



## **2009 Outdoor and Environmental Studies GA 3: Written examination**

### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

The format of the 2009 Outdoor and Environmental Studies question and answer booklet gave a clear indication of the depth of answer required for each question, as did the bold key words in the questions. Words such as 'list', 'explain', 'describe', 'outline', 'analyse' and 'evaluate' indicated the type of answer required. Students need to ensure that they understand these, and other, key terms and what is required for each.

Students need to use their examination time efficiently, including using the reading time to ensure they have an understanding of each question. When answering the paper, students should not rewrite the question as this wastes valuable time. However, the use of key words from the question in the answer is advised as this often helps to keep the response on track. Examples of key words include 'outline', 'compare', 'explain', 'describe', 'analyse' and 'evaluate'.

Students need to understand study-specific terms such as 'strategies', 'management strategies', 'processes', 'policies', 'influences', 'relationships', 'perceptions', 'views', 'commercialisation', 'impacts', 'movements', 'biodiversity', 'sustainability' and 'methods'. Clarification of terminology used within the *VCE Outdoor and Environmental Studies Study Design* was published in the February 2008 edition of the *VCAA Bulletin*. This can be accessed on the VCAA website <[www.vcaa.vic.edu.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au)>. Teachers are advised to consult previous Assessment Reports, as well as this one, to obtain a broad range of possible examples of these study-specific terms. Students also need to be able to use these terms in the context of specific questions and give appropriate examples rather than quoting general definitions. Students are advised to be specific and to enrich their answers with suitable examples where possible and appropriate to indicate the depth and breadth of their knowledge. Sweeping, generalised statements are not appropriate and do not attract marks. Students should avoid giving rote answers and ensure that they have carefully read and understood the question before answering.

Students should use the marks allocated for each question and each part of each question as a guide to the length of time they should spend working on that part, as well as an indicator of the depth of response expected. For example, a question worth four marks will require a significantly more detailed answer than a question worth only one or two marks.

Some questions asked for a specific number of responses. These responses were marked in the order presented and extra responses were not taken into account, therefore students who gave additional responses did not receive additional marks. If a student thinks of a better response after finishing their initial answer, they should cross out the answer that they feel is the weakest and add the extra response. If there is insufficient room an additional script book may be used, as long as the response is clearly labelled. A number of students failed to score maximum marks in some questions as they had listed a variety of responses when only one response was asked for. Students are advised to choose their responses carefully and fully describe them rather than just giving a list of all possible responses.

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 booklet that can be used for this and students may ask for an additional script book if needed. A plan enables students to outline the main ideas they will cover and order their responses before they start.

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. When asked to identify a specific outdoor environment or issue for a particular question, the choice is critical – it must be one that will enable the student to thoroughly address the question.

Students are not marked on their spelling, but incorrectly spelt words can, at times, distract from the intended meaning. Students should aim to develop and practise this ability if needed.

### **SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

#### **Question 1**

Students needed to identify an activity that they had participated in for their studies. No marks were allocated for this.

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1a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	4	24	72	1.7

Students needed to either:

- clearly indicate an earlier form of participation (for one mark) and a more contemporary form of participation (one mark)
- outline a change in participation (one mark) and give a supporting description for that change (one mark).

A possible response (related to surfing as the chosen activity) could have been: Participation in surfing has increased with more people becoming involved (one mark). Lighter boards and modern materials have made it easier to catch waves (one mark).

Patterns of interactions over time could include:

- increasing or decreasing participation over time or other long-term trends
- seasonal changes, or other cyclic variations.

1bi.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	19	13	22	13	18	7	9	2.6

Each description (for the two comparisons) needed to clearly identify a response to risk taking (one mark) and develop two clear points of description associated with that response (two marks).

These descriptive points could have included:

- a reason supporting (one mark) and a reason opposing (one mark) the response
- an evaluation of the response (one mark) and a reason supporting the evaluation (one mark).

A possible response (related to surfing) could have been: Wearing surfing helmets could become compulsory (one mark). This could help reduce injury to surfers (one mark) but it would be hard to enforce or police (one mark).

