



2006 VCE VET Hospitality Food and Beverage GA: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

The VCE VET Hospitality (Operations) Food and Beverage examination is based on the following three units of competence:

- THHBFB03B Provide food and beverage service (110 hours)
- THHBFB10B Prepare and serve non-alcoholic beverages (15 hours)
- THHBFB02B Provide a link between kitchen and service areas (10 hours).

Overall, students in 2006 scored slightly better than in previous years; however, a clear exception was questions relating to 'THHBFB02B Provide a link between kitchen and service areas', which was examined for the second year. The responses to the 2006 paper for Section A Questions 15 and 26 and Section B Question 15d. indicated a poor understanding of the key responsibilities of the food runner. It is important for students to have an understanding of this service position.

Most students demonstrated a sound knowledge of food and customer service, ordering procedures, sequence of service and the skills required to work in the front of house environment. An exception to this was Section B, Question 15c., in which students displayed a poor understanding of the cutlery adjustments (set and removed) for specific orders.

It was disappointing to see the low scores on questions related to non-alcoholic beverages. Often the responses showed a lack of understanding of common beverages, such as to how to make and serve a pot of tea or iced chocolate.

In the 2006 examination there was a focus on questions that required students to apply their knowledge to a particular scenario and explain how the practical skills learnt in training should apply to real industry situations. Some students found this challenging but they should be commended for attempting to answer the question. Often students were unable to express their responses succinctly and/or their answers did not address the question, resulting in lower marks.

Students need to be able to recognise the differences between 'list', 'describe' and 'explain' when answering a question. For example, Question 17 of Section B asked students to explain the term 'frappe'. Often the responses given were only one or two words, which is insufficient detail. Students need to be prepared to develop further detail in their answers and should be encouraged to use industry terminology and practiced techniques that reflect professional industry practice.

Students are encouraged to follow the instructions given in the question. Where they were asked to provide a certain amount of information, any additional information given was not marked. For example, if a student was asked to identify three points and gave four points, only the first three points were assessed; the additional point was not taken into consideration, even if correct. Therefore, if students think of another response after they have already written down the required number of points, they should cross out what they consider to be the weakest point and replace it with the better response.

When asked for a number of pieces of information, students who gave two responses that meant the same thing did not gain a mark for both. In this case the points were combined and one mark was given (if appropriate) for the two similar responses.



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	8	9	82	1	
2	0	91	5	3	
3	95	1	1	2	
4	11	80	7	1	
5	6	6	84	4	
6	2	66	8	24	
7	4	17	53	25	Detergent (option B) is the correct chemical to use when cleaning equipment used to serve food, and it should be thoroughly rinsed after cleaning. Degreaser (option D) is a heavy duty chemical that is not food safe and is often used to clean floors and baked on cooking equipment such as stovetops.
8	17	1	4	77	
9	0	3	95	2	
10	19	4	72	5	
11	6	1	4	90	
12	60	13	18	8	
13	10	66	18	5	Mustard (option B) was the correct answer as this is offered to guests to accompany menu items such as grilled steak to add relish to the dish. Black pepper (option C) is offered as a seasoning.
14	83	13	1	2	
15	62	34	1	2	Option A was the correct response. An oyster fork (option B) is only required when serving oysters, not mussels.
16	2	47	36	16	Option B was the correct response; the entree plate is required and a small knife is used by the guest to portion or spread the cheese onto crackers or bread.
17	4	2	91	3	
18	2	11	86	1	
19	68	5	6	21	Option A, chamomile, is the only example of a herbal flower. All other teas are variations of black leaf fermented teas.
20	68	4	14	14	Option A was the correct response. Biscotti are small 'twice cooked' little biscuits offered with coffee.
21	13	7	75	6	
22	91	2	1	6	
23	3	57	11	29	Option B was the correct response as there is a space above the main fork and not the main knife area (due to the glassware). This placement should also align with the fork, allowing the guest to eat directly from the bowl if desired.
24	91	2	3	4	
25	0	0	0	100	
26	11	23	10	57	The main responsibilities of the food runner are running the food from the kitchen and cleaning service areas. This role is principally based in the kitchen and not on the restaurant floor, therefore option D was the correct response.
27	0	96	1	3	
28	57	0	0	42	Option D was the most appropriate response as final adjustments to the position of chairs and tables are made when setting the table.

