> <li>• Serve from the right</li> <li>• Serve in a clockwise direction</li> </ul>
Present the bill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use bill folder / service plate</li> <li>• Double-check for accuracy</li> <li>• Present to the host / person who requested the bill, or place in centre of table</li> <li>• Provide feedback forms</li> <li>• Be alert to non-verbal signals that they are ready to leave</li> </ul>
Farewell the guests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pull out chairs</li> <li>• Retrieve belongings (e.g. coats/umbrellas)</li> <li>• Ask if you can call a cab or Uber</li> <li>• Walk them to door / open door / thank them for their patronage / invite them to return</li> <li>• Say goodbye / good afternoon / good evening in a warm and friendly way (have a nice day or smile)</li> <li>• Use their name if you know it</li> <li>• (Removing the tablecloth or packing up tables were not accepted)</li> </ul>

Responses had to directly relate to the practical task in question and what is said and done to achieve a professional standard. Answers that were not directly related to the step listed were not accepted. There was

flexibility allowed as to which section the response was listed as long as there were no repeated answers. One-word answers were not accepted.

## Question 7a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	33	67	0.7

When completing the docket, the cover numbers are written on the right-hand side so the waiter knows which cover had which meal and can place the meals in front of the correct person, or so the cover numbers are separated from the quantities of items ordered to avoid confusion when the chef reads the docket.

Students had good knowledge of the reasoning behind writing the covers numbers on the right-hand side of the docket.

## Question 7b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	9	20	42	27	2.8

Correct responses included:

- changes/alterations (including omissions or additions)
- specific instructions (e.g. sauce to the side or sunny side up)
- degree of cooking (e.g. steak medium)
- side dishes / accompaniments (not condiments)
- dietary requirement / allergy / intolerance
- portion sizes / entrée or main course / line to separate courses
- recording 'no entrée' or 'no main' when not ordered by guest.

Overall, this question was well handled. Students needed to focus on four distinctly different items that could be recorded on the docket. Better responses included an example to add clarity to the response.

## Question 7c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	26	12	15	24	23	2.1

Responses could include details as follows:

- Table number
  - used to identify which table the meal should be taken to
- Number of covers
  - cross-check the number of meals ordered / to be delivered to number of people at the table
  - restaurant tally for total covers for service period
- Time of order
  - it can be seen what time the order was taken – so they can check ordering time in case of delays / monitor any delays
  - can be used to ensure each table's meals are prepared in the order they were received by the kitchen
  - can determine/analyse busy periods (e.g. for staffing/rostering)

- Waiter name
  - if there are any queries/questions from kitchen, chef knows which waiter to ask
  - determine how many covers each waiter served
  - so that the appropriate waiter can be called when meals are ready.

Responses that lacked clarity did not clearly link each of the docket items (table number, number of covers, time of order and waiter's name) to the ways these are used by the restaurant. It was necessary for students to provide one response for each item of information.

## Question 8a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	6	43	44	8	1.5

Correct responses included:

- make an offer – offer or present the menu / ask if they would like anything to eat
- make a suggestion – make a specific suggestion / suggest sharing menu / wine and food matches
- entices – use suggestive selling techniques / appealing language / detailed descriptions/benefits of sharing.

Most students were able to describe ways to entice customers by describing dishes but some forgot to simply make an offer to the customer (e.g. by providing them with a menu or asking if they would like to order some food).

## Question 8b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	1	4	13	23	25	34	3.7

Menu item	Dietary requirement		
	Gluten intolerant	Nut allergy	Vegetarian
mini-burgers	x		
skewers		x	
Indian vegetarian platter	x		
Asian tastes*		X	X
bruschetta	x		

\*Nut allergy and vegetarian were both accepted. Students may have selected either or both of these.

This question was very well handled. Some responses included extra crosses, which meant that they did not receive a mark as the intended answer was not obvious.

## Question 8c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	16	9	34	41	2.0



Correct responses included:

- tacos – serve cheese and sour cream to the side or remove cheese and sour cream
- burgers – remove cheese
- fries – with no tzatziki
- Indian platter – remove yoghurt or serve to the side
- bruschetta – do not select the feta and mint option.

This question was well handled. Most students were able to recognise that lactose intolerance refers to dairy products and identify which items should be removed to make the dish suitable for a guest with this condition. Some students did not recognise that there were two ingredients containing lactose in the tacos (cheese and sour cream).

Where students did not achieve full marks, this was often due to not identifying which menu items the ingredients were removed from.

