



2010 VCE VET Community Services GA 2: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

It was pleasing to see the number of students enrolled in this VCE VET program continues to increase. In 2010 there were 563 students enrolled.

As students undertake coursework and an examination, it is important that teachers and trainers refer to the scored assessment guidelines and exam specifications, and attend professional development provided by the VCAA and Registered Training Organisations in reference to these areas.

As in previous years, the paper comprised three sections. There were a number of well-answered papers that reflected a very deep understanding of the subject material. Students were able to go into detail with their answers and provide examples to support them. Students are encouraged to review the marks allocated for each question in order to maximise their opportunities to gain the most marks. Students are also encouraged to make the intention of their responses clear to the assessors.

It should be noted that this is the final year the examination will have electives. From 2011, only the four compulsory units of competency from the revised program will be included on the examination. Teachers and trainers should refer to the exam specifications on the VCAA website for further information.

Once again, some students answered both electives. In this case, the answer receiving the highest mark was the one awarded.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

For each question, an outline (or answer) 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 focused on key concepts, definitions and the underlying principles of community services; therefore, students needed to produce responses that were relevant and accurate.

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	21	7	6	7	59	2.8

Students were asked to list the four basic principles of social justice: access, equity, participation and rights. Many students answered this question well.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	3	6	20	71	2.6

Students were asked to list three basic counselling skills, including:

- specialised knowledge
- paraphrasing
- using nonverbal techniques
- maintaining appropriate eye contact
- active listening.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	6	21	73	1.7

Students were asked to provide two reasons why confidentiality is important in community services work. Acceptable responses included:

- legislative framework
- policies and procedures
- effective relationships

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- rights
- trust
- ethics.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	Average
%	62	39	0.4

Caseworkers organise an individual service plan through consultation.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	19	26	55	1.4

A community services mission statement would include goals of the organisation and values.

Questions 6a. and 6b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	5	3	8	51	33	3.0

6a.

There were a number of Acts of Parliament that could be identified. Students were expected to know the correct name of the Act, but not the year it was passed. Teachers and trainers are reminded that Acts of Parliament are constantly changing so this list is correct at the time of publication but should be checked for the current name and wording on the relevant website(s).

Some of the legislative Acts relevant to cultural diversity included:

- *Equal Opportunity Act 1995*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Disability Services Act 2006*
- *Human Rights Act 2004*
- *Age Discrimination Act 2004*
- *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001.*

6b.

Suitable responses included (three of):

- gender
- religion
- race
- sexual preference
- language
- age
- ability
- ethnicity.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	19	29	52	1.3

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.

Questions 8a. and 8b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	14	15	18	36	17	2.3

8a.

The legislation in Victoria overseeing OH&S in community services is the *Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004*.

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8b.

Students were asked to list three OH&S issues, relevant to community services organisations, that require formal policies and procedures. Acceptable responses included:

- no hat, no play
- SunSmart
- manual handling
- viral outbreak
- harassment and bullying
- threat to property
- natural disasters
- smoking
- traffic accidents
- anaphylaxis
- safe food-handling
- hygiene control
- workplace accidents
- ergonomics.

Question 9

Marks	0	1	Average
%	39	61	0.6

To empower clients, the most relevant response was 'skills in applying social justice principles'.

Questions 10a–c.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
%	1	3	5	10	19	21	21	21	4.9

10a.

Other service areas included (two of):

- aged care
- disability
- children's services
- child care
- drug and alcohol
- advocacy services
- juvenile justice
- leisure and health services
- housing.

10b.

An acceptable response that defined the link across different service areas would have been 'community services is the term used to describe a range of different services that integrate with one another and have a common purpose of improving the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable or disadvantaged members of the community'.

10c.

Students were asked to list three common characteristics of youth work, community-based mental health, community development and child protection. Acceptable responses would have included that they:

- work with vulnerable people in need of support
- are not for profit
- have a social benefit
- aim to reconcile issues or problems
- treat all clients equally and/or fairly
- apply the social justice principles.

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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. Locating and identifying key terms will assist students to provide relevant answers.

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	0	1	8	91	2.9

Students were asked to list three reasons why a young person might leave school early. Acceptable responses included:

- not enough money
- family issues
- forced out
- bullying
- lack of focus
- cultural/language barriers
- pregnancy
- peer pressure
- transport issues
- gaining employment.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	5	13	26	56	2.3

Students were asked to provide three reasons why a casework approach would be appropriate for working with early school-leavers. Acceptable responses included:

- easier to meet individual needs
- not a class or group issue
- allows people to progress at different rates
- some have simple needs/some complex
- allows for individual support and plans to be developed
- ensures privacy and confidentiality
- helps with individual goal-setting
- creates open communication.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	2	9	25	63	2.5

Students were asked to identify three things that a caseworker would aim to achieve at the initial meeting. Acceptable responses included:

- identifying the issues
- developing options/actions
- setting a timeframe
- creating rapport
- helping to establish a support network
- identifying barriers/goals/interests
- ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the client.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	7	7	30	16	41	2.8

Students were asked to describe two ways in which the needs of a young person who has been out of school for less than one month may differ from a young person who has been out of school and unemployed for 12 months or more. Acceptable responses included:

- the first person may not have any financial assistance
- the first person would need to establish links with support agencies

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- the first person's social networks will have changed
- the first person may need housing support
- the counselling needs differ between the young people.

