



2009 VCE VET Community Services GA 2: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

The number of students undertaking this VCE VET program continued to increase in 2009.

The three sections of the paper were designed to assess students' knowledge and application of the units of competence specified for the study. It was expected that all students would be familiar with the underpinning knowledge and skills identified in the relevant competency standards:

- CHCYTH1C Work effectively with young people
- CHCGROUP2C Support group activities
- CHCRH1B Orientation to work in the leisure and health industry
- CHCCWI1B Operate under a casework framework.

In particular, students had to be able to provide definitions of terms, give a sense of the history of community services, and discuss associated legislation, communication models and techniques, cultural diversity, policies and procedures. In addition, students should be able to apply elective unit knowledge.

Students generally displayed quite a good understanding of the theory; however, when applying concepts to a broader context some students simply restated the question, repeated key words and the used many generic terms, for example, communication, equality and rights.

The examination questions were designed to allow students to use specific instances and examples from their own learning experiences.

As in previous years, the paper comprised three sections: Section A contained short answer questions based on core units of competence, Section B consisted of short answer questions that were based on a scenario and Section C contained questions that were based on the two elective streams – Children's Services and Community Services.

A number of well-answered papers were received. These papers reflected comprehension of the question and gave considered, relevant explanations of concepts. Students' capacity to apply ideas to a variety of scenarios or situations allowed them to respond appropriately across the community services areas. Students who read the questions carefully and responded directly to them received more marks than students who made general statements.

Students needed to answer one elective option. Despite this being clearly stated, there was a considerable number of students who answered both electives. In those instances, the highest score was taken into consideration.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

For each question, an outline answer (or answers) is provided. In some cases the answer given is not the only answer that would have been awarded marks.

Section A – Short answer questions

This section focuses on key concepts, definitions and the underlying principles of community services; therefore students must be able to produce responses that are relevant and accurate.

Question 1a–b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	1	9	27	64	2.6

1a.

Students were required to name one other service area other than aged care and disability services. Children's services, youth work, mental health, community development and protective care were all appropriate responses.

1b.

This question related to the statutory framework in which the work of the service takes place. Acceptable responses included occupational health and safety, duty of care, privacy and naming a specific policy or procedure.

2009 Assessment Report



Question 2

Marks	0	1	Average
%	16	84	0.9

Children and Young Person's Act, Child Wellbeing and Safety Act Equal Opportunity Act, Disability Services Act

Students should have knowledge of relevant legislation associated with the industry.

Question 3a–b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	3	7	17	36	37	3

3a.

Appropriate responses included:

- use of a translator or interpreter service
- information provided in other languages
- use of a person's name
- learning about other cultures
- tolerance
- empathy.

An understanding of culture as more than race was important to be able to answer this question well. Some students listed terms such as food, clothing and respect, which required elaboration.

3b.

Anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	24	34	43	1.2

Duty of care is industry terminology and all students should know its definition. A statement such as 'Taking reasonable measures to ensure safety of clients, colleagues and self' was awarded full marks.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	32	19	14	11	24	1.8

The four principles are participation, equity, access and rights.

While many students recalled the acronym (PEAR), there was some confusion about the terms.

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	34	25	40	1.1

Either of (including an explanation):

- it is a case of equity as a local service. Those living outside the area do not have the right to material aid
- if access is denied, people are refused participation and are not treated equally when they may be in greater need.

Question 7a–c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	0	2	5	11	27	29	25	4.5

This question required some knowledge of OH&S in three different situations.

7a.

In any organisation, a safe working environment is the responsibility of the worker, management and the organisation.

2009 Assessment Report



7b.

Issues identified could have included:

- appropriate training
- job roles
- personal safety
- whether or not machinery was required.

Naming specific injuries or issues was also acceptable.

7c.

Students were required to refer to their answer to Question 7b. and explain an action that could be taken to reduce or minimise the likelihood of risk or injury. They could have given one example and an explanation, or given two examples.

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	11	8	21	60	2.3

Other than by speaking, information could be conveyed in a number of ways, including written form, email, on a website, SMS message, sign language or a PowerPoint presentation.

Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	3	19	78	1.8

Privacy – ask relevant questions only

Confidentiality – don't gossip or share information

Students need to be clear about the difference between policy and practice.

Section B – Scenario

It is essential that students read the scenario material carefully in order to give appropriate responses in this section. Answers should reflect an understanding of the context. Location and identification of key terms assist students to provide relevant answers. Questions 1–4 were well answered and responses indicated that students were able to identify with the scenario.

The information preceding Question 5 related to Questions 5, 6 and 7. Some students responded to the questions out of context, instead making reference to the small planning groups formed to discuss and make recommendations.

