

2014 Outdoor and Environmental Studies GA 3: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

The question posed, the marks indicated and the space allocated for responses in the 2014 Outdoor and Environmental Studies question and answer book gave a clear indication of the depth of the answer required for each question, as did the key words in each question. Words such as ‘describe’, ‘explain’, ‘analyse’, ‘outline’, ‘evaluate’, ‘identify’ and ‘discuss’ indicated the type of answer required. Students need to ensure that they understand these key terms and others, and what is required for each.

Students need to use the examination time efficiently. Reading time should be used to gain an understanding of each question. When responding to a question, students do not need to rewrite the question in their answer. Instead, they should use key words from the question in their answer as this often helps to keep the response on track. Repetition or restating the question does not attract marks.

Students must ensure that they read each question carefully so that they accurately interpret what is required in their answer. Where a longer answer is required, students are strongly advised to complete a brief plan first. There are a number of spaces within the question and answer book that can be used for this, and students may ask for an additional answer book if needed. A plan enables students to outline the main ideas they will cover and order their responses before they start writing. The use of subheadings within a longer answer may also be appropriate, depending on the nature of the question.

In preparing for this examination, students need to be familiar with a range of outdoor environments and with varying types and levels of human impact. The inclusion of specific content within the study design means that when students are asked to identify or select a specific outdoor environment, Indigenous community, discourse, factor, threat, action, conflict, Act or convention for a particular question, their choice is critical – it must be one that will enable the student to thoroughly address the question, adding detail and context to their answer.

Students need to understand study-specific terms such as ‘European settlement’, ‘commercialisation’, ‘policies’, ‘non-Indigenous settlers’, ‘contemporary’, ‘nation building’, ‘social responses to risk’, ‘sustainable development’, ‘industrialisation’, ‘threats’, ‘actions’, ‘decision-making processes’, ‘influences’, ‘relationships’, ‘impacts’, ‘discourses’ and ‘methods’. Clarification of terminology can be found on page 31 of the *VCE Outdoor and Environmental Studies Study Design*. Teachers should consult previous examination reports, as well as this one, to obtain a broad range of examples of how questions use these study-specific terms. Students need to be able to use these terms appropriately rather than just give general definitions of them. Students should also be specific and enrich their answers with suitable examples where possible and appropriate in order to indicate the depth and breadth of their knowledge. Sweeping, generalised statements are not appropriate. Students should avoid giving rote-learned answers and ensure that they have carefully read and understood the question before responding.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Note: 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 errors resulting in a total less than 100 per cent.

Question 1a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	4	3	8	11	33	20	21	4.2

Students needed to identify a specific outdoor environment and a specific Indigenous community – no marks were allocated for doing so. This format was common throughout the examination and gave students the opportunity to set the context for their answers.

The two interactions were worth three marks each. In order to receive full marks, two different interactions had to be described. Students’ descriptions tended to be generic and were not necessarily specific to the outdoor environment and Indigenous community selected.

2014 Examination Report

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

Phillip Island

Bunurong

- 1. The Bunurong tribe were semi-nomadic, meaning that they walked around from place to place following the seasonal food supply. They would visit Phillip Island in the months of spring as the short-tailed shearwaters were in great abundance.*
- 2. The Bunurong tribe also put sanctuary zones at Cape Woolami, on Phillip Island in place. In these zones, hunting and fire was completely prohibited. This then allows the flora and fauna to flourish and overflow out of the sanctuary zone boundaries so the Bunurong Tribe had a plentiful food supply.*

Question 1b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	5	10	23	30	32	2.8

Four marks were awarded for explaining the relationship using both interactions described in part a. Responses that did not refer to both interactions from part a. were not awarded full marks. Relationships are inclusive of perceptions, interactions and/or impacts, and any combination of these could have been used by students in their response.

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

Before European settlement, the Bunurong Tribe shared a beautiful kinship with the land of Phillip Island. They believed they were a part of the land and saw it as a temple/cathedral, or a place that needs protecting. Their interactions included semi nomadism, sanctuary zones (as explained above) which had positive effects on Phillip Island. Their semi-nomadism allowed the land to regenerate while the sanctuary zones increased the biodiversity of that area. It is said the Bunurong people had very minimal impact on Phillip Island.

Question 1c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	6	5	14	16	33	14	12	3.6

The two interactions were worth three marks each. In order to receive full marks, two different interactions had to be explained. Explanations that were not connected to non-Indigenous settlers were not awarded any marks.

