

2016 VCE VET Community Services examination report

General comments

The four compulsory units of competency assessed in the 2016 VCE VET Community Services examination were:

- CHCCS421B – Undertake community sector work within own community
- CHCRH401C – Work effectively in the leisure and health industry
- CHCCW301C – Operate under a casework framework
- CHCAD401D – Advocate for clients.

The three sections of the 2016 examination were:

- Section A – Multiple-choice questions
- Section B – Written responses
- Section C – Case study.

Questions 5a., 5b., 8, and 10 allowed students to demonstrate their advanced knowledge and deep understanding of the subject matter. Students were encouraged to go into detail in their answers and to provide examples to support their responses. The use of examples showed an understanding of linking theory to the workplace.

Teachers and trainers should refer to the examination specifications on the VCAA website for further information.

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 resulting in a total more or less than 100 per cent.

Section A – Multiple-choice questions

The table below indicates the percentage of students who chose each option. The correct answer is indicated by shading.

Question	% A	% B	% C	% D
1	23	31	9	37
2	1	1	96	2
3	6	1	76	17
4	2	6	1	91

Question	% A	% B	% C	% D
5	11	76	12	1
6	9	76	4	12
7	54	26	13	6
8	26	53	2	19
9	4	4	1	90
10	1	1	89	8
11	1	1	97	1
12	12	16	2	71
13	91	7	0	1
14	74	4	1	20
15	6	40	31	22

The multiple-choice section, which focused on key concepts, definitions and the underlying principles of community services, was generally well answered. Careful consideration needed to be given to the definitions and the details documented in the units of competency.

Section B – Written responses

It was essential that students read the questions carefully in order to give appropriate responses in this section. Answers needed to reflect an understanding of the context of the question. It was also important to identify key terms, demonstrate understanding and provide examples.

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	12	37	51	1.4

Any two of:

- the community services worker should make sure they have an understanding of the client's first language and have an interpreter with them if required
- they should have an understanding of the client's culture and customs and make sure they do not offend the client
- they should respect the client's dress traditions and wear appropriate clothing and behave in an appropriate manner
- they should be aware of dietary needs.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	41	3	9	10	37	2

Any two of:

- Participation – clients should have the ability to participate in whatever they wish, such as sport and education.
- Access – clients should have the right to access whatever they wish, such as education and resources.
- Equity – clients should be treated fairly and equally, having the opportunity to access education, jobs and workforce.
- Rights – clients should have the right to be treated fairly, to speak up, to vote and to have information in their own language.

Equality was also accepted.

Question 3a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	37	63	0.7

A workplace network is a formal or informal group of workers or agencies that support each other, sharing information and working together in the best interest of the clients or the community.

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

A workplace that liaises or works closely with another workplace to better or enhance their performance.

Question 3b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	33	37	30	1

Communicate with likeminded people, build positive professional relationships, develop professional learning experiences, attend network meetings, attend existing network meetings or identify a need for a new network, such as changes in legislation or new regulations.

Question 3c.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	50	50	0.5

Answers could have included:

- networks should reflect the changing needs of the community
- to maintain relevancy of the current network
- new organisations and groups relevant to the current network can be invited to attend
- identify a need for a new network, change in legislation, security checks, etc.

This question was not well answered.

Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	67	33	0.3

Outreach support

'Home-based support' was also accepted.

Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	15	35	50	1.4

Any two of:

- being comfortable in their environment
- emotionally and physically easier for the client
- no need to arrange travel
- may have a disability
- lower cost to client

- more family friendly
- allows worker to learn more about their client, seeing them in their home environment.

This question was generally well answered.

Question 5

It was evident from responses that students found Questions 5a. and 5b. challenging.

Question 5a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	46	44	10	0.7

The answer needed to include building a more accessible and inclusive community for all people.

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

An advocate could use the information in the convention as evidence of what the client needs and how their rights should be upheld to inspire change. They could also explain the convention to the client to outline their entitlements which would bring about change as the client would be aware of their rights and could demand they are upheld.

Question 5b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	49	41	9	0.6

It affirms the minimum standards for the survival, dignity, security and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples worldwide and enshrines their right to be different.

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

The United Nations declaration provides indigenous people with the information necessary for them to self-advocate. Having the information allows the clients to become empowered and validate their feelings surrounding the infringement of their rights.

Question 6

These questions were generally well answered.

Question 6a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	2	98	1

Females

Question 6b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	7	23	70	1.6

Answers could have included (any two of): meditation, yoga, mindfulness, exercise, rest, more sleep, music and visit a psychologist.

There were some thoughtful and creative answers to this question.

Question 6c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	27	43	30	1.1

Answers could have included (any two of):

- pressure from families to achieve
- females are often high-achieving students
- females are often more mature than males.

This question was well answered.

Question 6d.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	4	96	1

Answers could have included: doctor, friends, family, teachers or sports coach.

This was a well-answered question.

Question 7a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	24	26	50	1.3

The role of the mediator is to assist two disagreeing parties to come to an agreement, by listening to both sides of the argument and assisting them to see the other party's point of view, thereby minimising harm.

