



2010 Outdoor and Environmental Studies GA 3: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

The format of the 2010 Outdoor and Environmental Studies question and answer booklet gave a clear indication of the depth of answer required for each question, as did the key words in the questions. Words such as 'assess', 'explain', 'describe', 'outline', 'identify', 'discuss' 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. Students should not rewrite the question in their responses 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.

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 one worth only one or two marks.

Students must ensure that they read each question carefully in order to accurately interpret what is required in their answer. Where a longer answer is required, students are strongly advised to first complete a brief plan. 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 enable the student to address the question thoroughly.

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, and students must ensure the response is clearly labelled. A number of students failed to score full marks in some questions as they had listed a variety of responses when only one was required. Students are advised to choose their responses carefully and describe them fully, rather than simply giving a list of all possible responses.

Students need to understand study-specific terms such as 'strategies', 'actions', '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 on the Outdoor and Environmental Studies study page. 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 in order 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-learned answers and ensure that they have carefully read and understood the question before answering.

Students are not marked on 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 awarded for this.

2010 Assessment Report



1a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	4	5	14	25	53	3.2

A possible response related to cross-country skiing as the chosen activity could have included (one mark for each):

- stay on the trail
- inform someone before you go
- carry safety equipment
- wear warm waterproof clothing.

The points in the code of conduct needed to relate specifically to the activity and to safe participation in the activity. Minimal impact strategies were not accepted unless they could also relate to safe participation.

1b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	6	26	68	1.6

For two marks students needed to identify a strategy and then describe that strategy. Strategies needed to be appropriate to the activity identified. Descriptions of the strategy could include giving examples of the strategy in use or giving a justification for the strategy.

A possible response related to cross-country skiing could have been: Skiing on designated tracks is a strategy that could be used (one mark). It helps to avoid damaging plants (one mark).

1c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	11	8	28	27	25	2.5

Students needed to:

- identify a management strategy related to the specific activity (one mark)
- give a description of the strategy (one mark)
- evaluate the strategy (one mark) and justify the evaluation (one mark).

A possible response related to cross-country skiing could have been: Fencing off sensitive areas from skiers (one mark) for the protection of flora and fauna in the area (one mark). This strategy is successful (one mark) as the vegetation in the fenced off areas is in better condition due to less trampling (one mark).

Question 2

2a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	6	15	38	41	2.2

Students needed to identify a view (one mark) and give supporting explanations of that view (two marks). The view and accompanying explanation needed to relate to the photograph; full marks were awarded only when students explicitly referred to the photograph.

Possible responses could have been:

- nature as a playground (one mark). The picture shows a family playing in the water (one mark), reflecting the view that the beach is there for recreation, fun and play. (one mark)
- nature can be owned (one mark). The beach houses in the background are owned by people (one mark), which reflects the view that nature is something we can buy/own (one mark).

2b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	12	6	23	21	39	2.7

For each contemporary view students needed to identify the means for portraying a view (one mark) and identify a view appropriate to the means (one mark).

Possible responses could have been:

2010 Assessment Report



- the climbing magazine *Rock* (one mark) portrays a view of the environment as something that needs to be conquered (one mark)
- the use of signs and display boards (one mark) educating about previous Aboriginal use of the land show nature as a museum (one mark).

Contemporary views might have included (but were not limited to) some of the following. The environment as a:

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

2c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	15	6	12	13	19	16	18	3.4

For each explanation students needed to connect a view described in 2a. or 2b. to a relationship (one mark) and then explain the relationship (two marks). Explaining the relationship might have included discussion of possible interactions with environments and possible impacts on environments.

Possible responses could have been:

- the view that nature is a playground leads to the greater use of environments like the beach shown (one mark). This can increase our connection with these sorts of environments (one mark) but can also lead to negative impacts on them (one mark)
- the view that nature is something to be conquered has led to the rise of adventure sports (one mark). People do things that give them an adrenalin buzz (one mark) as they treat the environment as an adversary (one mark).

Question 3

Students needed to identify an environment that they had studied throughout the year. No marks were awarded for this.

3a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	3	3	14	14	66	3.4

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

- nomadism
- the hunter-gatherer life
- firestick farming
- sacred sites
- corroborees
- rock art.

