

2020 VCE Industry and Enterprise examination report

General comments

In 2020 the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority produced an examination based on the *VCE Industry and Enterprise Adjusted Study Design for 2020 only*.

Several students wrote consistently high-quality responses throughout the examination. Most responses to definition and work-related skills questions were accurate, with the required level of detail. Many students struggled with extended response questions, writing brief and general responses that did not show the depth of understanding required. A number of students did not answer all questions in the examination.

Advice for students

- Students should ensure they use all reading time effectively. This time may be used to determine the order in which to answer questions, check all elements of questions and plan the extended response.
- Use the number of marks per question and the space provided as a guide to the time to be devoted to a question and the length of the response.
- Students need to be able to address the specific task words in each question. Students are reminded to identify these from the skills section of the study design.
- Students should ensure they express their content knowledge explicitly, as assessors cannot infer knowledge. This means practising writing responses in a clear and precise manner with the required level of detail.
- If a question asks for a certain number of points (for example, Question 2a.) students should provide no more than the number of points requested, as additional points cannot be awarded marks.
- Students are expected to paragraph extended responses: for example, discuss and evaluate questions.
- If students continue an answer in the extra space provided at the end of the question booklet, clear indication must be made on both pages that this has been done. Where a response is continued within the extra space, the question number must be provided at the beginning of the continuation. Similarly, it must be clearly indicated on the original page that the response will be continued within the extra space at the end of the booklet.
- Where questions include stimulus materials, students should reference these in their responses.
- Students should attempt all questions as marks are not deducted for incorrect answers.

Specific information

Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what 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	3	Average
%	23	20	25	32	1.7

To be awarded full marks for this question, students needed to apply knowledge of functional and numerical flexibility within a compare framework. Students were required to explicitly identify and outline similarities and differences between the two types of flexibility. A significant number of students did not explicitly compare functional and numerical flexibility, instead providing outlines of the meaning of the two terms, sometimes linked by words such as 'whereas' or 'however'. These responses could not be awarded full marks.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

There are a number of differences between functional and numerical flexibility. One of these is that functional flexibility focuses on flexibility related to the tasks or functions that the employees perform, for example multi-tasking, while numerical flexibility focuses on the number of workers and the conditions of their work, for example the use of casual employees.

Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	5	16	24	33	12	11	2.6

High-scoring responses demonstrated a knowledge of both flexible work arrangements in a specific work setting and the nature of an enterprise culture. Many students did not achieve full marks because they did not expressly link the discussion of flexible work arrangements to development of an enterprise culture.

The following is an extract from a high-scoring response.

The drafting firm where I completed my work placement proactively meets challenges, which is at the core of enterprise culture, by using a variety of flexible work arrangements. An example is the use of Trello and Jira online project management tools. These technologies have created opportunities to complete project requirements in a shorter period of time and to solve problems more quickly. Staff use shared office 365 documents to work collaboratively together. They no longer have to send the documents to each other via email. They can simultaneously work on the same documents together and keep a record of who has done the alterations. They can allocate and work on those tasks independently, but still on the same document. This example of flexible work arrangements posed a number of challenges including that staff needed to be trained and that the cost of some of the tools was relatively high for a small firm.

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	43	29	27	0.8

To be awarded full marks for this question, students needed to demonstrate a knowledge of quality assurance and its supporting principles. A number of students wrote about quality in general or quality control and not specifically about quality assurance. These responses could not be awarded any marks as they did not address the question being asked.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Quality Assurance principles are based on ISO 9001 which is an externally certified preventive quality process which aims to ensure that the product or service is free from defects. A key principle is that all employees are aware of their roles in the process. This means that they have sufficient training to be able to carry out their role at a high level. In addition employees will be recognised for high levels of effort and will be motivated to undertake any required training.

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	12	15	38	36	2.0

While the majority of students could identify two work-related skills, many were unable to link these to the process of achieving quality assurance and subsequently justify how each skill would assist the process. Students who did not score well simply identified and then described two work-related skills.

The following is an extract from a high-scoring response.

Two work related skills that would assist employees to attain quality assurance are communication skills and showing initiative. Through communication skills, the employees would be able to discuss any defects they might find in the process they can be rectified by both the employees and management to maintain their quality assurance. In addition, employees with highly developed communication skills could assist by suggesting clear and concise wording to communicate in writing each step of the process.

