

2015 VCE VET Business examination report

General comments

The 2015 VCE VET Business examination assessed the following units of competency.

- BSBWOR301B Organise personal work priorities and development
- BSBINM301A Organise workplace information
- BSBITU306A Design and produce business documents
- BSBPRO301A Recommend products and services
- BSBCUS301B Deliver and monitor a service to customers

The 2015 examination comprised two sections: Section A, which contained multiple-choice questions, and Section B, which contained short-answer questions.

The following approaches were used when assessing students' responses.

- The competencies that are taught and being assessed relate to the business industry; therefore, the language used by students needs to reflect that industry.
- For questions requiring more than one example, full marks cannot be awarded if answers are the same or the equivalent.

Students and teachers should also note the following information.

- Students are encouraged to read and understand sections of each unit of competency, including the required skills, range statement and evidence guide, and reference several textbooks to gain greater understanding of the program structure.
- Students should avoid answering questions with one word or one phrase unless it is necessary, such as in a list.
- Students' responses should use business terminology or language and be as clear as possible to demonstrate their knowledge.
- Scenarios provided as part of a question are not an answer source for a different question in the examination.
- Students should attempt to answer all questions.
- Students are encouraged to read each question carefully and respond to what has been asked. Students should write responses linked to each scenario provided.
- Students should read a question several times if necessary to comprehend all of its requirements as the ability to follow instructions is an integral part of business practice.
- The question should not be repeated in the answer as this wastes time and space.
- Students should look for key words/terms in questions.
- The answer space provided and the marks allocated should be used as a guide to the length of the answer required.

Specific 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	0	1	1	98
2	99	1	0	0
3	19	1	3	76
4	2	82	1	15
5	93	0	1	6
6	9	90	1	0
7	1	2	95	2
8	2	94	2	2
9	4	58	16	22
10	0	1	98	1
11	3	17	72	9
12	1	88	8	3
13	1	2	7	91
14	1	0	0	99
15	83	9	6	2
16	4	1	2	94
17	15	82	3	0
18	4	88	7	1
19	96	1	2	2
20	90	2	3	5

Section B – Short-answer questions

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	38	14	48	1.1

An additional or extra good or service to the purchased product, given to a customer free of payment. Examples included:

- sample
- buy a plant, get free fertiliser
- product/extended warranty
- buy an iPhone, get a free screen protector or iPhone case.

Some students confused the word 'complimentary' with 'complementary'.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	24	17	27	11	21	1.9

Input devices receive information or data, whereas an output device sends information from an information processing system such as a computer.

- input device – keyboard, mouse, scanner, modem, camera, mobile phone, open
- output device – monitor, printer, photocopier, modem, projector, speakers

Many students were able to provide examples of input/output devices but struggled to explain what input/output devices are.

Bluetooth was not acceptable as it can be both.

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

An input device is one that inserts information or data for processing. For example a scanner inputs hard/copy documents to be accessed electronically. An output device is one that produces information after processing; for example a printer is an output device.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	87	1	5	2	6	0.4

Specific need of customer	How employee may assist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • age • beliefs/values • culture/customs • disability (may include hearing, sight, mobility) • language • gender • religious/spiritual observances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak clearly/summarise/paraphrase. • Use non-discriminatory language. • Use appropriate language/interpersonal skills. • Use non-verbal language/clear written communication/confirm understanding/provide information about ramps/lifts/disability services on offer. • Seek further assistance from a specialist, i.e. sign language. • Multilingual staff/provide information in languages other than English. • Show consideration. Show knowledge of areas, i.e. special rooms for prayer.

Dietary requirements was not an acceptable answer.

Many answers were incorrect as they did not address customers with specific needs.

Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	8	29	38	23	2.7

Any four of the following:

- interview
- surveys
- feedback form (paper and online)
- focus group
- email
- questionnaires
- comment box/web blogs validated by one's email address
- complaints
- verbal
 - face-to-face meeting
 - telephone
- formal letter.

