

2022 VCE Industry and Enterprise external assessment report

General comments

Students generally scored highly in the 2022 VCE Industry and Enterprise examination, with the majority attempting all questions. Students demonstrated a good understanding of many of the key knowledge elaborations, including work-related skills, training, innovation and flexible work arrangements.

Responses that did not score well were not strong in their application of knowledge to scenarios provided in the examination. Many students struggled to comprehend and respond accurately to the specific requirements of the task word within questions, resulting in responses that did not address the specific question being asked. Students need to be familiar with the requirements of higher-order terms such as compare, distinguish, discuss and evaluate. The limit for each is specified in the study design. It is important that as part of their examination preparation students are given opportunities to practice writing responses to questions that use different command terms. Students and teachers can access the [list of command terms](#) on the VCAA website.

There is a need to focus on the interrelationship/connections between different elements of the study, for example between work-related skills and an enterprise culture, or work-related skills and the development of innovation.

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.

Question 1a.

Mark	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	5	3	38	38	17	2.6

Students generally handled this question well. Most described the key features of two work-related skills they developed during their structured workplace learning and then detailed how they applied one of these skills. A common error made by students was to simply name two work-related skills without describing them. Some students detailed how they used both skills. Students are reminded that in questions where one example is specified, that only the first response will be read and marked.

The following is an example of a possible response.

I developed a range of communication skills during my workplace learning. Communication skills allow a message to be accurately shared verbally, in writing or visually. The communication could be with other employees, customers, suppliers, or members of the public. I also developed my problem-solving skills when seeking solutions to issues. Problem-solving involves identifying the underlying issue and brainstorming possible solutions leading to the implementation and monitoring of a solution.

I used my problem-solving skills when an angry customer complained that a large order had not arrived. This could mean that the customer would not shop with us again. The easiest solution was to reschedule the delivery, another option was for our store to pay for an urgent express delivery. I made the problem solving my priority and checked to see if all parts of the order were in our storeroom or at the larger distribution centre. I then phoned my manager and explained that I could organise express delivery guaranteeing delivery to the customer within 2 hours. Once the manager approved my solution, I contacted the customer and delivery firm to make arrangements.

Question 1b.

Mark	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	9	23	32	19	17	2.2

To be awarded full marks for this question, students needed to explain the links between the development of work-related skills and the development of an enterprise culture. They also needed to demonstrate an understanding of the key elements of an enterprise culture and be able to show how work-related skills supported this. Most high-scoring responses did this by explaining how specific work-related skills increased the level of enterprise culture. Responses that did not score well either did not demonstrate an understanding of the key elements of an enterprise culture and/or explicitly show the role of work-related skills in an enterprise culture.

The following is an example of a possible response.

A key component of an enterprise culture is the ability of the workplace to respond to issues proactively. The planned and supported development of work-related skills is central to the ability of the workplace to develop and maintain an enterprise culture. If employees develop complex communication skills, they can speak and write to stakeholders to accurately convey intended messages. This will help build trust-based relationships with other employees so that they work consistently, support each other, share ideas, and learn from each other. Effective communication skills help employees to listen carefully and then ask clarifying questions and to show empathy and understanding. These are all implicit in an enterprise culture. Furthermore, if employees are supported to develop problem solving skills, they will be able to proactively respond to a range of problems that are faced in any workplace. Detailed problem-solving skills build employee confidence and the ability to work as a productive team by making a range of contributions as problems are explored, possible solutions generated, and decisions successfully implemented.

Question 2a.

Mark	0	1	2	Average
%	5	27	69	1.7

To be awarded full marks students needed to outline two work-related skills that Lou **could have** developed during his structured workplace learning. Students did not need to make links to the stimulus material, but the skills needed to be logical in the context of a café. Some students simply described the two work-related skills and did not show how Lou demonstrated these skills. The most common work-related skills outlined were communication, planning and organising and using technology.

Question 2b.