Possible responses could have been:

- firestick farming (one mark) was used for flushing out animals for hunting and helping to promote vegetation regrowth (one mark)
- seasonal movement (one mark) allowed tribes to follow resources and to help environments to recover (one mark).

Each interaction described needed to identify a valid interaction (one mark) and students needed to give a description of that interaction (one mark).

3b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	4	5	18	17	56	3.2

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

- farming

2010 Assessment Report



- land clearing
- hunting for food and/or sport
- the introduction of foreign species.

Possible responses could have been:

- foxes and rabbits were introduced (one mark) to allow settlers to hunt them for food and sport (one mark)
- land was cleared (one mark) for the development of farms and settlements (one mark).

Each interaction described needed to identify a valid interaction (one mark) and students needed to give a description of that interaction (one mark).

3c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	4	20	19	55	3.2

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

- recreation
- commercial activities
- tourism
- conservation
- education and research.

Possible responses could have been:

- golf courses are developed and built (one mark) for recreation (one mark)
- resorts are constructed (one mark) for people to holiday at and for the developers to make money from (one mark).

Each interaction described needed to identify a valid interaction (one mark) and students needed to give a description of that interaction (one mark). Interactions described in 3a., 3b. and 3c. could be repeated, provided the descriptions were appropriate to the particular time periods.

3d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	13	6	10	17	18	16	20	3.5

Students needed to choose one interaction from each of 3a., 3b. and 3c. (for a total of six marks). For each interaction they needed to identify a relationship (one mark) and then explain the chosen interaction to that relationship (one mark).

Possible responses could have been:

- seasonal movement shows care and respect for the environment (one mark) and conservation or 'worship' relationship (one mark)
- the clearing of land allows the production of food (one mark) and shows a 'worship' relationship (one mark).

3e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	15	10	17	17	18	11	11	2.9

The assessment of the contemporary state of the environment needed to relate to the three different interactions – one from each of 3a., 3b. and 3c. (for a total of six marks). For each interaction students needed to describe the state of the environment (one mark) and assess the effect of the interaction on this state (one mark).

Possible responses could have been:

- there are areas of land degradation like erosion (one mark) caused by the clearing of vegetation (one mark)
- there are areas of remnant vegetation remaining (one mark), which would have been protected by seasonal movement (one mark).

2010 Assessment Report



Question 4

4a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	14	37	50	1.4

Students needed to outline the health of the Victorian environment (one mark) and identify how the data makes this evident (one mark). Students could use the data to indicate a reduction in biodiversity, a reduction in number of species, a reduction in species variation or a loss of habitat. Simply restating figures from the table was not acceptable.

A possible response could have been: The Victorian environment is in poor health (one mark) due to a reduction in biodiversity (one mark).

4bi.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	2	5	25	68	2.6

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

- clearing of habitat
- introduced species
- overharvesting
- salinity
- modification of waterways
- recreational hunting
- pollution.

One mark was awarded for each of three valid factors.

4bii.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	3	2	8	11	22	18	36	4.5

Students needed to outline how each of the factors identified in 4bi. could have caused the situation. Each outline needed to include a good explanation of the effect of the factor (two marks), especially as it related to the table of endangered and vulnerable species.

Possible responses could have been:

- clearing of land reduces habitat diversity (one mark) and can lead to loss of species (one mark)
- introduced species compete with native species (one mark) and can result in loss or reduction of native species (one mark)

4c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	20	6	14	9	18	10	23	3.2

For each one of the three measures, students needed to identify the measure (one mark) and describe the measure (one mark). Measures for environmental health might have included (but were not limited to):

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

Possible responses could have been:

- the quality of water in a river (one mark) can be used to indicate the health of a waterway and the surrounding environment (one mark)
- the number of introduced species in an environment (one mark) can indicate the degree of pressure that native species are likely to be under (one mark).

2010 Assessment Report



4d.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	15	12	25	14	34	2.4

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

- emotional and/or physical wellbeing
- aesthetic appreciation
- economic benefits for individuals, including employment.

For each response, students needed to identify a reason (one mark) and describe the reason why it is important for an individual to maintain healthy environments (one mark).

Possible responses could have been:

- healthy environments provide high levels of water and other resources (one mark) that are vital for survival (one mark)
- people appreciate and enjoy the aesthetics of the environments (one mark). This is enjoyed much more in healthy, natural environments (one mark).

