



2003 Industry and Enterprise Studies GA 3: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

The 2003 Industry and Enterprise Studies examination paper followed the same format as previous examination papers and was worth a total of 50 marks. Students were required to answer six questions. Questions 1 to 5 formed Section A and students were required to answer all questions for 40 marks. Section B provided three questions from which students had to select one question. The structure of the paper was as follows:

Question	Type	Area of Study/Content	Marks
Section A			
1	Short answer	Technology	6
2	Short answer	Enterprise culture	8
3	Short answer	Change in Australian industry – workplace participants	6
4	Short answer	Change in Australian industry – sustainable resource use	10
5	Short answer	Training and workplace learning	
Section B			
	Choose 1 out of 3 questions		
1	Extended response	Quality	} 10
2	Extended response	Workplace flexibility	
3	Extended response	Training and workplace learning	

Choice of options

In Section B there was a choice of three questions. These questions covered different topics as shown in the table above. Question 2 proved to be the most popular choice (38.7%). This was closely followed by Question 1 (34.7%). Students' choice of question in this section was often determined by their experience in the workplace. Each question in Section B provided excellent scope for students to draw on and use examples from their work placement, and this was evident in many of the responses to questions in this section.

Areas of strength and weakness

Students generally answered more successfully where they were able to provide relevant workplace or industry examples. Students who had a good understanding of current events also did well on the examination. For example, students who had read about the impacts of the 2003 drought were able to use this in answering Question 4 in Section A on sustainable resource use. Students who did well overall were obviously well prepared and were able to draw on a range of examples or industries. These students used the examination time wisely.

Question 3 in Section A presented information about changes in job vacancies in tabulated form. Reading and interpreting statistics is an important skill for students to develop and is particularly relevant in a subject like Industry and Enterprise Studies. Many students were unable to interpret the data correctly, thus affecting the quality of their response to this question.

Advice to students includes:

- being able to define terms correctly; in particular, terms that caused problems were: sustainable resource use, e-commerce, job sharing and job rotation

Understand the meaning of terms, for example:

- enterprise culture is not the same as multiculturalism (Question 2 Section A)
- self-paced learning does not mean doing things whenever you want with no guidelines (Question 5 Section A)
- workplace training is not the same as training (Question 5 Section A).

Generally, students could perform better by paying more careful attention to examination technique. In particular, students should:

- pay careful attention to the marks indicated for each question. The number of marks provides an indication as to how much assessors are expecting students to write. For example, if a question asks you to *'List and explain two reasons that account for the large increase in job vacancies in the trades sector'* and the question is worth four marks, students would be expected to give two reasons and explain each reason with at least two detailed sentences for each reason

- attempt all parts of each question, do not leave questions out, and if not sure try anyway. Marks are not deducted for incorrect answers and assessors are generally looking to award marks
- assume that the assessor knows nothing and, therefore, answer each question as clearly as possible by demonstrating your knowledge as best you can
- develop a clear understanding of the meaning of instructions used in the examination paper such as ‘identify’, ‘describe’ and ‘explain’. In particular, in the 2003 paper several questions asked students to ‘describe the difference between...’. This does not mean give a definition of the two terms. Students need to contrast the finer differences between particular terms in these questions
- write neatly in the examination.

Formula answers

The examination requires students to draw on their own experience from the workplace as well as knowledge about broader Australian industry. Teachers should continue to introduce students to as many case studies and examples as possible. Students should continue to familiarise themselves with current events relating to workplace and industry issues and be prepared to use these in the examination if they provide relevant examples.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section A

Question 1

a

Marks	0	1	2	Average 0.83
%	50	16	34	

Define the term e-commerce. Illustrate your answer with an example.

Electronic Commerce involves computerised buying and selling, both by consumers (B2C) and from business to business (B2B). It is any form of business transaction in which the parties interact electronically rather than by physical exchanges or direct physical contact. Goods can now be bought, sold and paid for using electronic means, especially through the Internet. The general definition of Electronic Commerce includes all transactions using electronic media such as the telephone, fax machine, electronic payment, money transfer systems, electronic data interchange and the Internet. Popular products that may be bought and sold using e-commerce include CDs, books, software/hardware, magazine subscriptions, paying bills over the phone/Internet and travel.

b

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average 2.77
%	15	4	19	11	51	

Identify and describe two technological initiatives in an industry you are familiar with.