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Section B – Short answer questions

The following answers are based on the marking guide used by assessors when marking the exam papers. Please note that for some questions, not all possible answers have been listed.

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	1	4	32	63	2.6

Cutlery should be checked prior to service to ensure it is:

- thoroughly clean
- polished/free from watermarks and finger prints
- in good condition/not scratched
- appropriate for use with the menu
- of sufficient quantity for service requirements
- matching
- correctly positioned on the table

Students generally provided good responses to this question and scored well. Students who referred to the same indicator more than once, for example 'polished' and 'no fingerprints', scored only one mark for both responses. No marks were given for responses such as 'not chipped' or 'cracked' as this is not relevant to cutlery.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	36	11	26	21	6	1.5

Description of the correct technique includes:

- hold the base of the glass with the corner of the cloth
- invert the glass over a bowl of steaming hot water until fogged
- gently push part of the cloth into the centre of the glass to the bottom
- holding the cloth on both the inside and outside at the same time twist to wipe and polish
- the glass should be held up to the light to examine for marks when finishing this task.

To gain full marks students needed to describe the technique of polishing a champagne glass with some detail. The information required included fogging the glass and polishing all parts of the glass correctly to remove any remaining marks. Responses that reflected incorrect procedures such as washing the glass, or dipping the glass or the cloth into the water did not gain any marks. Checking for fingerprints, cracks or chips on the glass was not relevant to this question.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	4	2	22	10	63	3.3

Feature	Reason
flat (low heel)	foot/shoe has more contact on the floor
non slip	often the floors in hospitality establishments can be wet or slippery
closed in or covered toe	to protect toes from dropped objects or hot liquids
supportive/in good condition	to prevent varicose veins and support the foot and back (orthopaedic inserts)
not open at the heel	secure on the foot
leather or similar material	protect the foot from dropped objects or hot liquids

The safety factor and the reason in the response needed to match to gain full marks when responding to this question.

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Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	12	61	25	3	1.2

Advantages of the envelope fold include:

- quicker to fold
- presentation – minimal handling, so less creasing
- more hygienic due to minimal handling
- practical for storage – pre-folded napkins can be stored flat when done in bulk
- quicker to set on the table/distribute in bulk.

Many students found this question difficult. Often this was due to a lack of knowledge about napkin handling and the context of its use. Responses that related to a personal preference, such as ‘the fan is an old fashioned style and not suitable’ or ‘easier for the guest to unfold’, did not gain a mark. One word responses such as ‘quicker’ did not provide sufficient information to score a mark.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	5	13	24	28	21	9	2.8

Correct responses included:

- welcome the guest (greet/acknowledge)
- confirm their booking/reservation
- escort guests to their allocated table or pre-dinner drink area
- seat and lap the guest
- offer a pre-dinner drink/water/beverage list
- inform the waiter in that section that guests have been seated.

The customer should always be the first priority for service staff in any role within the hospitality industry. Within a restaurant, effective teamwork is essential for professional service and often this requires assisting those who are under pressure. This question challenged students’ understanding of customer service and measured their knowledge of the sequence of tasks that service staff are expected to perform when working in a restaurant environment.

Some student responses noted the importance of staying at the bar to fulfil their role and considered that attending to the customers was not part of their responsibilities. Though this has some merit, it was not given any marks as it did not ensure that the customers were not left waiting, which was the focus of the question.