Social media and online reviews are not always verifiable forms of feedback. Mystery shopper was not accepted.

Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	12	4	28	4	52	2.8

Any two of the following:

- survey may provide information on product/service improvements/distribution problems/usage/ordering process/customer demographics
- allows for greater understanding of the customer's needs
- may provide information on best promotional activity – product launch versus web page
- decide which products to promote
- target marketing
- meet sales figures
- successful promotional strategies
- preferred communication method
- what customers like and want (strength of product/service), which product/service to keep
- what customers dislike (weakness of product/service), which product/service to discontinue

This question was answered well.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	40	40	20	0.8

Any two of the following:

- actively and regularly research competitors' products and services
- use catalogues, advertisements, flyers/brochures
- call or visit the competitor to verify
- check product features/benefits/description/date advertised

- use websites
- test the products
- check model number (not product label)
- evidence of purchase receipt.

Many students were unable to give specific examples.

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	7	29	63	1.6

Any two of the following:

- ensures instructions relating to the document have been followed
- makes sure everything that needs to be included is included
- fresh eyes
- ensures consistency of layout/style
- checks for clarity/clear communication (makes sense)
- language should be consistent
- checks spelling and grammar
- checks for typing errors
- saves paper (no reprinting)
- saves time to reprint.

This question was answered well.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	12	16	31	41	2

Any three of the following:

- unexpected higher volume of phone calls and customer visits
- budgetary constraints
- competing work demands
- urgent work from manager
- environmental factors such as time and weather
- resource availability, i.e. lack of computers, software programs
- technology/equipment failure/breakdown
- unforeseen circumstances such as staff illness/resignation
- workplace hazards
- stress.

This question was answered well.

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	24	24	31	22	1.5

Any three of the following:

- trade show
- industry showcase

- field days (agriculture)
- on-site demonstration and training by suppliers
- internal training, on-the-job training and internship
- external training/short course
- informal and formal learning programs
- mentoring
- reading manual on product
- reading industry journals/magazines, business catalogues
- staff meetings where products are discussed

Many students require a better understanding of the term professional development.

Question 9a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	4	28	68	1.7

Any two of the following:

- enables individual to reflect on personal work capabilities
- assess one's own skills
- reach or achieve KPIs
- review strengths and weaknesses
- allows for review of needs analysis
- allows for review of further training needs
- identify areas for improvement
- goal setting.

This question was generally answered well, with most students stating that it highlights strengths and weaknesses.

Question 9b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	3	5	32	24	37	2.9

Skill	Strategy
interpersonal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practise telephone technique • listen to others in the workplace • seek feedback from colleagues/manager
communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compile an FAQs document to use to respond to caller questions • use a script prompter to answer calls • training
time management skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a daily to-do list • use a personal schedule • prioritise tasks • check/confirm with supervisor tasks that are urgent and non-urgent

customer service skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training courses, find a mentor • coaching – access resources
administrative skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training • access key resources

Students struggled to identify the specific skills. Some of the skills identified did not link to the given scenario.

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

Skill	Strategy
<i>Time Management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Create checklists of tasks -prioritise tasks -create work schedule including time allocation -set personal goals or key performance indicators to keep or track.
<i>Communication</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Training in answering phone calls e.g. formal course or from more experienced receptionist -implement effective communication skills -build better relationship with colleagues to encourage seeking assistance

Question 10a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	4	7	20	38	31	2.9

Business technology	Use in a business setting
tablet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • taking notes in a meeting • provide a customised user experience for customers, including sound, video and animation • mobile, can be taken out of the office to various sites • real time, live communication • take photographs, store them, email, upload to websites • effective way to present information to clients/small group • diary • digital signage • work schedule

mobile phone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • off-site communication with workplace and customers • real time, live communication • take photographs, store them, email, upload to websites
scanner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make a copy of a document • convert document to a portable/hard-copy file • scan photographs and images
desktop computer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • manage complex/confidential documents in the workplace • create websites • specific documents, such as create agendas, minutes, cover letters, etc.