Question 5

5a.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	30	70	0.7

Local, state and national policies were acceptable. International policies such as RAMSAR or World Heritage were acceptable only if they were applied in a local Australian context, and if students indicated this in their responses to 5b. and 5c. Management strategies were not appropriate responses for this question.

5b.

Marks	0	1	Average
%	34	66	0.7

A possible response could have been: The aim of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1998* is to protect and preserve endangered species in Victoria (one mark).

One mark was awarded for a valid aim.

5c.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	31	32	37	1.1

A possible response could have been: The *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1998* includes a procedure for identifying and listing threatened species in Victoria (one mark). Action plans to manage these species and control possible threats are developed and implemented (one mark).

For two marks, students needed to give a good explanation of the operation of the policy.

5d.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	16	25	59	1.5

Groups that may support environmental policies include:

- environmental groups
- conservation groups.

Groups that may oppose environmental policies include:

- land owners
- developers
- miners.

2010 Assessment Report



Environmental and conservation groups were suitable groups likely to support environmental policies. Government agencies and departments directly involved in implementing policies were not acceptable. One mark was given for each valid group identified.

5e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	38	11	26	8	18	1.6

Students needed to outline two actions that the group supporting the policy could use to assist its implementation. Two marks were awarded for each response; students needed to include a good explanation of a feasible action that the chosen group (5d.) could use.

Possible responses could have been:

- identify the species under threat (one mark) and report these to the agencies responsible for the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1998* (one mark)
- organise working groups to remove weed species (one mark), allowing the preservation of native bushland (one mark).

A number of students were confused by this question. It did not ask for methods to influence decision making but rather actions that could be used to support the implementation of a policy. Students need to be flexible in order to respond to questions that may be different from ones they may have used during their examination preparation.

5f.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	25	7	20	12	35	2.3

Students needed to outline two methods that the group opposing the policy could carry out to change or stop the policy. Two marks were awarded for each response. Students needed to identify a method (one mark) and outline the method (one mark).

Possible responses could have been:

- lobbying politicians to stop preservation of bushland (one mark) by organising meetings and conducting phone calls (one mark)
- using the media to promote development projects in sensitive areas (one mark) through advertising and positive promotion (one mark).

Question 6

Students needed to identify a natural environment they had studied throughout the year. No marks were awarded for this.

6a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	2	2	6	13	23	22	32	4.5

For each of the three categories – recreation, conservation, and commercial – students needed to either:

- include an interaction (one mark) and a description of that interaction (one mark)
- outline at least two interactions (two marks).

6b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	25	12	17	13	13	10	10	2.5

For each of the three categories of use in 6a., students needed to identify a factor that could influence patterns and types of interactions (one mark) and then describe how that factor causes the influence(s) (one mark).

Possible responses could have been:

- (for recreation) Technological innovations like lighter and stronger materials (one mark) have made these interactions easier and safer, and this has encouraged more people to become involved (one mark)
- (for conservation) Media coverage of environmental campaigns and issues (one mark) has made more people aware of the need to protect natural environments and this has encouraged the expansion of conservation programs (one mark)

2010 Assessment Report



- (for commercial) Commercialisation of experiences in the outdoors – selling outdoor experiences (one mark) – has made it easier for people who can afford it to participate in these experiences, but can shut out those who can't afford the costs (one mark).

Students who used three different factors generally used them very well. Students who used the same factor for each response found it difficult to respond to the question.

6c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	21	11	17	16	15	11	9	2.6

For each one of the three categories identified in 6a., students needed to describe a relationship (one mark) and connect this relationship to the interactions described in 6a. (one mark).

Possible responses could have been:

- (for recreation) A significant relationship many people have with this environment is that of a playground or gymnasium (one mark). These interactions described show this, and they also help to encourage other people to have this type of relationship with the environment (one mark)
- (for conservation) The conservation interactions described reflect a relationship of worship and protection (one mark). They also show how people are building strong connections with places and then deciding that they need to help protect these places (one mark)
- (for commercial) The commercial interactions described show a relationship that values the environment for what humans can get from it (one mark). This is a complex relationship since people recognise that to make money from environments you also need to protect and sustain them (one mark).