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	2	4	15	32	32	13	2	3.4

Correct responses included:

- ensure all tables are clear, including linen, crockery, cutlery, cruets, decorations and advertising, and reposition chairs
- make sure all service equipment is turned off; for example, heating and music
- re-stock waiters’ stations (clean waiters’ station, clean/wipe menus, polish cutlery and refill cruets)
- re-set tables for next service/crumb chairs
- reposition tables according to the floor plan, including store excess tables and chairs
- collect and sort dirty linen and make ready for collection
- specific tasks as per the cleaning schedule; for example, vacuum/clean toilets/floors/stack chairs up
- turn off or collect signage/clean blackboards
- store or clean table decorations; for example, candles and vases
- set up for next meal service; for example, menus and equipment
- ensure closing/security routine is completed/prepare handover information for the next shift.

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Many students confidently gave details of end of service tasks which are often incorporated into key procedures at the end of an evening shift. Some students found it difficult to conceptualise their experience and identify 'big picture' tasks more relevant to closing the establishment at the end of the day. No marks were given for responses relating to cashiering, debriefing or tasks specifically related to the bar, kitchen or coffee station.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	22	21	34	23	1.6

Techniques for garnishing a non-alcoholic cocktail are:

- frosting
- rim – side garnish with sliced fruit
- sunken – dropped/sinking fruit
- floating – including dusting with powder or decorative iceblocks
- use of syrup or honey on the inside of the glass.

Often responses were not written well and did not adequately describe the technique or method to gain a mark. Frequently the description related to a decoration (a straw, umbrella or toy) and not a garnish, which did not score a mark.

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	13	26	38	19	3	1.8

The garnish should be:

- an appropriate product to match with the beverage contents/glassware
- prepared hygienically
- secure on the glass
- appropriate in size
- fresh (of good quality)
- well presented (size, colour, texture, no pips)
- consistent for service/according to standard recipes.

Students displayed some difficulty when identifying important considerations when garnishing a cold beverage. Common responses that related to the garnish being 'quick to make' or 'not hot' did not score a mark.

Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	9	9	16	25	24	13	3	3.0

Correct responses included:

- task allocation for waiting staff
- menu information
- beverage information
- occasion/purpose of the function (names of bride and groom/VIPS)
- running sheet (time of arrival/departure/speeches or set schedule/duration)
- any guests with special requirements – menu or service
- list of tasks still to be completed – mise en place/ambience/floor plan
- number of guests expected for the evening
- reset information.

Many students were not familiar with the service requirements of a cocktail party even though these are quite similar to restaurant service. A pre-service briefing is important to ensure all service staff know the information required for the service period.

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Many students focused their responses on tasks regularly performed with restaurant table service or details pertaining to responsible service of alcohol which did not score any marks.

Question 10

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	36	24	21	19	1.2

Appropriate responses were considered under the following three headings.

- unsure of correct response to the customer
 - acknowledge the customer's request and inform them of action to check with the management
 - inform the customer of the establishment policy to decline, give a reason and apologise; or
 - inform the customer of the outcome and package the risotto but store in the fridge until the customer is ready to leave and ensure clear instructions from the chef are provided
- decline the customer's request
 - inform the guest that establishment policy does not permit leftover cooked food to be taken home
 - the reason is to act in accordance with food safety legislation
 - apologise for any inconvenience
- fulfil the customer's request (students needed to display familiarity with establishment policy/food safety standards)
 - food is placed in a sealed container and stored in the fridge
 - the establishment provides written instructions clearly outlining procedures to follow to keep the food safe for consumption/management is aware of the action
 - the package and information are given to the guest when leaving

This challenging question was answered quite well by most students. Students needed to be familiar with current industry practice and food safety legislation and articulate their responses with some detail and accuracy to score full marks.

Responses that indicated the request was carried out based solely on the customer request, without following establishment procedures or awareness of food safety practices, were not awarded marks.

Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	12	26	61	1.5

Service task	Order of service (1–10)
Adjust cutlery	3
Serve the main course	4
Take the food order, up to the main course	2
Lap the guest	1
Enquire whether meals are satisfactory	5
Offer additional drinks	6
Brush/crumb down	9
Clear main course plates	7
Clear cruets, butter plate	8
Offer dessert menu	10

Students answered this question quite well and demonstrated a good understanding of the correct order of service.