This question was generally answered well.

Question 10b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	35	38	27	0.9

Any two of the following:

- letter informing client of date, time and venue of training program
- invoice to client
- agenda for the training day
- email
- handouts/manual/training guide (for customers)
- flyer/brochure
- feedback form/evaluation form.

Memo (internal use) and web page (not a business document) were not acceptable.

Question 10c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	26	20	32	22	1.5

Any three of the following:

- electronic filing system
- manual filing system
- hard drive
- floppy disk/zip file disk
- portable hard drive
- folders
- USB/memory stick
- microfiche
- storage boxes
- archive box
- filing room

- bookshelf
- CD ROM/optical disk
- cloud
- server
- filing cabinet.

Electronic database was not acceptable as this is software. Decentralised filing was unacceptable but decentralised filing system was acceptable.

Some students confused this with filing classification methods such as alphabetical.

Question 10d.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	39	37	24	0.9

Any two of the following:

- verbal skills
- empathy
- build rapport
- eye contact
- seeking feedback to confirm understanding
- appropriate body language
- good/active listening
- questioning to clarify information.

Patience and writing skills and were not accepted as they are not interpersonal skills.

Some students struggled to identify skills. General terms were often used but not accepted such as communication skills.

Question 10ei.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	27	33	40	1.2

Any two of the following:

- offering quality products and services
- slogans and promotional strategies
- loyalty programs
- competitive price
- excellent customer service
- after-sales service
- flexible delivery arrangements
- good product knowledge
- offer product differentiation (something new)
- online training course
- offer discounts.

Advertising was not an acceptable answer.

Some students included the same information in either answer.

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

By offering an incentive or benefit not currently provided by other competitors.

Rewarding existing customer loyalty with discounts or special offers.

Question 10eii.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	30	36	34	1.1

- loyalty programs – to keep customers, offer incentives to return
- excellent customer service – customers will return because they know they will get professional service
- slogans and promotional strategies to create ways for people to remember and identify with them
- competitive pricing so customers know they will be offered a good deal
- flexible delivery arrangements so customers don't need to leave their workplaces
- offer product differentiation (something new) – a new training program to further skills
- online training course – businesses and individuals can train in their own space and more people can be trained from around the world

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

Customers are more inclined to purchase your product/services if you are offering them something additional not received elsewhere. Customers are more likely to stay loyal to your organization and use your products/services if they feel appreciated and valued.

Question 10f.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	46	33	15	6	0.8

Any three of the following:

- free of bullying
- evacuation plan displayed
- disability access
- emergency exits must be clearly marked and participants informed of the exits
- hazards
 - prevention of slips
 - prevention of trips and falls – cables and leads must be secured
- ergonomics – chair, keyboard, screen, document and telephone need to be adjusted for the individual and regular rest breaks need to be taken
- appropriate lighting, heating
- ensure equipment is only used by trained personnel
- environmental factors such as temperature and air quality.

Protective clothing and hazards without explanation were not acceptable.

This question was not well answered. Many responses did not relate to the scenario.

Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	17	49	34	1.2

Internet:

- global system of computer networks
- users are worldwide
- unlimited users

Intranet:

- restricted usage
- network is accessible by employees/members of the business, school or organisation
- content is shared by employees/members within the business, school or organisation
- limited number of users
- local network within an organisation

Generally answers did not distinguish the specific differences between the internet and intranet.

Question 12

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	12	38	50	1.4

Answers included the following:

- readability
- consistency/uniformity
- production of high quality documents
- maintenance of high standards
- improve communication
- enforces best practice
- compliance/audit compliance
- professional image
- saves time.

This question was answered well.