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

- 1. Clearing of land. The first non-Indigenous settlers, the McHaffies, cleared Phillip Island to farm animals such as sheep and cattle, and to provide areas for infrastructure and housing to be built.*
- 2. Introduction of native species. The McHaffies and other non-indigenous settlers which came from the UK wanted Phillip Island to feel like 'home', so they introduced animals such as foxes and rabbits onto the island.*

Question 1d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	6	13	24	32	25	2.6

Four marks were awarded for analysing the relationship using both interactions described in part c. Responses that did not reference both interactions from part c. or were not connected to non-Indigenous settlers were not awarded full marks.

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

The first non-Indigenous settlers perceived Phillip Island as Terra Nullius (land belonging to no one) and as a harsh, wild land which needed to be tamed. Due to clearing the land and introducing native species, they impacted Phillip Island negatively, through loss of native biodiversity and an increased competition for food sources for animals such as the Cape barron geese and black swamp wallaby.

2014 Examination Report

Question 1e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	17	18	20	22	23	2.2

Four marks were awarded for explaining how the selected influence changed human relationships. Responses that were not placed in a historical context were not awarded full marks.

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

industrialisation

Industrialisation of machinery caused the environment to be viewed as a resource, Land clearing occurred around glen alvie for farms. The industrialisation allowed agriculture such as dairy farming to become much more productive. This meant that it had a larger negative impact on the land as more cattle caused erosion around the powlett river. The environment was seen as only something that could provide for humans to make profit and resources. This meant they relationship with the Bass Coast environment was very disconnected and they had little respect.

Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	41	7	19	11	23	1.7

Students needed to select an environmental discourse other than global warming or any of its associated components (e.g. rising sea levels, carbon emissions, rising temperatures, ice caps melting).

Two marks were awarded for each key argument outlined. Two different arguments were required in order to receive full marks. Valid discourses were any issues that concerned the environment, such as water management (including the desalination plant), biosecurity, cattle grazing, biodiversity, etc. This question was not answered well and it was clear that students needed to be more aware of the range of discourses referred to in the study design.

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

Environmental discourse Water management Desalination Plant (Wonthaggi)

1. The desalination plant is needed: The Victorian Government believed the desalination was needed to secure a future supply for Victoria, particularly in the case of another drought, and also to create jobs during construction.

2. The desalination plant is not needed: This was believed by many members of the community and the environmental group watershed. They believed there are many other solutions to water management such as recycling water. Also because the desalination plant has a lot of negative environmental impacts such as the salt concentrate returning to the ocean.

Question 2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	44	13	17	14	12	1.4

Four marks were awarded for an analysis of how the selected discourse could influence contemporary societal relationships.

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

People who believe that the desalination plant is needed and that we have a secured water supply could perceive the ocean environment as a resource for drinking water. This could lead to interactions like the continuation of unsustainable water usage and individuals not being cautious of their water consumption, thus having a negative impact, putting more pressure on Victoria's water supply. On the other hand, people who did not want the desalination plant might perceive the environment as vulnerable and in need of protection. This can lead to positive interactions that are water conscious, such as installing low flow shower heads. This has a positive impact as it reduces individuals water consumption, putting less pressure on Victoria's water supply.

2014 Examination Report

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	3	4	11	16	26	22	19	4

Students needed to identify an outdoor environment that was to be used as the basis of their response. Students then had to select two factors and explain how these factors played roles in determining contemporary societal relationships with that outdoor environment.

Each factor was worth three marks each. In order to receive full marks, two different factors and explanations of how each played a role in determining contemporary societal relationships was required.

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

Alpine environment

Factor 1

Technologie has a positive effect on contemporary societal relationships with the Alpine Region. Equipment is better (lighter, warmer, safer) making people feel safer and able to stay in the snow longer as they are more comfortable. Phones make people feel more secure as they can get help in an emergency and the environment is seen in a positive, recreational light. Giving people more incentive to look after it so they can continue their activities.

Factor 2

Commercialism of the Alpine Region such as the Ski Resort has led to people being able to experience the snow, cheaper and safer. It also gives people access to professional instructors who lead by example the importance of a healthy environment and need to look after it to keep the snow. Portraying the environment as gymnasium and temple people are therefore more inclined to carry out behaviours that look after it, so they may come back to the resort and experience the Alpine environment again.

Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	17	22	61	1.5

Two marks were awarded for describing an argument that could be used to label sustainable development as invalid.