Mark	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	7	22	28	34	8	2.2

Enterprising behaviour involves developing appropriate enterprise capabilities as well as relevant skills acquisition. When individuals put these skills into practice, an enterprise culture can be fostered within the workplace. After defining this term, higher-scoring responses explained actions that Lou could have taken in the café workplace to show the depth and breadth of his enterprise capabilities. Enterprise capabilities include adaptability, acting autonomously, taking charge of oneself and showing leadership by motivating and inspiring others. Responses that did not score well often failed to define enterprising behaviour and so could not be awarded full marks. In addition, they tended to focus on descriptions of the behaviour and not an explanation of how Lou could have demonstrated them in the workplace.

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

Enterprising behaviour is concerned with an employee showing by their actions that they have developed a range of enterprise capabilities. Lou might have demonstrated his enterprising behaviour by showing his willingness to learn through asking the manager to enroll him in a barista course. He could then have expressed his willingness to work on the coffee machine during peak periods. In his daily work he could show his ability to connect and work with others by treating all colleagues with respect and trying to develop relationships with them. This would assist him to understand their perspectives.

Question 2c.

Mark	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	23	11	34	22	9	1.9

This question required students to identify a workplace with which they were familiar. This could have been the workplace where they completed their structured workplace learning, or one studied in class. They then needed to discuss the opportunities and challenges that this workplace faced developing and/or maintaining an enterprise culture. Finally, they needed to assess how successfully the workplace had developed an enterprise culture. Responses that did not score well did not address all the required elements. The most common omission was limiting their comments to a description of enterprise culture in that workplace without explicitly addressing either the extent to which that had occurred or the challenges that they faced.

The following is an extract from a possible response.

However, the business is open to problem solving and innovation when initiated by management. In the past decade rainfall in the area has declined. They adopted an innovative response by investigating a way, suggested by an employee, to reduce water use. Technology plays a crucial role in the operation of the farm. The owners are currently investigating the use of the new driverless tractors to harvest some crops. Recently they have installed new technology in the packing shed to sort and pack produce. This technology allows produce to be delivered more quickly and has improved quality in produce going to the retailer. The produce rejected by the technology is now sold to a local farmer to feed his pigs. Projections by the owner show that the technology will pay for itself within five years.

Question 3a.

Mark	0	1	2	Average
%	13	42	45	1.3

Students handled this question well by defining the term and providing an example. Some students failed to provide an example and so were unable to be awarded full marks.

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

Workplace flexibility is the implementation of a range of strategies that allow the workplace and its employees to adapt quickly to changing work circumstances. An example of workplace flexibility is adjusting working hours so employees can attend events at their children's school or employers can send workers home early if needed.

Question 3b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	13	10	21	19	21	15	2.7

To achieve full marks for this question, responses needed to identify a community or work setting, outline two types of flexible work arrangements, and show how each could lead to a development of an enterprise culture in that workplace. Responses that did not score well were generally limited to an outline of two types of flexible work arrangements without establishing how each supported an enterprise culture. The use of the terms 'numerical' and 'functional flexibility' in answers was problematic for some students as they could not provide outlines of each term.

The following is an extract from a possible response.

My workplace was with "Big Build". The business uses a range of flexible work arrangements. Employees display functional workplace flexibility; this means that they will be completing a variety of tasks in the workplace rather than just the one. During work placement I framed, plastered, answered queries from clients and loaded the vehicle. This diversity meant I demonstrated a range of WRS and gained a more comprehensive understanding of the business. Seeing the links between roles I felt confident and competent to contribute ideas and to ask questions as part of an integrated team. This contributed to the continued development of an enterprise culture as workers contributed proactively while focusing on working to a high standard of quality.

Question 3c.

Mark	0	1	2	Average
%	12	41	47	1.4

This question required students to show the link between workplace flexibility and the attraction and retention of employees. Higher-scoring responses provided logical reasons – often that the workplace would build a reputation as an 'employer of choice' for current and potential employees – for the relationship. Responses that did not score well generally focused on an outline of what workplace flexibility was without explicit links to attracting and retaining employees.

The following is an extract from a possible response.