Society's responses to risk taking could have included (but were not limited to):

- infrastructure development
- development of rules and regulations
- certification requirements
- new safety procedures and/or equipment
- criticism of risk takers
- legal responses and sanctions
- training and education
- restriction of access to specific venues.

This question was answered relatively poorly. Many students confused society's responses to risk taking with personal responses and perceptions of risk.

1bii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	14	12	22	17	18	9	9	2.8

Students needed to identify an impact (one mark) and develop two clear points of description associated with that impact (two marks) for each response. The description needed to outline why this risk-taking response would lead to this impact.

A possible response (related to surfing) could have been: A positive impact may be the increased involvement in conservation and protection of environments (one mark). If people feel safer while surfing, it may encourage more people to participate (one mark) and this may lead to a greater awareness of environmental problems (one mark). A negative impact may be increased erosion in beach and dune areas (one mark). If more people become involved in surfing because it is safer (one mark), there will be more people walking through dunes to access the surf breaks (one mark).

Impacts should have been related to the specific response of society to the risk taking associated with this activity.

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1c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	6	28	66	1.6

Students needed to outline a particular relationship that they have or have developed (one mark) and link their participation in the activity with this relationship (one mark).

A possible response could have been: To surf regularly you need to become more aware of weather and how it creates swell and waves at different beaches (one mark). This has led me to a closer relationship with coastal places as I have to pay more attention to lots of things (one mark).

Descriptions of relationships may have included (but were not limited to):

- a greater awareness of places
- fear of certain places
- a more intimate response to places
- a greater desire to visit certain places.

1d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	12	26	37	26	1.8

The explanation needed to identify an influence on people's relationships with places (one mark), clearly linking this to commercialisation or commercial activities (one mark) and including support for this link (one mark).

A possible response could have been: Commercial surfing schools educate their clients (one mark) about coastal issues and minimal impact appropriate in coastal places (one mark). This might lead to more people developing respect for the coastal environment and starting to care about what happens to it (one mark).

## Question 2

Students needed to identify which photograph they were referring to, although there were no marks allocated for this.

2a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	6	3	6	9	11	12	53	4.6

Students needed to identify a view (one mark) and give a supporting description of that view (one mark) for each one of the three descriptions.

Possible responses included:

- people view this place as an adversary (one mark), something to challenge them, to face and defeat (one mark)
- people view this place as a resource (one mark). There are commercial opportunities and things to extract from or use within this environment (one mark)
- people view this place as a cathedral (one mark). Being in this place can be very meditative and spiritual (one mark).

Views might have included (but were not limited to):

- environment as resource
- environment as a gym
- environment as a museum
- environment as a cathedral
- environment as a place to fear
- environment as a place to dominate
- environment as a challenge or adversary.

2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	11	5	11	17	16	13	26	3.7

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For each analysis students needed to outline a relationship or an influence on a relationship (one mark) and indicate how the view leads to or links with this relationship (one mark).

Possible responses could have included:

- viewing the environment as an adversary develops a relationship where the environment is not very important (one mark) since the key factor is the challenge to the person (one mark)
- modern views of the environment as a resource can lead to a stewardship relationship (one mark) if we want to extract things in a sustainable way (one mark)
- viewing the environment as a cathedral might make it seem more important than through other views (one mark) but it is still related to the value of a place for what humans can get from it (one mark).

2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	8	4	8	17	19	17	27	4

For each explanation students needed to identify an impact on the environment (one mark) and link this impact to the relationship noted in the previous question (one mark).

Possible responses could have included:

- although the relationship does not necessarily view the environment as important, the impact is probably not very big (one mark) because the number of people involved in adventure and risky activities is usually small (one mark)
- the impact of resource extraction has been very big, with species being exploited and becoming extinct (one mark). However, sustainability practices are starting to help reduce this (one mark)
- the impact of viewing the environment as important is positive (one mark) because it encourages conservation practices (one mark).

### Question 3

Students needed to identify an interaction used by indigenous Australians, although there were no marks awarded for this.

3a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	8	20	72	1.7

The outline needed to give two distinct points of information (for one mark each) about the interaction.

A possible response could have been: In hunter-gatherer societies like Aboriginal Australia before European settlement, it was common for men to hunt for meat such as kangaroo (one mark) and for women to gather roots, grubs and turtles (one mark).