## Question 8d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	11	47	34	8	1.4

Correct responses included:

- at the pass – check that dishes are ready / well presented, for the correct table and what was ordered / where it is going
- dietary requirement (vegetarian) – check this has been accommodated
- check table – check the table to ensure there is space for share plates / clear table to make room
- cutlery/plates/napkins – provide side plates and fork/cutlery and napkins for each guest
- assistance – ask if they require anything else (e.g. more drinks).

One mark was awarded for any correct response from the categories above. Students needed to extend their response by focusing on three different things that need to be completed. Students often focused on only one area, such as checking meals at the pass, setting the table or accommodating dietary requirements.

## Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	4	40	56	1.5

One mark was awarded for checking and confirming the delay

- double-check waiter docket / system entry to confirm number of meals, and
- clarify/check with the chef at the pass that table two is ready, and/or
- confirm if there is a delay with one meal, and/or
- ask what the length of delay will be.

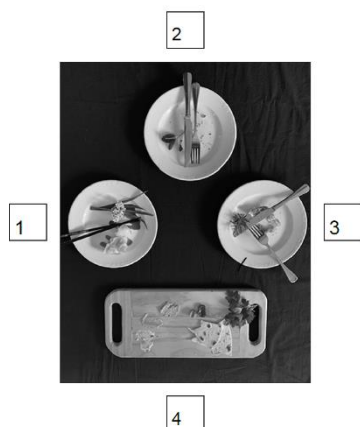
One mark was awarded for describing the next appropriate step. This step should relate to customer service:

- deliver the three meals to table, apologise and inform customer of expected length of delay, or
- wait for all four meals to be ready to deliver to table at same time (must refer to waiting only if the delay is expected to be short).

In addition to checking with the chef about the delay, responses should also address customer service, including apologising and ensuring the customer is informed about the length of the delay.

## Question 10a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	57	43	0.4



In both casual and formal environments, the clearing of plates should be done professionally and in one direction. Standard practice is to move clockwise around the table, using a two-plate method whereby cutlery and scraps are positioned on a plate in the non-dominant hand and subsequent plates are stacked on the forearm. In this instance, the board should be collected last (therefore labelled cover #4) as it cannot be easily stacked due to its different size and shape.

## Question 10b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	48	23	29	0.8

One mark was awarded for describing that the plates should be cleared first. Students needed to explain that because they are the same size and shape, they can be stacked more easily in the non-dominant hand.

The second mark was awarded for explaining that the board should be collected last with an explanation of why (e.g. it is heavy / awkward size or shape / can't be stacked / easier or safer to carry in other hand).

The industry standard for clearing is clockwise, and grouping items together that can be easily stacked is standard practice. This is why it is appropriate to clear the three same-sized plates first. Heavier items that are more difficult to collect and carry should be carried in the other hand or collected separately for safety.

Stacking plates on top of the board does not display an understanding of professional clearing techniques.

## Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	37	34	29	0.9

To achieve full marks, students needed to define what a blend is: the mixing of beans from different origin or a mix of different types of beans, and describe how the blend affects the final espresso by explaining that the

blend can affect the characteristics such as flavour/aroma/crema/viscosity of the espresso shot (the response must refer to at least one of these).

Most students identified sensory characteristics of different blends of coffee, but not every response clearly explained what a blend is.

## Question 12

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	12	35	34	20	1.6

Correct responses included:

- the grind size of the beans is too fine
- stale beans
- too much ground coffee in filter basket
- espresso may be over-extracted
- espresso may be tamped too firmly/hard
- machine not cleaned properly (e.g. chemical residue from backflushing, or spent coffee from previous extraction)
- issues related to water temp/pressure.

Responses needed to be specific (e.g. when referring to grind size, specify that the grind was 'too fine' and not use a general term like 'inappropriate' grind size).

## Question 13

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	36	33	30	0.9

One mark was awarded for stating that the barista should use a double filter basket.

The second mark was awarded for stating at least one of the below:

- 14–18 g coffee (range permitted) / a double dose / two shots of coffee to make a strong espresso
- a double filter basket is used to create two espresso shots with strong flavour (e.g. double / doppio ristretto)
- a double filter basket will ensure the correct amount of ground coffee is used – must say amount (grams) or double dose to produce a strong espresso.

Incorrect responses referred to the 'normal' basket or to the group handle. Students should state relevant measurements (e.g. a double dose or 14 g of ground coffee produces an espresso that is strong in flavour). Further descriptions, such as stating that the latte glass sits under both spouts, also assists in providing a clear 'visual' response that demonstrates understanding.