The introduction of flexible workplace arrangements can definitely help attract and retain employees. Many employees now place high importance on working in a workplace which promotes flexibility. Therefore, a workplace which reflects this will build the commitment of employees as they will feel valued and listened to. They will recognise that they are an important asset for the workplace and that consequently their professional and at times personal needs will be met. This will act as an incentive for them to continue their employment with the workplace. In addition, the workplace will build their reputation in the industry which will help attract new employees.

Question 3d.

Mark	0	1	2	3	Average
%	13	35	38	14	1.5

To achieve full marks for this question students needed to explore the possible benefits of workplace flexibility for an improvement in work-related skills and productivity. On the whole, students were able to demonstrate links between these concepts. Responses that did not score well frequently did not address both concepts.

The following is an example of a possible response.

Workplace flexibility will improve work-related skills by increasing the skill base of employees. Functional flexibility will mean that employees have a grasp of a wide variety of tasks and required skills in a workplace or industry. This will enable them to understand a wider range of tasks and links between the tasks and WRS like the need to communicate. Employees will probably be able to use diverse technology in the industry and the quality of team discussion could be improved as employees understand the demands of different tasks. Productivity could also be improved as employees with flexible work arrangements like job sharing, flexible start and/or finish times or the ability to work from home, should feel more connected to the workplace. The flexible arrangements should ease tension between professional and personal commitments enhancing their ability to focus on their role. This should lead to an improvement in the quality of their work and productivity. If they feel valued employees are also more likely to put more effort into their work.

Question 4a.

Mark	0	1	2	Average
%	26	29	45	1.2

A large number of students struggled with this question. The most common error was a confusion about the difference between an event in society, for example the pandemic, and a change in the underlying social attitudes or values. Other responses that did not score well identified but did not adequately describe the selected change in social values or attitudes. Responses awarded full marks identified and then described a change in social values or attitudes. Changes identified included the increased desire for work–life balance, the increased preference for online shopping, the significant increase in concern for the environment and changing attitudes towards health including the increase in vegan lifestyles.

Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	15	9	23	27	9	10	7	2.7

Students needed to identify and outline the key features of an opportunity or pressure and evaluate one industry's response to it. Examples of selected opportunities or pressures include the impact of COVID-19 and lockdowns; changes in trading relationships with other countries, especially China; workforce skills shortages; and the increased priority of environmental sustainability. Many students struggled to provide detail and/or an overall supported conclusion when exploring the response of an industry. Their responses tended to be brief, one-sided descriptions that were not supported by evidence. There were several responses that fully explored the response of the industry in detail, often with precise relevant evidence, before making a logical conclusion about the effectiveness of the response.

The following is an extract from a possible response.

Overall, the signs point to a long-term change in consumer behaviour, generated by this change in social attitudes, and the need for Australian retail business to maintain and develop their focus on online shopping/ecommerce. The impact of the pandemic may have assisted the industry to respond to the underlying change in attitudes as Australian ecommerce has had unprecedented growth since April 2020. By the end of 2021 the industry came close to hitting growth forecasts that were originally set for five years from now, as more people shop online, more often, for more types of products. For the industry to maintain and develop their market share and profits businesses will need to continue to focus on the opportunities and adopt a proactive innovative approach. They will also need to embrace the challenges to be price competitive and at the forefront of technology.

Question 5a.

Mark	0	1	Average
%	46	54	0.6

A number of students found this question challenging, with nearly half failing to be awarded the mark available. An industry-specific competency is the capability to apply or use the set of related knowledge, skills and abilities required to successfully perform tasks in a defined industry.

Question 5b.

Mark	0	1	2	3	Average
%	41	13	20	26	1.4

To be awarded full marks for this question students needed to select and outline any process that could assist in the development of employees' industry-specific competencies. Students who struggled to accurately define the term were generally not able to meet the demands of this question. Responses that did not score well tended to identify a possible process, which was followed by a brief description but was not explained.

Students wrote about several different processes to develop industry-specific competencies. Some students focused on macro processes using a skills audit to frame required learnings while others commented on work-based processes including mentoring and on-the-job training.