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

Sustainable development can be very expensive as installations of home insulation, double glazed windows and solar panels can have high premium costs. Even with government rebates the cost is too high for society making sustainability unwanted and invalid.

Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	26	37	37	1.1

Two marks were awarded for describing an argument that could be used to label sustainable development as valid.

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

Sustainable development allows for the future generations and current to have all resources necessary. If sustainability is not introduced the health of the environment will be deteriorated and may cause extinction of some environments depriving society of necessary resources.

Question 4c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	20	23	36	22	1.6

Three marks were awarded for evaluating the concept of sustainable development. Responses that did not refer to both arguments from parts a. and b. were not awarded full marks.

Many students did not provide an evaluation, but rather defined the concept of sustainable development and merely mentioned the arguments from parts a. and b. verbatim.

2014 Examination Report

There are many ways to construct responses to questions that require evaluation in the response. Responses that received full marks did not solely offer a clear-cut judgment. Such responses may have included several well-made points and presented multiple reasons to support and/or refute the item being evaluated.

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

Sustainability can be very expensive due to installation costs but in the future it may save people money as it can lower power bills and solar panels even provide free energy. If sustainable development is not introduced resources will become more scarce which will increase the prices of such resources. Overall, including the argument that it provides for current and future generations, sustainable development is effective and necessary as it may be expensive at first but it will protect and maintain environments which will prevent future increases in prices for resources.

Question 5a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	4	5	13	21	21	17	19	3.8

Each reason was worth three marks. In order to receive full marks, two different reasons explaining why healthy environments are important were required.

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

Recreation/Adventure: Many industries seek the outdoors for many past times and activities such as bike riding, surfing and bushwalking. For these activities to be undertaken with enjoyment and in a successful manner, the environment must be in a healthy state, free of pollution, erosion and with high soil and air quality.

Education: Many people seek the outdoors for knowledge and to develop a deeper understanding of the world around them. Learning in the outdoors is especially beneficially for individuals who are kinesthetic learners, and many subjects at schools use outdoors as a basis for their curriculum eg. PE, Outdoor education, Geography. Therefore for individuals to be able to do this successfully, the environment must be in a healthy state.

Question 5b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	13	9	19	21	17	10	9	2.9

Students needed to identify an environmental threat that was to be used as the basis of their response. They then had to describe two potential impacts this threat could have on society.

Each impact was worth three marks. Two different impacts were required in order to receive full marks.

This question was not well answered as students tended to focus their responses on describing the threat alone or its impact on the environment, rather than its impact on society. Impacts on society could have been positive and/or negative.

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

Land degradation – can cause soil erosion and decreased soil quality this can cause reduced productivity on farms and in agriculture due to the land being degraded. This can reduce profit and decrease the society's economy and amount of resources for society. Land degradation can also impact on the waterways as soil run-off from the erosion can get into the rivers and streams. This can reduce the quality of the water due to increased turbidity. It can cause the water to be unfit for human consumption reducing water supplies for society but also increases the cost that society has to pay in order to get clean water.

Question 6a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	17	8	21	12	21	7	14	2.9

Students needed to name an outdoor environment that was to be used as the basis of their response.

One mark was awarded for identifying each of two themes. Two different themes, other than human settlements and biodiversity, were required in order to receive full marks. Acceptable themes included atmosphere, coasts and oceans, inland waters, land, and natural and cultural heritage.

2014 Examination Report

Two marks were awarded for describing each of the two indicators that could be used to determine the health of the environment. Two different indicators were required in order to receive full marks. Acceptable indicators were those that were measurable, such as soil quality, water quality, level of air pollution, level of biodiversity, etc.

Students' responses highlighted confusion between State of the Environment themes and indicators, as these were often placed in the wrong columns.

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

Theme	Description of indicator
<i>Atmosphere</i>	<i>Air quality – If an environments air is clear and free of pollution like at Mt Buller, the atmosphere can considered to be in a healthy state.</i>
<i>Land</i>	<i>Soil quality – If the soil is soft, moist and species filled and covering a vast area, like at Mt Buller, then the soil can be considered a healthy state.</i>

Question 6b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	20	8	18	22	32	2.4

Four marks were awarded for evaluating the health of the selected environment. Responses that did not use the themes from part a. were not awarded full marks.

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

Mt Bullers outdoor environment can be considered healthy. This is due to its soil is soft, moist and species filled, as well as covering a vast area. Mt Bullers atmosphere and air quality is good as well. It is clear and pollution free, with no smog. Due to these reasons Mt Buller can be considered in a healthy state.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	14	26	35	15	10	1.8

Each objective or mission was worth two marks. Two different objectives or missions had to be outlined in order to receive full marks.