Many students did not receive full marks for this question because they did not explain the answer clearly enough.

Question 7b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	28	34	38	1.1

The negotiator confers with both parties and brings them together, by mutual agreement, until they reach a settlement that both parties agree on. Whereas, the mediator minimises harm. Both parties in this case do not necessarily agree on the settlement.

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
%	12	19	17	21	15	9	5	1	2.6

Full marks were achieved through:

- identifying the emotions of the client group: embarrassment, feeling ashamed, refusal to participate because of fear of it being found out that they were illiterate
- describing building confidence and trust
- setting out a plan of how the project will develop.

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

Firstly, I would organise a meeting time and date with the men's group to discuss issues or weaknesses that they may feel is affecting their work habits and also discuss achievable goals that each individual would like to achieve in reference to literacy and also achievable goals overall as a group. Once issues are identified and measurable and achievable goals have been discussed, a step by step timeline will be discussed and put into place. This case plan will involve goals, timelines for the goals, techniques to help achieve that goal and other support services that are available when the group is in need.

By setting up this group, I hope to allow the men to feel confident in their decision making when they are faced with literacy issues. By improving their confidence and working on individual areas that the group feels they need to improve on, these men will then feel confident when reading and writing as these are everyday skills. Potential barriers that could occur is embarrassment when working in a group, self doubt and potential cultural linguistic differences. Stake holders I will need to work with are the school and the English teachers to help provide support for the men and potential linguistic translators if need be.

Quite a few students answered Question 8 using dot points. This approach was acceptable.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response in dot-point form.

Meeting the needs of the group.

- *Learning to read – hiring tutors and volunteers to teach the men how to read.*
- *Improving reading skill – by going to local libraries and book clubs.*
- *How to write – practice writing lists, letters, brochures, etc.*

Aim to achieve:

- *Confidence – I aim for the men to become confident writers and readers who aren't ashamed to contribute their pieces.*
- *Trust – Hopefully the men can trust their coworkers to help them when needed and feel safe to ask for help*
- *Experience – I aim for the men to take their skills in literacy and apply them elsewhere, including teaching others*

Stakeholders to work with:

- *Tutors – professionals who can effectively educate the men.*
- *Volunteers – willing people to assist and support the practice of literacy skills*
- *Librarians to organise book clubs and library membership cards for borrowing*

Potential barriers:

- *Language – some of the men may be of different cultures and so learning English will be harder as it isn't their first language*
- *Lack of interest – the men may feel ashamed about lacking literacy skills and refuse to participate*
- *Participation barriers – the men may not have a mode of transport to attend the tutoring sessions or book club meetings, they may also have a family that preoccupies their time etc.*

Question 9a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	89	11	0.1

Criminal Record Check

Criminal Background Check was also accepted.

Question 9b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	26	44	31	1.1

Both:

- to ensure the safety of all workers and clients
- it is a requirement of organisation policies and procedures.

This question was poorly answered.

Question 9c.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	31	69	0.7

Working with Children Check

Question 10a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	11	43	46	1.4

Answers could have included (any two of):

- do not offend them
- predict what issues might be occurring in their community
- an awareness of managing historical issues, such as, the impact of the stolen generation
- ensure good rapport with community members
- accessing additional support that may be reflecting current community needs.

The answer needed to relate to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and how best to meet their needs.

Students were challenged by this question. Many student answers repeated the question.

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

It is important to be aware of issues that impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to ensure cultural safety and cultural awareness to avoid insulting or offending anyone. It also gives us a better understanding of the community and will therefore create a sense of unity where everyone feels valued.

Question 10b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	12	35	53	1.4

Answers could include (any two of): being culturally appropriate, have a good understanding of their needs, will make people feel comfortable in a familiar environment, makes it more culturally acceptable to access support, knowing that there are specific supports available, ownership, inclusiveness, cultural safety, and preservation of identity and culture.

The response needed to relate to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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

They feel comfortable working with people of the same cultural background.

They are able to interact with other people in their community and form relationships.

Question 10c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	19	53	28	1.1

Answers may have included: concern for breach of confidentiality, stigma, wanting to use different services from their parents, community exclusion, not wanting to identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander service user, service doesn't meet client's needs, wrong clan, distance a problem (particularly in remote regions).

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

They may see a specific service as one that is isolating and marginalising them from society.

They may also find it offensive or that it goes against their culture and/or beliefs.

Question 11a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	22	78	0.8

Answers could have included (one of): health and wellbeing, respect, inclusivity, equality, contributing to a positive environment, positive communication, open-mindedness.

Question 11b.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	28	72	0.7

This question allowed students to use their practical experience to answer the question.

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

By being an honest and trustworthy person in their workplaces and being reliable.

Question 11c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	35	29	36	1

Answers needed to include any two of the following:

- ethics: rules of conduct employed by a profession; a right way to do things/to behave; expectation of a profession
- value: the worth placed on an object, behaviour and/or custom, defined by our beliefs, expectations, views and ideas; personal attributes that you bring to work; shared values of staff and colleagues.