## Question 14

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	5	7	9	16	17	15	14	11	7	4.3

Name of drink	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
Latte	30 mL espresso	topped with textured milk	1 cm thick dense foam

Name of drink	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
long black	hot water	30 or 60 mL espresso	none
cappuccino	1/3 espresso	1/3 textured milk	1/3 thick dense foam
piccolo latte	15–30 mL espresso or ristretto	Topped with textured milk	layer of thick dense foam (measurement not essential)
macchiato (short or long)	30 mL espresso	dash (stain) hot or cold milk	optional dollop of foam

Points to note:

- Components 1 and 2 of the long black were often in the incorrect order. The 30 or 60 mL of espresso are floated over the hot water to ensure the crema does not break.
- Most students were familiar with the name 'cappuccino' and that it contains 1/3 thick dense foam.
- Piccolo latte was well handled. Some students said 'dollop' of foam. This is not accurate and relates more directly to a macchiato, not a latte.
- Macchiato, short, long or macchiato on its own were accepted.
- It is important to refer to espresso (not simply coffee).
- Students were required to say either thick or dense foam (as given in the example) and must not refer to the foam as 'froth'.
- It is important to be aware of the grams of coffee required and the volume of the pour in millilitres (mL), which is preferable to referring to 'shots' of coffee.

## Question 15

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	8	20	17	37	0	17	2.5

Clean exterior.	5. Non-abrasive surface cleaner
Clean interior.	2. Descaling chemical
Clean filter baskets.	3. Rinsing and scouring
Clean drip tray.	1. Drain and rinse
Clean shower screen.	4. Group head cleaning brush

Not all responses to this question demonstrated familiarity with cleaning processes related to the espresso machine.

## Question 16

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	23	27	28	25	1.5

Examples of correct responses are as follows.

Type of tisane	Example
bark	cassia (cinnamon), slippery elm, pine-bark, cherry-bark, willow-bark, oak
flower	camomile, jasmine, rose, geranium, chrysanthemum, dandelion, elderberry, hibiscus, rosehip
fruit	lemon, orange, blackcurrant, raspberry, apple, pear, peach
leaf	peppermint, spearmint, mint, raspberry leaf, lemon balm, rosemary, lemongrass
root	ginger, licorice, dandelion root
seed	anise/aniseed, caraway, fennel

Where responses did not achieve full marks, it was generally because they gave examples of teas rather than tisanes (e.g. green tea or chai). Tisanes do not contain leaves from the *Camellia sinensis* plant.

## Question 17

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	3	2	6	34	56	3.4

Types of financial transactions include:

- electronic funds transfer at point of sale / EFTPOS / EFT (includes debit cards)
- cash payments
- credit cards
- cheques / travellers cheques
- advance payments
- vouchers / coupons / gift cards
- charge back (to room or company).

Most students handled this question very well, demonstrating strong knowledge of the types of transactions used by customers.

## Question 18

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	7	13	21	37	23	2.6

Regarding security of the cash (for two marks), replies needed to include any two of:

- seek assistance from the manager or a colleague
- do not leave the open till unattended
- remove the cash till and ensure it is placed in a safe and secure place out of reach/sight of the customers
- remove all the large notes
- fix the till or arrange for someone to fix the till.

For continued high level of service to customers (for two marks):

- apologise to the customers in line
- arrange for a colleague to continue to assist customers with payment (e.g. another register)
- process card payments (EFTPOS and credit cards) / ask for a different payment method.

Students were aware of the importance of not leaving the till unattended, asking a colleague for assistance, apologising to customers and offering other payment methods. Student responses were polite and focused on the customer and the security of the cash, which was very positive.

Most students handled this question very well.

## Question 19

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	7	17	35	27	11	4	2.3

Correct responses included:

- apologise and respond – advise the customer what you will do to fix the problem or give options for resolution (e.g. say sorry and tell them you will get another steak cooked to their liking / ask if they would like the same dish ordered or want an alternative)
- advise the kitchen of the error and order a replacement meal
- report to the supervisor (provide approved compensation e.g. drink, bread)
- keep customer informed about progress
- serve the meal and follow up (e.g. check satisfaction / check nothing else required).

Students should be aware of how to fix certain common customer complaints and problems and be specific in their response. Not all responses communicated all the steps necessary to resolve a customer complaint or issue.

It was necessary to apologise and acknowledge/respond for one mark.

Before offering compensation, it is necessary to obtain authorisation from the manager.

The customer should always be informed about how the situation is being dealt with and any progress updates.

When answering this type of question, students should ask themselves: How exactly do I resolve the problem? What would I actually say and do?