Interactions could have included (but were not limited to):

- nomadism
- hunter-gatherer life
- firestick farming.

3b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	9	19	35	37	2

The explanation needed to identify a relationship (one mark), describe an aspect of this relationship (one mark) and link the relationship to the interaction (one mark).

A possible response could have been: The Aboriginals had developed a relationship of living off the land (one mark), taking only what they needed, moving around with their food supply and moving with the seasons (one mark). They built a sustainable relationship over many thousands of years (one mark).

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3c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	9	30	61	1.5

The evaluation needed to include a judgment of the extent and/or nature of the impact (one mark) and a justification supporting this judgment (one mark).

A possible response could have been: There are some people who believe the hunter-gatherer practices led to the extinction of many large megafauna species (one mark), although this is still being argued and generally these practices seem to have had no major impact (one mark).

3d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	8	10	30	23	29	2.6

For each description students needed to outline an effect on the indigenous interaction (one mark) and give some support to or explanation of this effect (one mark).

Possible responses included:

- European settlers built farms with fences, changing the patterns of movement of animals and Aboriginals (one mark) and this made it harder for traditional hunting to continue (one mark)
- European settlers killed off many native animals which they saw as competition to their sheep and cattle (one mark), making traditional ways of life much more difficult (one mark).

## Question 4

Students needed to identify an environment they had studied although no marks were awarded for this.

4a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	4	5	14	17	21	14	24	3.9

For each description students needed to identify a reason for keeping the environment healthy (one mark) and identify the importance of this for human society (one mark).

A possible response (with one reason) could have been: Keeping this environment healthy is important in maintaining access to resources like timber (one mark). Healthy environments tend to provide a greater quantity and more sustainable reserves of such resources (one mark).

Reasons for keeping environments healthy included (but were not limited to):

- access to resources (including food, timber, water, air, etc.)
- ability to undertake research
- development of medicines
- provision of services (like water purification).

4bi.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	14	5	12	13	18	11	28	3.6

For each of the three outlines, students needed to identify a suitable indicator (one mark) and give a description of how this indicator might be used to measure health (one mark).

A possible response (for one indicator) could have been: Assessing the quality of water in an environment is a good measure of a place's health (one mark). Cleaner and clearer water, and water supporting more living things, is generally found in healthy places (one mark).

Indicators of environmental health included (but were not limited to):

- water quality
- levels of biodiversity
- numbers of introduced species
- soil quality indicated by vegetation cover
- levels of pollution.

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## 4bii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
%	16	7	11	16	16	13	10	10	3.4

The evaluation should have given an overall judgment of the health of the environment (one mark), based on the student's description for each indicator (two marks for each of three).

Each description should have given two clear points of information relating the indicator to the specific environment.

Possible examples of descriptions for indicators might have been:

- we used the water in this place without any sort of treatment (one mark) because it was of a very high quality, suggesting good health (one mark)
- there were a lot of signs of introduced animals and pests in the area (one mark) and a number of different weed species, both indicating poor health (one mark).

## Question 5

### 5a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	6	5	22	19	49	3

For each description students needed to identify an interaction (one mark) and explain how this interaction could lead to the current situation (one mark).

Possible responses included:

- the use of river water for irrigation (one mark) reduces environmental flows and affects the health of rivers (one mark)
- collecting water on properties, such as through the use of dams (one mark), reduces the amount of water that flows into rivers and streams and can damage their health (one mark).

### 5b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	6	4	10	13	21	14	33	4.1

For each outline students needed to either:

- identify an action that individuals could take (one mark) and give some detail for this action (one mark)
- identify an action (one mark) and explain how this action could maintain or improve the health and/or sustainability of river environments (one mark).

Possible responses included:

- plant trees around river banks (one mark) to help prevent and reduce erosion (one mark)
- where household water is sourced from rivers (one mark), water usage could be reduced (one mark)
- reduce or avoid the use of motorised water craft for recreation (one mark) because of the erosion effects from their wakes (one mark).

### 5c.

To achieve full marks for this question, students needed to identify an environment they had visited or studied.