Question 12

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	10	17	25	46	3.0

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Food Docket			
1	SOD (1)		(1)
1	Soufflé (2)		(2)
1	Crepe (4)		(4)
2	Chicken (1,3)		(1,3)
1	Beef – medium (2)		(2)
1	Lasagne (4)		(4)
1	Cheese (2)		(2)
2	Crumble (3,4)		(3,4)
1	Strudel (1)		(1)
Table No	Waiter	Covers	Time
12	Joe	4	8.45

The person number (in brackets) was accepted in either position shown.

Most students scored well on this question and transferred the details correctly onto the food docket. A common response that did not score marks was to transfer the food order into a grid docket format. The grid docket information is used by the waiter to remember what each guest has ordered and it not acceptable for kitchen orders. Students should ensure when filling out food dockets that all information is transferred correctly. The use of abbreviations was not allocated marks, but students should use key words rather than full menu descriptions when preparing food orders.

Question 13

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	5	27	44	23	1.9

Correct techniques included:

- write the order clearly – acceptable hand-writing/effective transfer of copies
- use correct abbreviations as per the establishment
- clearly note any special customer requirements on the order
- verbally repeat the written order back to the guest
- electronic ordering – cross reference or double check
- enter docket details correctly – complete all details and write in the correct position.

Common responses that did not gain marks included listening to the guest, having a good knowledge of the menu or calling out the food order in the kitchen.

Question 14

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	5	8	23	35	29	2.8

Correct responses included the following.

Collecting drinks from the bar using a tray

- double-check the drink order is correct for the table
- identify drinks for service (cover number)
- check drinks are prepared correctly as ordered
- arrange the drinks so they are balanced on the tray/appropriate for service
- handle glassware by the base or stem
- check cleanliness of tray/ensure a non-slip mat is in place
- handle or hold the tray appropriately

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Serving drinks to the guests using a tray

- hold the tray away from the table behind the guests
- step into the table with bent knees while supporting the tray/maintain balance of tray during placement
- serve the drinks in sequence around the table (anti-clockwise,) serving the host last
- place each drink to the right hand side of the guest/professional etiquette/identify the drink to each guest on placement
- handle glassware by the base or stem.

Student responses indicated a good understanding of professional service procedures when serving or collecting drinks from the bar. No marks were given for responses related to the transportation of drinks on the tray or descriptions of unprofessional practice.

Question 15a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	45	55	0.6

Table d'hote menu

It was disappointing that almost half of the students were unfamiliar with this style of menu and could not answer correctly.

Question 15b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Average
%	5	3	3	5	5	5	8	16	26	24	6.5

A	Side plate	F	Main knife
B	Knife (butter)	G	Entree knife
C	Entree fork	H	*Dessert/Entree fork
D	Main fork	I	*Dessert spoon
E	Serviette	J	Water glass

*Responses for H and I were accepted in either position.

Students generally scored well on this question. Students who did not score full marks often did not appear to have read the question carefully enough or used incorrect cutlery descriptions in their response. The identification of table decorations, wine glasses, cruets or plates was not correct and did not score a mark.

Question 15c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	18	0	26	0	25	0	20	0	10	3.6

Customer	Menu Item	Cutlery required	Cutlery to be removed
1	Soup	Soup spoon	Entrée knife and fork
2	Porterhouse steak	Steak knife	Main knife
3	Fettuccini marinara	Soup/dessertspoon	Entrée knife
4	Risotto	Spoon	Main knife

Students generally seemed unfamiliar with the term 'cutlery adjustments' and did not score well on this question. When a food order has been taken from a guest the waiter is often required to adjust the set cutlery on the table with other cutlery appropriate for the food items selected. Cutlery adjustment entails placing what is required and removing what is no longer needed in each course. Students often neglected to consider what was already set on the table in their response. Some responses indicated a poor understanding of what cutlery is required for the selected menu items.