Students had to both identify AND describe **two** technological initiatives in an industry they are familiar with. Answers were dependant on the industry to which students were referring. Typical answers included EFTPOS and RF Guns used in the retail industry.

Question 2

a

Marks	0	1	2	Average 0.60
%	59	21	20	

Define the term enterprise culture.

An enterprise culture means that the workplace or industry has a common set of values and behaviours that promotes the development of enterprise concepts. The workplace will, individually and collectively, act on the enterprise qualities like creativity and flexibility to solve problems, create action and manage risk in the organisation.

b

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average 1.57
%	32	17	28	7	16	

The Australian government has been encouraging an enterprise culture. Identify and explain two advantages of developing an enterprise culture in Australian industry.

An industry can be assisted by an enterprise culture in a number of ways. These will all assist the organisations in that industry to achieve their goals effectively and efficiently. When the Karpin Report first outlined the need for an enterprise culture they found enterprise to be the biggest challenge faced by Australian industry. If the industry and the individual workplaces and workers are enterprising they will be able to not only cope with the rapid rate of change but will seize the opportunities in the change. This will allow the industry to operate at a high level and it may gain a comparative advantage and become more internationally competitive. The benefits of this will spread beyond the industry to the whole society enhancing the general quality of life.

Two advantages of developing an enterprise culture are:

- an individual with enterprise skills is not only more marketable, but has more control over their own future. At work these people will have more initiative and be more proactive therefore benefiting the workplace. Personally, as they feel more in control, they will probably be more motivated and therefore more productive
- a workplace with an enterprise culture can achieve goals more efficiently because it is more proactive and can adapt to and manage change quicker and with less stress.

c

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	36	31	33	0.97

How might a workplace encourage the development of an enterprise culture?

A workplace might encourage an enterprise culture in a number of ways. These include:

- Worker selection – the employer could include enterprise attributes in the selection criteria and job description so that they are looking for these qualities in new workers.
- Training and development – they could promote and extend enterprise in workers through the training program in the workplace.
- Teams – If workers are organised in teams and given some control over the task they may increase productivity and synergy may occur. If teams also have planning and evaluation meeting time these benefits will be extended.
- Performance appraisal – attaching some kind of personal or professional reward to displaying these qualities will show workers that the employers value them and make them more likely to display them.
- Research and development – employers need to develop action plans for each individual enterprise quality. Innovation refers to the ability to come up with new ideas. Workers tend to be more likely to do this in a training situation but the workplace also needs to devote resources to the provision of R and D opportunities so they can take advantage of the potential that innovation offers in problem solving and new product generation.

Question 3

a

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	23	45	32	1.09

Describe what the above table says about employment prospects in the professional sector.

The table showed changes in job vacancies from November 2001 to November 2002. For professional occupations there was an overall decline in employment of 13.7 per cent over the year. In particular, employment in marketing and advertising has been worst hit with a massive decline of 69.5 per cent over the year.

b

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	32	21	31	7	9	1.40

List and explain two reasons that account for the large increase in job vacancies in the trades sector.

The table shows that employment in the trades sector has increased 30.7 per cent from November 2001 to November 2002. This general increase could be due to the general change in government policy to encourage employment in trades through Apprenticeships and New Apprenticeships. More opportunities are open to students in the post-compulsory years of schooling to pursue trades through VET in schools and traineeships.

Specific sectors such as the construction industry have benefited from the First Home Buyers Grant, which has seen first home buyers receive a \$10 000 grant from the Federal Government. This has resulted in a boom in the number of new homes being built in the period November 2001 to November 2002.

Question 4

a

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	55	25	20	0.65

Define the term sustainable resource use.

Sustainable resource use refers to a pattern of resource use where consideration of the future availability of the resource is factored in as a variable. Typically we talk of sustainable resource use for natural resources. This might mean only using a certain percentage of the resource or regrowing stocks for the future.

b

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	38	11	14	22	7	8	1.72

Name an industry in which sustainable resource use is a major pressure. Describe and illustrate two ways sustainable resource use is a major pressure in this industry.