Questions 5a. and 5b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	0	1	5	7	87	3.8

5a.

Advantages of a student returning to their former school could have included (two of):

- social connection
- familiar environment (people, processes, buildings)
- easier access
- may help with finances.

5b.

Two advantages to a student of going to a new school would have included:

- allows for a new start
- the student feels less shame as no one knows them
- they can create new support networks
- provides the opportunity to make new friends
- the student may feel less judged at the new school.

Questions 6a and 6b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	1	1	6	17	76	3.7

6a.

Two advantages of a school having the students together in the same class would have included that they can:

- provide mutual support
- share the common issues they are experiencing
- follow a customised program
- track their progress
- relate to each other.

6b.

Two disadvantages of a school having the students together in the same class would have included:

- the possibility of discrimination
- potential for stereotyping
- confidentiality concerns
- disruptive influence on the class
- domination of teacher time
- the possibility that old problems re-emerge.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	23	12	22	43	1.9

Students were asked to contrast three pairs of characteristics that distinguish a gang from a peer group. Acceptable responses included:

- formal rules of membership/informal rules of membership
- closed/open
- formal meetings/informal meetings
- formal leaders/no formal leaders
- official uniform (colours)/no official uniform
- lack of respect for the law/respect for the law
- similar cultural background/different cultural background.

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Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	5	11	25	60	2.4

Students were asked how they, as a caseworker, would maximise the young person's role in decision-making.

Acceptable responses included providing the person with:

- informed choice
- access to information
- effective communication
- empowerment
- respect for their ideas
- information on their rights.

Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	1	1	3	7	15	18	56	5.1

Question 9a.

Students were asked to list two health issues facing young people who may be involved in the Pathways Program.

Acceptable responses included:

- risky behaviour
- STIs
- drug abuse
- alcohol abuse
- binge drinking
- contraception
- diet-related diseases
- mental health
- smoking
- domestic violence
- sexual abuse.

Question 9b.

Students were asked to list legal issues commonly faced by young people. Acceptable responses included:

- underage drinking
- use of illicit drugs
- street offences
- assault
- stealing/shoplifting
- driving offences
- vandalism/graffiti
- fake identification
- access to government benefits
- breach of financial contracts.

Question 9c.

Students were asked to list issues facing disengaged young people. Acceptable responses included:

- family conflict
- relationship stress
- violence
- isolation
- boredom
- depression
- bullying
- lack of social skills
- lack of access to basic needs
- homelessness.

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Question 10

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	4	14	82	1.8

Students were asked to give two reasons why many disengaged young people do not pursue leisure opportunities or activities. Acceptable responses included:

- lack of money
- difficulties with access/transport
- lack of networks
- lack of knowledge/lack of awareness
- cultural priorities.

Questions 11a. and 11b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	0	1	2	6	15	77	4.7

Question 11a.

Students were asked to give three reasons why very few young people would attend organised activities. Acceptable responses included:

- disengagement
- disempowerment
- activities organised for them rather than with them
- stereotyped activities
- lack of publicity
- bad timing
- activities may not be of interest to young people.

Question 11b.

Students were asked to recommend two strategies that a caseworker would use to improve attendance at these organised activities. Acceptable responses included:

- involve the young people in the planning
- survey the young people to determine their interests
- change the time or location
- make it more affordable
- have a reward for attending
- offer a variety of activities at the same time.

Section C – Electives

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

Elective 1 – Children’s Services Stream

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	1	12	87	1.9

Students were asked to list two reasons why play is important to child development. Acceptable responses included:

- helps children learn to take turns
- increases their social interaction
- encourages sharing
- helps them develop friendships
- helps physical development
- increases social and learning skills.

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Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	16	8	11	13	15	77	3.1

Question 2a.

Students were asked to list three methods a childcare worker uses to observe children. Acceptable responses included:

- running records
- taking photographs
- using checklists
- preparing portfolios
- paying attention to their interests
- listening to their stories
- time sampling.

Question 2b.

Students were asked to choose one of the methods identified in Question 2a. and then describe two aspects of the information a child care worker would include in their observation. Acceptable responses included:

- the date and time
- the setting
- the children involved
- any toys or equipment involved
- the children's behaviour
- any recommendations
- planning suggestions.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	8	10	22	60	2.3

Students were asked to list three ways observations can help a childcare worker to plan a developmentally appropriate and high-quality program to meet the individual needs of a child. Acceptable responses included helping to detail their:

- milestones
- strengths
- needs
- routines
- times
- indoor activities/outdoor activities
- group dynamics
- children's interests
- activities to meet child development stage
- safety
- likes/dislikes.

Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	4	4	3	13	18	28	30	4.4

Three other major areas of child development other than social development would have included:

- physical – fine motor skills/gross motor skills
- emotional
- cognitive (or intellectual)
- spiritual
- moral
- language
- creative.

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Question 4b.

Students were asked to describe three characteristics of social development that would be typical of either two year olds or seven year olds. Acceptable responses included:

Typical two-year-old behaviour:

- egocentric
- does not share/take turns often
- uses actions rather than words
- plays alongside others rather than with others
- associative play
- parallel play
- experiences separation anxiety.

Typical seven-year-old behaviour:

- takes turns
- understands concept of sharing
- understands rules
- enjoys established friendships.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
%	1	2	1	3	11	12	22	48	5.8

Students were asked to describe three activities that are suitable for either 3–5 year olds or 8–10 year olds. All answers required details of any equipment, materials and settings needed. Accepted types of activities included the following.

Suitable activities for 3–5 year olds:

- cooking
- sewing
- carpentry
- washing.

Suitable activities for 8–10 year olds:

- hobbies
- puzzles
- craft
- reading
- caring for pets.

Question 6

Apart from snack time, lunchtime and other meal time routines, students were asked to name one other routine that forms an important part of a child's day in care. Acceptable responses included:

- sleep/rest
- indoor play
- outdoor play
- arrival/departure
- toilet/hygiene
- specialised activities/programs.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	3	10	22	63	3.4

Students were asked to describe four aspects of the childcare worker's role during children's play. Examples of acceptable responses included:

- providing a challenging or stimulating environment
- engaging in play
- observing the children
- asking open-ended questions

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- assisting with skill development
- making suggestions
- supervising play
- managing the children's behaviour
- resetting the area
- ensuring activities are safe
- being a role model
- giving encouragement.

Elective 2 – Community Services Stream

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
%	4	2	2	3	10	17	19	44	5.5

Students were asked to list two reasons why people seek an advocate in community services. Acceptable responses included:

- to empower them to speak on their own behalf
- they are unsure of processes/resources/information
- language/cultural difficulties
- physical health problems
- social health problems
- mental health problems
- to assist them to access services

Question 2a.

Students were asked to list three roles of an advocate when helping a client. Acceptable responses included:

- providing skills
- providing information
- providing access to resources/services
- respecting client's rights
- helping with problem solving.

Question 2b.

Students were asked to choose one of these roles identified in Question 2a. and explain two things this may involve.

Acceptable responses included:

- being non-judgmental
- respecting their point of view
- informing them of their rights.

Questions 3 and 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
%	8	4	8	11	15	10	13	31	4.5

Students were asked to identify three key principles of advocacy that a worker would need to observe to appropriately advocate for clients. Acceptable responses included:

- having a needs focus
- having a client focus
- giving information to prepare the client
- assisting the client to prepare
- speaking when asked to and when appropriate
- helping overcome language/literacy barriers.

Question 4

Students were asked to explain two ways in which advocacy empowers the client. Acceptable responses included:

- aids participation
- provides information
- builds skills
- makes links to relevant authorities/services

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- acknowledges their rights.

Questions 5 and 6

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	13	10	15	14	16	32	3.0

Students were asked to list two ways in which mediation differs from advocacy. Acceptable responses included:

Mediation:

- involves multiple clients
- works for a compromise.

Advocacy:

- involves representing the rights of the client
- works for the best outcome for the client.

Question 6

In developing a community development strategy, students were asked to list three variables that should be identified before beginning the process. Acceptable responses included:

- resources
- issues
- actions
- options
- consequences
- stakeholders
- sustainability
- skills deficit
- goals/outcomes
- wellbeing of the client
- timeframe.

Questions 7 and 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	5	1	19	16	23	35	3.6

Students were asked to list two ways in which information could be presented to a community to assist the community development process. Acceptable responses included:

- through media articles
- at community meetings
- through face-to-face discussions
- via technologies (Facebook, websites, emails)
- at community events
- through surveys/questionnaires
- by polling.

Question 8

Students were asked to list three other ways a community could be empowered by the community development process.

Acceptable responses included:

- becoming united in a common cause
- taking ownership
- taking leadership
- organising a strategic approach
- sourcing expertise
- exploring funding
- creating a democratic process
- reducing discrimination.

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Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	17	16	24	42	1.9

As a member of your community, students were asked to list three roles you could have to assist the process.

Acceptable responses included:

- recruiting
- providing information
- joining the committee
- attending meetings
- fundraising
- ensuring activities are safe
- researching, doing surveys
- networking.