### 5ci.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	33	67	0.7

Students needed to identify an appropriate policy (one mark).

A possible response could have been: Establishment of marine national parks and protected areas around the Victorian coastline (one mark).

Policies could have included state or federal environmental legislation, or local government policies including (but not limited to):

- *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1998*
- *National Parks Act 1975*

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- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.*

International conventions and agreements were suitable if students could explain how these were applied in local circumstances. The RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands was an example that could be effectively applied to some Victorian environments.

## 5cii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	28	22	29	21	1.5

The explanation needed to indicate how the policy works (one mark), how it is used in the noted environment (one mark) and one other supporting piece of information (one mark).

A possible response (using the marine national parks example from Question 5ci.) could have been: The marine national parks are intended to be representative of the different types of coastline that exist in Victoria (one mark). This was the first such system in the world when it was established (one mark). It is illegal to fish, collect shellfish or to remove coral and seaweed within the areas (one mark).

## 5ciii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	25	22	30	24	1.6

The evaluation needed to include a judgment on the effectiveness, or otherwise, of the policy (one mark), a justification of the judgment (one mark) and one other piece of information (one mark).

The policy should be very effective (one mark) as examples of similar parks in other parts of the world show increases in fish stocks in protected areas (one mark). The policy is fairly new so it is somewhat early to fully evaluate it at this stage (one mark).

## Question 6

Students needed to identify an environmental movement and a conflict of interest they had studied, although there were no marks allocated for this. Appropriate environmental movements could have included one of a number of environmental interest groups and conflicts that students had studied.

Students are advised to choose the most appropriate example instead of the first example that comes to mind.

### 6a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	20	29	51	1.3

The outline needed to include two key points of information (for one mark each) about the formation of a particular movement or interest group. These might have included:

- who started the movement
- what motivated the movement's formation.

A possible response (using the Blue Wedge as an example of a movement) could have been: People were concerned about the impacts of dredging in Port Phillip Bay on the marine flora and fauna (one mark) and how the material stirred up would affect the Bay (one mark).

### 6b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	25	29	45	1.2

Students needed to describe a relationship or an influence on relationships (one mark) and explain how the movement affected this relationship (one mark).

A possible response could have been: Most people swim at bay beaches and are not aware of what is in the water. The Blue Wedge's education campaign (one mark) has helped to increase the awareness of how special the Bay is, with great diversity of coral, kelp and seaweed (one mark).

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## 6ci.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	16	4	16	16	49	2.8

For each description students needed to identify a method (one mark) and explain how the movement has used this method to try to influence decision making (one mark).

Possible responses could have been:

- publishing photos of the coral gardens at the mouth of the Bay (one mark) was aimed at increasing awareness of certain aspects of the dredging (one mark)
- to gain publicity for the cause (one mark), people on surfboards tried to block the way of the dredging boat (one mark) when it arrived.

Methods described could have included (but were not limited to):

- direct action methods
- lobbying
- letter writing campaigns
- use of the media
- use of public figures
- community meetings and rallies
- education campaigns.

Some students confused lobbying and direct action. The differences between these (and other) methods needed to be clear.

## 6cii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	18	5	19	17	42	2.6

For each evaluation students needed to include a judgment (one mark) and a statement justifying the judgment (one mark).

Possible responses included:

- the photos of the coral were spectacular and the plume looked like a very large area of dirty water (one mark), which I would think would have created an effective contrast (one mark)
- the surfboard protest was quite effective (one mark) as it received plenty of media attention at the time (one mark).

## 6d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	39	15	24	21	1.3

The explanation needed to identify a decision-making process (one mark) and then give two clear statements describing how this process works and how it was used in this case (for one mark each).

A possible response could have been: Community consultation is now a part of many decision-making processes (one mark). There were a large number of meetings around the Bay where stakeholders could present their views (one mark). It seems like the process was not very effective for the people opposed to the dredging (one mark).

Decision-making processes could have included (but were not limited to):

- legislation
- use of courts
- community consultation
- political processes.

Police action was a favoured response for many students. While this has been part of the study in the past and was accepted as a response for this question, it is generally not appropriate for future questions on environmental decision making.