Question 2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	22	16	26	22	14	1.9

To be awarded full marks, students needed to identify and explain an enterprising response to the management of quality and link it to a workplace with which they were familiar. A common issue was a failure to link the response to a specific workplace or industry, which could have been either an example studied in class or a work placement. The selection of a quality management approach that was not enterprising was another issue.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

An enterprising response to quality management in my workplace, a café called Peaches, was the owner's decision to call a staff meeting and outline a new process for improving the quality of food sold at the café through concentrating on delivering a better product to customers with a consistent high standard of service. She outlined a process where any employee could make suggestions to change the menu items, including where to source sustainable, quality ingredients to use in making the meals and snacks served in the café and for takeaway. She set up a folder where we could write suggestions as well as encouraging us to come speak to her at any time, we had an idea. Staff embraced this approach and made a number of suggestions especially about possible menu items and new suppliers. We also began to give each other feedback about interactions with customers and each other. This new approach has been in place for about four months and we have sourced fresh ingredients from a number of different places and introduced new menu items that has seen an increase in the number of people coming into the café and in turn has increased output of quality products, which the customers enjoy.

Question 3a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	18	40	42	1.2

Most students handled this question well and were able to demonstrate an understanding of the essential features of an enterprise culture.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

An enterprise culture is a proactive way of doing things and meeting challenges in a workplace or industry. All internal stakeholders in the workplace or industry will display the behaviours that contribute to and elevate the level of proactive thinking and action. Behaviours that are typically seen in a workplace or industry that is classified as enterprising include adaptability, technological skill, high levels of teamwork, problem solving and distributed leadership.

Question 3b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	17	13	12	30	13	11	5	2.6

To be awarded full marks, students needed to be able to apply their understanding of enterprise culture to a specific community or work setting and explore the strengths and challenges of that location's development of an enterprise culture, before coming to an overall conclusion, making a value judgment about the extent to which the firm has developed an enterprise culture. A number of high-scoring responses selected work settings that did not demonstrate many features of an enterprise culture. These responses demonstrated an understanding of how the selected work setting had not developed an enterprise culture. Lower scoring responses made a limited number of points, which were frequently not developed and did not evaluate the overall development of an enterprise culture.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

A workplace I am familiar with is our local charity shop. I feel that it is an enterprise culture as it displays many of the characteristics of an enterprise culture. All staff, paid and volunteer, work hard to create a work environment that promotes initiative, teamwork and the ability to solve problems. Staff show adaptability by working in various areas of the shop including cleaning, sorting donations, stocking shelves and serving customers. Management support us by providing encouragement and training. For example, we are trained to record sales in daily tally sheets, tag goods for sale and answer the telephone. In addition, we are encouraged to work to solve problems, for example keeping small children amused as their mothers shop. Management holds weekly team meetings where everyone is encouraged to contribute ideas honestly. There is a high level of trust assisting staff to feel important and connected to the workplace and each other. There is opportunity to ask questions, make suggestions, seek, and give feedback. Most importantly their ideas are not only listened to but also acted on. The workplace is very inclusive especially of young unskilled workers and those with disabilities. These workers were encouraged to take on leadership roles. In essence the team works in a united and collaborative way. My investigation highlighted only one negative experience, when a new shift manager worked while the manager was on leave. The new manager was very bossy and did not like to be told anything. Employees did not know what to do about this and some of the disabled people did not come to work until the regular manager came back from holidays. One employee I interviewed wanted to tell the manager and suggest that the replacement manager get some training on how to handle people but felt that it was not appropriate to do this. Overall, I think that my workplace is an enterprising culture, although I feel there is more to be addressed in the area of taking on leadership roles.

Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	2	33	65	1.6

Students generally handled this question well, with most writing responses that demonstrated precise and accurate definitions of teamwork.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Teamwork is the collaborative work of a group of people to achieve a common goal. It is often associated with the concept of synergy. In a workplace with high levels of teamwork, each employee will typically have a clear and defined role and will have access to training to develop knowledge and skills. In addition, employees will feel connected to each other so that high levels of collaboration and effective communication will be visible.

Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	4	21	23	34	18	2.4

In order to achieve full marks, students were required to break down specific aspects of teamwork and apply these to the process of developing an enterprise culture. Writing only about teamwork in general, without making the required specific links to developing an enterprise culture, was a common feature of lower scoring responses.

The following is an extract from a high-scoring response.

A common feature of an enterprise culture is a high level of teamwork where employees display high levels of a range of work-related skills and capabilities as they work together to achieve goals. Teamwork acts as a springboard to develop higher levels of communication, adaptability and other enterprising capabilities that will assist the development and sustainability of an enterprise culture in the workplace. Flexibility initiative

Question 5a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	20	45	35	1.1

Most responses demonstrated some knowledge of work-related skills. Responses that did not score well were limited to an identification and outline of specific work-related skills and did not provide an accurate general definition. Work-related skills include a large number of skills considered essential for participation in the workforce and life in general. These skills are developed in a number of settings, including formal and informal education as well as a range of personal and work settings, and are frequently transferable.

Question 5b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	3	8	31	31	27	2.7

Generally, students handled this question well. Low-scoring responses either omitted one work-related skill or showed how a worker would demonstrate the skill rather than describing it.

The following is an excerpt from a high-scoring response.

Two work-related skills are adaptability and the ability to learn and develop skills and knowledge. Adaptability is a capability that involves flexibility, accepting challenge, developing industry specific competencies and accepting challenge. The ability to learn and develop skills and knowledge is linked to this and involves ongoing learning and openness to learning. It includes the acquisition of new skills like a professional vocabulary.

Question 5c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	12	16	28	25	19	2.2

This question required students to explore the relationship between work-related skills and enterprise culture, using at least one example to illustrate that relationship. Students who scored highly made explicit causal links between the two concepts and used a number of examples to support their explanation. Students who did not score well generally limited their responses to a description of the development of work-related skills and did not relate these to the development of an enterprise culture.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

When employees have well-developed work-related skills and are open to ongoing learning they are able to make effective contributions in the workplace to foster the development of an enterprise culture. An example of this was illustrated in a research task that we conducted in class. A manufacturing workplace was not meeting its objectives due to time inefficiencies on the production line and an increase in the number of defects in final products. Management felt that employees did not have the skills to identify defective products. On-site training and regular team meetings, to give employees voice, were introduced to develop work-related skills. This encouraged employees to problem solve and show initiative because they were listened to and had their skill base enhanced. These capabilities can be transferred to other aspects of their work and also improve their relationship with management thereby fostering the development of an enterprise culture.

Question 6a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	12	17	32	20	20	2.2

While the majority of students were able to outline one possible consequence of a reduction in research and development on the creation of an innovative culture, many did not provide a comprehensive definition of the term. Research and development is defined by the OECD as 'creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of humanity, culture and society and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications'. Possible consequences include the reduction in productivity mentioned in the stimulus material, reduced level of innovation, negative impact on international competitiveness and reduction in sales. Several low-scoring responses outlined more than one

possible consequence, but as only one consequence was specified in the question, only the first consequence was marked.

Question 6b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	29	22	22	26	1.5

This question required students to show an understanding of the similarities and differences between people-based and technology-focused innovation. Many responses did not clearly outline the difference between the two types of innovation. People-based innovation involves responding to the need to change in a creative way so that new ideas and possibilities are explored and used to generate solutions, and at times to create new markets. Examples of this include video streaming and 3D printing. Technology-focused innovation is generally the incremental rearrangement of a previous innovation. Examples include Uber and new versions of smartphones. Some low-scoring responses did not respond accurately to the command term and a comparison was not evident.

Question 6c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	8	18	18	27	12	17	2.7

Students were required to identify an innovation in a specific industry or workplace within the last four years. Relevant examples included PayPal, real-time language translations, augmented reality and vegan/non-dairy product expansion. A significant number of responses identified an earlier innovation that did not appear to fit within the defined time span and therefore could not be accepted. As innovations are constantly being refined, students were required to explain the basis on which they had nominated an innovation if it did not appear to meet the timeline specified in the study design. High-scoring responses usually identified a relevant innovation in a specific workplace or industry, then explored the opportunities and challenges that the application of the innovation presented, using evidence to support the discussion. Responses that did not score well tended to simply describe an innovation.