This question was not answered well as students' responses tended to take the form of broad, sweeping and generic statements that were not closely tied to the Act or convention chosen. Also, it was clear that students who selected the Ramsar Convention needed to be more aware of its specific objective/mission as it is not focused on migratory birds.

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

Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Victoria)

1. To protect and conserve threatened species. This may involve the creation of action statements to implement management that will enhance their habitat and prevent further reduction in population.

2. To manage and identify potentially threatening processes. This involves management to assess the health of the environment and act upon threatening process before they're a problem, such as habitat fragmentation.

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	3	4	9	18	24	23	19	4

Students needed to select two specific actions. Alternatively, students could have selected 'other' and identified the sustainable action in the space provided.

2014 Examination Report

Students were required to explain how two sustainable actions contribute to the sustainability of healthy outdoor environments. The explanations of the two sustainable actions were awarded three marks each.

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

Renewable Energy, this is a sustainable action that contributes to the health and sustainability of outdoor environments as it creates energy without burning fossil fuels. It does not release the Carbon dioxide and chlorofluro carbons that other energy sources do (such as burning coal) that heat up our atmosphere and have a negative effect on outdoor environments (ice caps melting, global warming). Examples of renewable energy are, wind power, solar power, geothermal, biomass and wave energy. Intergrated farming is an action that creates a healthier environment as it is a wholistic approach. Intergrated farming includes things such as 'pig tractoring' pigs clear land for a new crop and at the same time fertalise the land. Farmers to not have to use fertalisers that cause salinity and land degradation. Intergrated farming techniques result in little waste product, and focus on recycling. Resulting in a healthier environment.

Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Average
%	4	1	3	4	6	8	9	10	11	9	11	8	7	7	7.6

Students needed to select a specific conflict. Four marks were awarded for describing the conflict, including the key parties involved. Four marks were awarded for discussing a method used by each party to express its point of view (two different methods were required). Five marks were awarded for discussing and evaluating the decision-making process.

Legislation is considered a decision-making process and, therefore, was not accepted as a method. Police action was not accepted as a decision-making process.

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

Franklin River campaign (Tasmania)

The Franklin River campaign begun in 1978 when the Tasmanian State Government proposed to dam the Franklin River for a hydro-electricity plant. The Franklin River is situated in the Wild Rivers National Park in South-west Tasmania.

One key party involved was The Wilderness Society (formally known as the Tasmanian Wilderness Society). They campaigned against the damming as they believed that wild rivers like the Franklin River are an asset to our country and are of significant cultural and natural importance.

The second key party involved was the Tasmanian State Government and Tasmanian Hydro-Electric Commission (HEC). They both wanted to dam the river to provide a renewable source of energy for industries in Tasmania and also to create jobs during the construction phase as Tasmania had very low employment rates at the time.

A method used by The Wilderness Society (TWS) was the direct action of blockades. Direct action is physically preventing further work on the site and gaining recognition for the issue. Beginning in 1982 in December, the blockade ran by TWS lasted for a few weeks, with over 2500 people involved and over 1200 arrests. They impeded machinery and blocked workers access to the site. This showed the huge level of community support against the damming and raised a significant amount of awareness for the issue.

A method used by HEC was community consultation sessions. Representatives from HEC held these sessions in order to try and get people in the community on side and see the positives of the hydro-electricity plant. They answered questions from the public and tried their best to involve the community so they didn't feel isolated from what was happening.

The decision-making process: first the Tasmanian Government held a state referendum in 1981, to give the public a say on the issue. However, 'No Dam' was not an option, which led to 33% of people voting informally writing "NO DAM" across their ballot paper. Secondly, the Wild Rivers National Park became World Heritage Listed in December 1982 as it was recognised as an area of International cultural and natural significance. Lastly, the conflict was taken to the High Court of Australia where the Federal Government won by a vote of 4 to 3 to the Tasmanian State Government. This gave them the power to overrule the State government in terms of World Heritage Listed areas.

Overall, the State referendum and World Heritage Listing on their own were unsuccessful in solving the conflict. The World Heritage Listing was thought to solve the conflict, but the Tasmanian Government were going to go ahead with the plans anyway. Although these were ineffective by themselves, they did raise a huge amount of awareness for the issue and gained a lot of community support for the TWS. These led to the court action which was very effective as it provided a clear cut decision and ended construction immediately, solving the conflict.