The building industry is an example of an industry that has had to confront the issue of sustainability of resources such as timber for constructing and power for light, heating and energy efficiency. A key feature of the pressure is that some consumers have put pressure on builders to use renewable resources, such as timber products, in construction. Changes

in government policy on energy efficiency ratings have also compelled firms to adapt resource use and methods to meet statutory requirements.

c

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	49	20	19	12	0.93

How has the industry responded to the pressure for sustainable resource use?

One part of the response has been for building organisations to move to substitute products so that they consume timber products that are renewable. Some organisations have used this pressure as an opportunity and have devised a marketing strategy based around sustainability. Other sections of the industry have tried to limit their response and have looked on the issue as a threat rather than an opportunity.

Question 5

a

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	4	6	19	32	17	11	11	3.27

Describe the differences between the following types of training:

- **on-the-job training**
- **self-paced learning**
- **mentoring.**

Training in a number of industries occurs both on and off the job. Workplace learning that occurs on the job often happens in an informal, only when needed, situation. On-the-job training provides a ‘hands on’ learning experience, and can fit into an organisation’s normal daily activities. An example of on-the-job training may be when someone wishes to do double-sided photocopying. If they do not know how to do this, they may ask another staff member to show them. On-the-job training may not be accredited, but can be just as important. Self-paced learning involves employees or students working through a set program at their own pace. This means that trainees are not held back by others in the class if they are familiar with the content, or, if they need a little more time to learn the material, they can take it. Therefore, the self-paced learner can speed up or slow down their progression through the course. This allows more flexibility for the learner as they can incorporate their own personal circumstances into their training timetable. Self-paced learning is often computer-based, which means that there is no need to attend regular timetabled ‘lessons’ with a trainer/teacher delivering the material. For example, if I wanted to learn how to touch type, I could do this at my own pace by following the lessons in a specific computer program. Mentoring involves a more experienced staff member taking on the role of a ‘buddy’ for new staff members in an organisation. Mentoring is becoming more and more popular in industry today as the transition to a new workplace is less stressful for the new employee if they feel they have someone they can ask the ‘little’ questions that may not be covered in an induction program. Mentoring can also benefit the mentors. It encourages them to become team players, to give more of themselves in assisting new staff members, and to take on more of a leadership role within an organisation.

For example, when my teacher started at school, they were assigned a mentor. The mentor was a more experienced teacher who assisted my teacher to become ‘used’ to how the school operated, and was a point of contact to answer any questions/help with any issues that may have concerned my teacher.

b

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	11	35	54	1.42

Describe two advantages of workplace training for employees.

Advantages of workplace training for employees include:

- training is performed on the job, so it does not take up any extra time outside the workplace
- skills learnt add to lifelong learning
- training is often done in a team-based working environment which allows trainees to ask questions
- tasks learnt can be applied more quickly and directly in a practical environment.

c

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	16	38	46	1.30

Describe two advantages of workplace training for employers.

Advantages of workplace training for employers include:

- training is performed on the job so employers can monitor and evaluate employees’ performance
- skills taught have direct relevance and application to the workplace, therefore building a more competent workforce
- improved working relationships between managers and staff as they are learning in a team environment.

Section B

Question 1 (Quality)

'Quality refers to systems or processes that aim to continually satisfy customers' requirements.'

a

Name an industry you are familiar with and describe the difference between an internal and an external customer in that industry.

A worker within an organisation is an example of an internal customer. They are not the buyers of the final product, but a contributor towards its production. For example, a sales assistant in Myer is an internal customer. They serve the external customers when they come into the store to purchase something. An external customer is the buyer of the final product – the consumer.

b

Give three reasons to explain the importance of the employee in the quality process.

Employees are crucial to the quality movement. Without effective employees, the principles of the quality movement would be very difficult to achieve. Customers demand better quality products and services and, because of this, employees must continue to strive to meet these demands.