The following is an extract from a high-scoring response.

Professor Tony Weiss, University of Sydney, invented a surgical glue to be used instead of stitches. The glue, 'MeTro', is made of elastic protein and seals wounds within seconds. It has received a number of awards and has gained worldwide attention for its possible applications in emergency treatment ... The implications for the Medical and Health Care industry are numerous and include changing roles in the operating room and emergency department with wounds involving extensive bleeding, as well as on the battlefield--potentially saving lives and reducing the use of blood transfusions. If trials are successful the gel will not only improve clinical treatment and outcomes but has the strong potential to be a significant export for the industry... The innovation may also be significantly more expensive and may add to the cost of medical treatment and this may exclude some patients from its benefits.

Question 7a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	6	28	65	1.6

Students generally responded well to this question, with the majority able to provide an accurate definition of global trade. Global trade involves transactions in goods and services to markets that extend beyond the borders of an individual country. This includes provision of educational services to overseas students completing studies in Australia, online purchasing and more traditional sales to and from other countries.

Question 7b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	6	18	33	28	15	2.3

The majority of students responded well to this question. To obtain full marks, students needed to outline two changing patterns of trade and make use of the stimulus material. High-scoring responses frequently used relevant statistics to support their outline. Responses that did not score well were very brief and in some cases were limited to only one changing trade pattern.

The following is an extract from a high-scoring response.

In the period 2013 – 2018 Australia's merchandise exports increased, from approximately \$250,000mA to approximately \$320,000mA.. Overall our imports of merchandise showed an increase from \$250,000mA to approximately \$290,000mA.. In 2018 our merchandise exports were dominated by natural resources, coal, iron ore, natural gas, gold and aluminium ores which together accounted for approximately \$205,000mA. These primary products were exported to a range of countries with China purchasing more than double the amount of Australian merchandise goods than the next country which was Japan.

Question 7c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	24	22	54	1.3

The majority of students were able to accurately comment on the influence of the value of the Australian dollar on our trade. To obtain full marks, students needed to state that the value of the Australian dollar has a direct effect on Australian trade and then outline how this occurred.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

When the Australian dollar loses value this makes Australian produced goods and services cheaper when compared with goods and services produced overseas. For example, if the value of the Australian dollar declines tourists visiting Australia will need to change less foreign currency to pay for their meals and hotel rooms in Australia and Australian produced goods will be more attractive to overseas markets.

Question 7d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	24	15	18	19	24	2.0

This question required students to describe two factors influencing Australia's international trade competitiveness. Students wrote about a number of factors, including the value of the Australian dollar, productivity levels, trade agreements, the relative scarcity of our exports, and the policies and actions of government. High-scoring responses provided a precise outline of each factor and were supported with evidence. Responses that did not score well frequently addressed only one factor and generally did not demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the factors selected.

The following is an excerpt from a high-scoring response.

The emergence of free trade agreements in the last twenty years has been a significant factor shaping Australia's international trade competitiveness. Australia currently has 11 FTAs with 18 countries and is negotiating a number of others. These agreements seek to reduce or eliminate barriers to trade and to foster stronger trade ties between participating countries. They contribute to increased economic activity and job creation in Australia as they have opened up new markets and strengthened relationships between countries.

Question 7e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	28	12	22	17	9	12	2.0

This question required students to evaluate the recent strategy of an industry to participate in global trade. High-scoring responses clearly detailed the strategy using evidence to support their comments. In addition, these responses engaged in an evaluation rather than just describing the key features of a strategy. Responses that did not score well generally lacked contextual detail and briefly described a strategy, often not recent, to participate in global trade.

The following is an introduction to a high-scoring response.

In recent years the wine industry has sought to expand its global market. They have devised a number of strategies to assist them including launching new products like organic wines. Australia is now the 6th largest exporter of wine and 60% of our wine production ends up in the export market. In the 12 months to March 2019 wine exports increased by 5% to \$2.78b. Wine exports to China now account for 29% of the Chinese market. A significant increase in volume to USA was achieved in the same period. The industry has faced mixed trading conditions over the period. However, the fall of the Australian dollar and the implementation of free trade agreements with South Korea, Japan and China have benefited the industry's export growth.