Question 13a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	22	42	35	1.2

Any two of the following:

- tracking code
- timely dispatch of products from Tract warehouse
- well-organised mailroom
- contracting reliable couriers
- confirmation mail or phone call to confirm delivery
- express post
- air mail
- speed post.

Many students were able to identify at least one method.

Question 13b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	10	46	44	1.4

Any two of the following:

- advertising campaign – social media, TV, radio, catalogues, etc.
- vouchers
- loyalty cards, offers
- 'refer a friend' incentives
- promotions/giveaways/samples/prizes
- discounts
- send email to customers (email blast)
- expand product range
- media announcement
- product launch
- unpaid publicity; for example, a celebrity wearing your product.

Market research was not acceptable.

Many students suggested opening a store, which was not accepted. Students missed the idea of what the online business could do to expand.

Question 14

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	9	49	42	1.3

Any two of the following:

- ease of use
- ease of access and retrieval
- easily identifiable
- easier to manage security and integrity of files
- consistency
- saves time.

Many students struggled to provide two advantages.

Question 15

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	15	33	38	14	1.5

Any three of the following:

- give customers full attention by avoiding distractions
- use active listening techniques
- ask questions for clarification
- remove themselves from background/distracting noise
- speak clearly and concisely
- identify yourself
- alter language accordingly
- use customer name
- use an appropriate tone, such as have a smile in your voice

- be confident and positive
- show empathy and understanding
- be prepared to respond to various scenarios
- have information at hand, company website or catalogue for easy referral.

FaceTime and the use of a landline telephone were not acceptable.

Students struggled to provide three answers. Many students wrote clarifying and questioning as separate answers.

Question 16

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	13	24	63	1.5

Any two of the following:

- consult colleagues/supervisors
- consult the user guide, training manuals, FAQs, books
- consult organisational procedures and guidelines
- refer to existing documents
- contacting the Help Desk
- online help screens/tutorials
- IT department
- accessing Help by using the F1 key
- use templates.

This question was generally answered well.

Question 17

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	25	30	31	13	1.3

Any three of the following:

- font size
- paragraph spacing
- line spacing
- margins
- font type
- widow/orphan control.

This question was not answered well. Specific responses that named the functions were required.

Question 18a.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	35	38	27	0.9

- consumer reports provide feedback on customers' behaviour
- businesses use consumer reports to make future decisions and understand consumer behaviour, wants and needs
- plan for the future
- decision-making for the future

- industry reports assist businesses with decisions and help understand competitors, the market, growth in industry, consumer and product trends, price and economic trends and inform them of emerging products/industries
- identify consumer wants and needs
- identify areas of improvement

Many students were unable to demonstrate an understanding of consumer and industry reports. This indicated that students need to read the question carefully to ensure an understanding of what is being asked.

Question 18b.

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	38	41	21	0.8

- product and market and economic trends
- state of industry
- industry trends
- industry report – product range, new products, development, growth, emerging businesses, financial performance, sales figures, research affecting industry, market share, data
- information on competitors
- political factors
- benchmarks

Charts and graphs alone were not accepted. Students' answers needed to relate to the information given.

Many students struggled with this question. Only a few students understood the value or contents of an industry report.

Question 19

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	32	33	27	8	1.1

Any three of the following:

- identifying if it is a primary or trusted secondary source of information such as a government site – ATO, ABS
- audits
- interviews with colleagues and customers
- any information that can be verified as a reliable source
- verifiable signature
- free from bias
- information from other organisations or industry bodies
- someone in authority
- independent expert
- date the information was created or updated.

Many students struggled with this question. Students were not able to demonstrate what a reliable source was.

Question 20

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	3	6	27	64	2.5

Any three of the following:

- overcharged
- dissatisfaction with the service
- dissatisfaction with the product
- goods damaged in transit or at time of delivery
- goods not delivered
- poor or misled quality
- wrong goods delivered
- late delivery or service
- faulty goods
- refund/exchange.

This question was answered well.