Employees, in delivering superior quality products and services, should be able to:

- identify internal customers and continually try to provide superior service
- avoid the duplication of some tasks
- be more organised in how tasks are completed
- be an active member of work teams
- be professional in dealings with customers; provide assistance when needed
- deal with complaints effectively, ensuring a solution is found
- ensure adequate understanding/training in delivering a quality product.

Regardless of the employees' position in the organisation, all the company functions (production, sales, administration service, research and development, and management) are essential to ensure quality for customers.

Question 2 (Workplace flexibility)

a

Describe the difference between job rotation and job sharing. Use an example for each term to illustrate your answer.

Job rotation involves one worker who moves around doing different tasks in the workplace. In my work placement at a local café all the customer services workers had to perform a range of duties during a month. This meant that we all moved around from working front of house one week, to serving the next, then cleaning, and finally to carrying out kitchen tasks.

Job sharing is where the one job is divided between two workers. In class we read about teachers at Emerald Secondary College who job shared. One worked three days a week while the other worked two days. They were timetabled on as one teacher so that whoever was there that day taught the timetabled classes.

A difference between the two is that job sharing involves workers working on a smaller time fraction while job rotation does not. The key difference is that an aim of job rotation is to multi-skill the individual worker so that they are more employable, and also to increase their ability to contribute to the organisation. Job sharing is more about allowing the workers to design their working lives with other commitments in mind. The employer benefits because the workers will be happier and more motivated but their individual productivity should increase.

b-

Explain three strategies employers can use to encourage the development of workplace flexibility. Give examples to illustrate your answer.

Increasing flexibility is an important aim of the modern workplace. Flexibility was identified by the Karpin Report as one of the central enterprise attitudes. Flexibility is about being able to adapt to new situations and change direction when required.

Employers need to introduce flexibility into their workplaces in a variety of ways. There are three strategies that they could adopt. Firstly have a flexible attitude towards the division of work that uses a variety of modern human resource management approaches. This would range to the use of job sharing and compartmentalisation, multi skilling and outsourcing. If they are open and proactive they can consider the wide range of approaches and mould a package that best fits the needs of the workplace and the workers.

In addition they could investigate how the work is done. This means that they could conduct a SWOT analysis (or use a similar approach) to evaluate the operation of their organisation. This approach would allow them to identify areas of quality performance as well as areas that could be improved. Management could then take action to ensure that the application of flexibility enhances quality processes and outcomes.

The third strategy builds on the first by looking at the structure of the workplace. Many organisations have found that the re-organisation of the workplace into teams has directly increased flexibility, enhanced productivity and often triggered synergy in outcomes. An example of this is Arnott's where the more flexible arrangements allowed them to identify minor, but expensive, production problems and then to suggest ways to overcome the problem.

Question 3 (Training and workplace learning)

a

Describe the application of competency-based training in an industry or workplace that you are familiar with.

Competency based training has become an integral part of workplace training in Australia. This type of training has been embraced by most industries and Industry Training Boards have been instrumental in its design, development and implementation. In a competency-based training system, an explicit basis is expected where the measurable standards of performance are outcomes based and reflect the actual expectations of performance.

b

Explain in detail, using examples, the difference between generic competencies and industry-specific skills.

Generic competencies (also known as key competencies or generic work-related competencies) are a set of skills and abilities developed by the Finn and Mayer committees that are seen as vital for effective participation in the workplace. They are common or generic to all workplaces and they focus on how to transform knowledge from one situation in order to usefully reapply it in different contexts. Generic competencies are:

- collecting, analysing and organising information
- communicating ideas and information
- planning and organising activities
- working with others and in teams
- using mathematical ideas and techniques
- solving problems
- using technology.

Industry-specific competencies are skills and understandings needed at each of the work levels in a particular industry. They are specific to a particular industry and are unlikely to be transferable to other industries. They have been identified so that employees and employers in that industry are clear in their expectations, and so that ongoing training can be arranged which is beneficial to both the workplace and the individual. For example, a person working in a retail setting in a supermarket would need specific training in the operation of point of sale equipment such as cash registers, EFTPOS machines and scales.

© VCAA 2003

Published by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
41 St Andrews Place, East Melbourne 3002

Photocopying: This publication can only be photocopied for the use of students and teachers in Victorian Schools.