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	3	27	70	1.7

It was necessary to gather information from other young people to:

- give representation
- ensure the participation of a range of young people
- have ideas across a range of ages, interests, cultures and economic situations
- ensure access and equity.

An explanation of one point or listing two points was acceptable.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	0	8	92	1.9

There are many ways of gathering information from young people. Appropriate responses included:

- computer-generated gathering of information through Facebook, interactive websites, blogs and SMS messages
- interviews, surveys, discussion groups and meetings to ask pertinent questions.

2009 Assessment Report



Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	1	1	3	15	15	12	54	5

The issues described by students varied but included:

- transport: availability, frequency, vandalism, fear of late night travel
- employment: availability, exploitation, combining with studies
- environmental: impact of bushfires, drug/alcohol issues, location, access to services
- personal issues: bullying, self-esteem, loneliness, body image.

Identification of and reference to the impact of the issue on the life of young people were required to gain two marks for each issue.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	46	22	13	19	1.1

Characteristics of a representative group are to include people of different:

- gender
- culture
- age
- economic/financial levels
- interests
- geography
- educational levels
- status
- religions.

Three characteristics from this list were required for three marks.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	2	9	26	63	2.5

Three things that could ensure the small group functions well could include:

- goal setting
- actioning outcomes
- deciding on group rules
- keeping notes
- deciding on roles.

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	6	5	31	20	38	2.8

Students were asked to identify two roles and two responsibilities. They did not have to be linked. Roles included chairperson, secretary, organiser, 'doers' and 'talkers', decision-making roles. Examples of responsibilities included ideas, enthusiasm, taking notes, fulfilling roles, making good use of time and utilising skills.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	5	5	26	15	50	3

Challenges faced by groups are things such as conflict due to culture, egos, fairness of expectations, role allocation, finances and resources. Students were asked to describe two challenges; for example, 'reaching a decision might be difficult because people have different ideas' or 'ensuring there are sufficient resources to enable people to do their jobs'.

2009 Assessment Report



Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	27	25	24	24	1.5

This question required an understanding of democratic leadership. Appropriate responses referred to being participatory, inclusive, voting on decisions, collaborative decision making and being aware of, and respecting, differences.

Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	7	32	19	40	2.9

One of the group felt they had not been heard. Some ways of addressing this could include discussion of:

- an understanding of group dynamics
- conflict resolution strategies
- roles in, and the process of, group clarification
- effective communication skills
- building and maintaining relationships.

Question 10

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	5	9	85	1.8

It was important for students to read the lead to this question to understand the context for their answer. The benefits of maintaining leisure and social activities for young people are:

- to stay connected
- reduce stress
- have a healthy work/life balance
- exercise
- social development
- meet emotional needs
- understand the relationship between society, culture the family and the young person.

Two specific examples from students' own experience, or general examples from the theory, were accepted.

Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	12	19	69	1.6

This question related to the principles of access and equity, youth cultures, personal and social development and conflict management. Discussions about setting limits and boundaries, defining roles and tasks, self-esteem, motivation, ownership, contributing and recognition were relevant.

Question 12

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	15	9	17	13	16	9	20	3.2

A knowledge and understanding of the historical, social, political and economic context of CHCYTHIC Work effectively with young people would have enabled students to refer to the changes to:

- the rights of young people
- legislation relating to young people
- education
- values and attitudes
- involvement of young people in politics
- crime
- ways young people express their views
- technology for keeping youth connected, accessing information and having input into decision making.

Answers could have made reference to:

- government initiatives for young people

2009 Assessment Report



- access to employment and training across a broader range of areas
- equality for women
- sharing of household roles and responsibilities
- inclusive societies where all opinions are valued
- recognition of the contribution made by our multicultural society
- abolition of the White Australia Policy.

Section C – Electives

Students answered their elective sections well. Knowledge and application of concepts was evident in responses.

Elective 1 – Children’s Services Stream

Question 1a–c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	9	21	37	31	2.9

1a.

Taking turns using a toy is cooperative play, which differentiates it from an activity.

Some students confused developmental stages with types of play.

1b.

Any two of the following were valid responses for the benefits of cooperative play:

- learning to take turns
- social interaction
- sharing
- developing friendships.

1c.

Age 3–5 years was the best answer but 6–12 years was also acceptable. 0–3 year olds are not involved in this type of play.

Questions 2 and 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	1	9	28	62	2.5

Question 2

Any of:

- a type of activity
- a type of play.

Question 3

Two of:

- rattles, soft toys
- items to pull or push
- items to open and shut
- sensory mats
- auditory games
- being read to.

General words like games, books and toys were not acceptable.