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Question 15d.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	43	47	10	0.7

Correct answers included preparation of:

- napkins/doily
- underplates/underliners
- mustard selection
- parmesan cheese.

Students often suggested cutlery items, checking crockery or preparing finger bowls, none of which scored marks. Many students were not familiar with the responsibilities of the food runner or the kitchen duties required with the service of these menu items.

Question 16

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	22	39	32	7	1.3

When preparing the linen for collection by the laundry service the linen should be organised so that the:

- wet linen is separated from the dry
- kitchen linen (tea towels) are separated from white cloths, tablecloths and napkins (front of house items)
- linen is all bagged/closed ready for pickup
- linen is placed in the pick up area.

Many students did not score full marks due to a lack of relevant detail in their response. Often students described counting the linen, crumpling tablecloths or labelling the bag, which is a task occasionally required when hiring linen. These were not considered common tasks done in industry when a linen service has been engaged and therefore did not score any marks.

Question 17

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	43	31	19	8	0.9

- bottomless cup: usually refers to a serving of coffee; translates as having an unlimited amount of coffee (usually percolated) for one set price

Common incorrect responses referred to a glass, often without a stem.

- corkage: a fee charged to customers to cover the cost of glassware and service of BYO wine in an establishment

Common incorrect responses related to 'the charge for removing the cork from a bottle'.

- frappe: refers to a beverage that is soft frozen, having been blended with ice, or served over crushed ice

Common incorrect responses included naming a drink as an example, but providing no detail to explain the term.

When explaining common industry terms it is important for students to articulate the information with some detail and accuracy to score a mark. One or two word answers were insufficient.

Question 18

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	8	13	29	48	3.2

Common industry names of the glasses were.

- highball
- old fashioned
- pilsner
- martini/cocktail/jockey.

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Students did very well on this question and many were familiar with at least three out of the four glasses. No marks were given for identifying glasses with non-industry names.

Question 19a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	7	21	39	27	6	2.0

Equipment required for service includes:

- teapot/infuser/plunger
- coaster or under plate
- small pot of hot water
- two cups, saucers and teaspoons
- tea strainer.

Students did not demonstrate acceptable knowledge of how to prepare a pot of tea for service. The question stated the tea was loose leaf, it was to be served unsweetened and the service was for two people. Students frequently neglected to address all of these details in their answers. Often responses included milk and sugar and made reference to using a teabag or neglected to provide an infuser, tea strainer or two cups and saucers for the service.

Question 19b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	23	11	20	29	17	2.1

The correct method is:

- warm the teapot with boiling water then empty
- place a measured amount of loose leaf tea into pot/infuser
- add boiled water to leaves
- cover and allow a few minutes to brew or steep before serving.

Again students did not display a clear understanding of how to make a quality pot of tea and did not score full marks. Responses that suggested the tea being poured into the cups at the station and not at the table by the guests did not score a mark. Students often used terminology incorrectly and suggested leaving the tea to stew or fuse in the pot.

Question 20a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	41	59	0.6

The ingredients required for an iced chocolate are:

- cold milk
- chocolate syrup
- ice cream.

This question proved challenging for students to score full marks. Cream and ice, though sometimes served in an iced chocolate, are optional, 'non traditional' garnishes rather than essential ingredients and did not score a mark. Chocolate powder was not accepted unless it was indicated in the response that it was mixed with hot water to form a syrup.

Question 20b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	10	17	39	35	2.0

Service requirements are:

- glass (clean and chilled) – milkshake, colada or hiball
- straw
- under plate
- serviette
- long spoon (parfait)

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- chocolate powder, syrup or chocolate shavings.

No marks were given for 'spoon', 'big glass', 'mug', or 'sugar'.

Question 20c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	29	13	18	33	6	1.7

The correct method of preparation includes:

- select or chill a clean, cold glass
- place chocolate syrup into glass and top with cold milk
- add a scoop of ice cream
- garnish, decorate and serve.

Unfortunately many students described the method of making a chocolate milkshake and not an iced chocolate and therefore did not score full marks.