Question 12

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	54	29	17	0.6

Responses should have been related to community services workers, but many students related their answer to industrial sites.

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

A case management worker needs to make sure his workers attire is appropriate, as people may feel uncomfortable if they don't wear professional/appropriate attire. Example if they are wearing trackies and thongs their client will feel their case manager doesn't care about them and isn't professional.

Question 13

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	51	5	18	7	19	1.4

Answers could have included (any two of): recycling bin, paperless office, limited printing, compost bin, automatic lights, double-sided printing, workforce support, professional development, team-building days and planning days.

Question 14

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	12	5	16	12	27	14	13	3.3

Answers could have included (any three of):

- clear purpose – goals and tasks are clearly defined so everyone knows what is expected
- informal – atmosphere should be relaxed and comfortable so everyone feels safe to contribute
- participation – all team members contribute and participate in discussion so work is distributed equitably
- listening – active listening, questioning techniques, paraphrasing so people feel their opinions are valued
- respectful disagreement – dealing with conflict in an assertive manner that avoids bullying
- consensus – decisions made with input from the majority, in the best interests of the group
- open communication – people encouraged to discuss their thoughts to promote transparency in decision making
- shared leadership – leadership functions can shift according to the skills of team members so everyone can work to their full potential
- standards – maintained in a positive and courteous manner
- cultural safety, respect and diversity – no one is discriminated against based on ethnicity, physical ability, gender, age, etc.

Section C – Case study

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	16	37	48	1.3

Answers could have included (any two of): face-to-face appointment, phone calls, writing a letter, open questioning, discussions with her, active listening, paraphrasing, keeping Maria up-to-date, interpreter services.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	Average
%	58	42	0.4

Many other Acts were relevant. Dates and jurisdictions were not required.

Examples included:

- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Commonwealth)
- *Age Discrimination Act 2004* (Commonwealth)
- *Aged Care Act 1997* (Commonwealth)
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2016* (Vic).

Question 3a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	27	42	31	1.1

Answers could have included (any two of): have a cup of tea, provide outreach support, find a common interest, self-disclosure, taking time and active listening, validating Maria's concerns, strength-based support, client-centred approach, ask about her culture.

Question 3b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	23	24	53	1.3

Answers could have included (any two of): Maria may be deaf, time-poor, lack resources, etc.; no company car to travel, worker safety related to home visits, cultural differences, language barriers, unrealistic expectations.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	11	27	37	25	1.8

Answers could have included (any three of): assessment services, referrals, listening to her to get a clear understanding of her rights and needs, find out if the council is meeting Maria's rights within the community, speak to the council on her behalf, refer to aged specific services to support her, provide easy-to-read and easy-to-understand documents.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	17	19	30	35	1.8

'Duty of care' means to ensure the safety and wellbeing of your clients, yourself and other workers within reason at all times, to provide reasonable care.

To do this in your work with Maria, you can make sure Maria's access to your service is safe and suitable. For example, transport (access to taxis, trams, trains, buses), ensuring home visits are the safest option for Maria, etc., take action to ensure Maria's health and wellbeing needs are being met by someone (family or support person) and ascertain if the council is meeting its duty of care to Maria and advocate for this, etc.

This question was poorly answered considering that duty of care is a key concept in Community Services organisations.

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

Duty of care refers to protecting the safety of yourself, others and clients within reason without infringing on Rights. This refers to Maria as it is important to ensure she is safe and feels safe in her home but as her caseworker I would not want to infringe on her rights by making her leave her home, or do anything she wasn't comfortable with.

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	40	5	13	13	29	1.9

Answers could have included (any two of): access, rights, participation, equity, etc. so Maria can have equal access and Maria has the right to feel safe in her community.

This question was well answered.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	34	10	29	10	17	1.7

The question asked for community organisations, and marks were given for actual organisations. Acceptable answers could have included local, statewide or national organisations.

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

Mildura Residential Support Services – can assist Maria in finding a new place to live or placement in a aged care facility if she chooses.

Meals on Wheels – they offer food to the homes of those who cannot get it themselves. They may also check on Maria.

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	31	44	26	1

Answers could have included: suggesting supports/services, having an assessment, carrying a torch, using cab charge, walking with a friend, walking aids, getting a mobile phone, personal

alarm, quote for sensor lights, investigate purchasing a pet, facilitate Maria meeting her neighbours, mentor from Italian community, etc.

The following is an example of a mid-range response.

I would gather a range of different options for improving safety such as flood lights and cameras as well as possible aged care facilities and then allow her to make a decision she is most comfortable.

Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	41	32	27	0.9

Answers could have included: learn about Maria’s values, experiences, upbringing, preferred language, expectations, etc.; check that Maria understands and agrees to everything that is being discussed and planned for her.

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

By making sure the environment she chooses to stay in is culturally safe and she could express herself and her culture. Also, she could stay with family who speak Italian so she feels included and culturally safe.