Questions 4 and 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7	Average
%	1	6	7	6	7	10	14	20	28	5.7

Headings to organise information when taking a running record included:

- date
- time

2009 Assessment Report



- setting
- children involved
- observation
- observer's name/initial
- decoding
- recommendations, if necessary.

Question 5

The indoor or outdoor activities needed to be OH&S compliant and could have included policy or procedures for:

- safety
- SunSmart policy
- third party checking
- appropriate to age/ability
- manual handling
- hygiene
- safe food handling.

Question 6a–c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	1	4	7	17	29	43	4

6a.

Breakfast, lunch, snack, morning/afternoon tea, hand washing, selecting or serving food

6b.

A variety of healthy food is important because it:

- educates children about taste and texture
- assists development and growth
- introduces appropriate food groups
- recognises cultural influences.

6c.

Staff members can assist the independence of children during food routines by doing things like:

- offering choices
- allowing time
- explaining options
- demonstrating the use of utensils
- modelling behaviour
- encouraging children.

Questions 7 and 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
%	0	0	0	2	7	18	19	53	6.1

Question 7

There are many reasons why parents might use a childcare service and students were required to select three.

Possible answers included:

- to prepare children for school or kindergarten
- time out for the child or parent
- parents' work commitments
- for cross-cultural experiences
- because there is no one else to help with childcare
- to develop the child's social network
- to foster intellectual, social or emotional development.



Appropriate specific examples were also acceptable; for example, ‘so they get used to being away from mum’, ‘to meet other children’ and ‘to get new play experiences’.

Question 8

Benefits for the child include:

- learning about being with other people
- making new friends
- having access to toys and equipment not available at home
- stimulation
- developing a more structured routine
- becoming more independent.

Students were required to explain their answer; for example, ‘The routine of childcare enables the child to know there is a time for play, eating and resting. When they go to kindergarten they are prepared for what happens.’

Elective 2 – Community Services Stream

Questions 1 and 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	12	20	13	18	13	25	2.7

Question 1

Good answers provided a clear definition of advocacy; for example, ‘An advocate represents or speaks on behalf of a person to protect their rights and provide appropriate information to them.’

Question 2

Advocacy is a process to ensure:

- people’s rights are respected
- they can access services
- they can participate in the community
- they are treated equitably
- they have access to appropriate information
- they feel empowered by the process.

Students needed to either list four points or explain two.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	Average
%	22	78	0.8

The main point of advocacy is to put the client first.

Question 4a–c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	27	11	13	15	16	9	8	2.4

4a.

The community development process relates to the principles and practices of community development work. It involves community ownership of the any of the following:

- project
- task
- activity
- problem
- issue.

4b.

Any three of the following characteristics of the community development process were acceptable:

- consultation
- collaboration

2009 Assessment Report



- involvement
- inclusion
- access for all
- ownership
- recognition of contributions
- acknowledging all voices.

4c.

Students were asked to select one of their responses from Question 4b. and explain its importance for community development. Answers should have related to the philosophy, principles and practices of community development work and/or social justice. Answers reflecting relevant local community issues were accepted; for example, 'Ownership means people are more likely to feel included and contribute to the process', 'If people work together you are more likely to get a consensus' or 'When people are included the cultural issues can be bridged'.

Questions 5 and 6

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	20	23	37	20	1.6

Question 5

The role of an advocate in this process could be to:

- empower the community to be heard
- inform them of their rights
- provide knowledge of/access to information
- act as a resource.

This was not about advocacy for an individual.

Question 6

Counselling and support is not a community development activity.

Questions 7 and 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	7	5	14	17	21	17	19	3.6

Question 7

Important headings for accurate reporting could include (four of):

- the name of the project
- venue
- people present/apologies
- issues discussed
- actions/person responsible
- time frame/timelines.

Question 8

Empowerment in community services means things like:

- teaching people to do things for themselves
- generating confidence in people
- gaining education, knowledge and skills to facilitate/enhance the process.

Questions 9 and 10

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	21	22	27	16	15	1.8

Question 9

Students needed to include mention of the community being responsible for:

- investigating possibilities
- involving others in the process

2009 Assessment Report



- developing resources
- skill building
- consultation
- giving people opportunities to speak and be heard, to participate, to contribute and to be valued.

Question 10

Students needed to include reference to the positive changes regarding (two of):

- people
- community structures
- resources
- strategies for change
- a sense of community and belonging
- inclusive policies and practices.

Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	37	29	34	1

Aspects which could indicate that a community development project is sustainable include:

- it continues after the support ends
- there has been change/adaptation/reworking within the community in response to the project
- people/community have assumed ownership, control, maintenance of the project or facility
- The facility/project:
 - is in use
 - is being reviewed
 - continues to develop.