The following is an example of a possible response.

The first step in this process is for the workplace or industry to align the specific competency requirements to each work role with the qualifications and experience of employees in those roles. This may identify competency gaps as well as areas where competencies of employees need to be up-graded (perhaps to keep up to date with changes in technology) or revisited and reinforced (for example in the need to OHS standard compliance). Once this has been done choices need to be made on the best way to build and maintain the competency. Training has a fundamental role in this. The workplace or industry must select the delivery mode for the training. This includes decisions about on-the-job or off-the-job training as well as who is best suited to deliver the training. In most cases, many aspects will be delivered and assessed in the workplace so that the training can be tailored to the unique characteristics of that workplace.

Question 6a.

Mark	0	1	2	Average
%	13	33	54	1.4

This question was generally handled well. The majority of students were able to accurately identify a possible government initiative to encourage motorists to purchase electric vehicles and provide a clear outline of this to be awarded two marks. Relevant initiatives included grants, subsidies, tax/rebate incentives to purchasers, increasing petrol taxes, increased provision of charging stations and advertising campaigns.

Question 6b.

Mark	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	18	24	31	14	13	1.8

To gain the maximum four marks for this question, students were required to discuss the impact of the government initiative on two stakeholders. This required them to comment on the opportunities and challenges of the government initiative for both stakeholders. Higher-scoring responses were structured in a paragraph, outlining these opportunities and challenges, for each. The most popular stakeholders were employees, retailers and potential purchasers. Responses that did not score well tended to provide brief unbalanced descriptions of one side of a possible impact or addressed only one stakeholder.

The following is an example of a possible response.

Customers are an industry stakeholder. If the government were to provide a subsidy this would mean that customers should get a reduced price on their vehicles as the cost of manufacture would be less for the vehicle company. However, this depends on whether the electric vehicle manufacturer chose to pass the saving on to the customer.

Employees are another industry stakeholder, if the government were to provide a subsidy and encourage vehicle manufacturers to produce electric vehicles then employees would have to learn new skills. For many employees this would be welcome and may increase their employment prospects. However, some employees would resist this change as it would be challenging for them and may lead to unemployment.

Question 6c.

Mark	0	1	2	3	Average
%	26	27	26	22	1.5

Many students found this question challenging. Students were required to identify an industry and then explain a way the government could promote change in that industry. Popular methods the government could use included changes in fiscal policy like funding for research and development, promotion of Free Trade Agreements and changes in legislation. Responses that did not score well were generally limited to a description of the method and did not address how that action could promote change, which they needed to do to be awarded two of the three marks, or they selected a change that was not government related.

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

The Victorian government has recently introduced a number of environmental based guidelines and mandates which will mean that industries will either need to change or will feel supported to make changes. This government's approach to climate change promotes change in the building and construction industry by requiring potential suppliers to meet climate risk assessments. This could mean

that the industry will need to introduce new or adapt existing procedures and use new materials and energy sources to enter into contracts with government. An example of this is the requirements related to the Metro Tunnel Project.

Question 7a.

Mark	0	1	2	Average
%	3	35	62	1.6

Students generally handled this question well. The majority of students selected and provided key details of one of the actions mentioned in the stimulus material. These included the 'employee of the month' scheme; the use of training; the 'ideas board' and associated awards; and increased workplace flexibility arrangements. Students are reminded that in questions where a stated number of responses are required, they should limit their response to that number to be awarded the appropriate marks. If more than one was included, only the first response was marked.

Question 7b.

Mark	0	1	2	3	Average
%	10	31	38	21	1.7

This question required students to comment on the link between the development of work-related skills and continued innovation. To be awarded three marks, clear links needed to be made to the case study. Responses that did not score well often did not include reference to the case study.

The following is an example of a possible response.

There is a strong link between the development and application of work-related skills and the level of innovation in a business. With the introduction of new technologies, including drones and the automated watering system at Alex's Apples and the need for less employees, managing and leading will be important in that employees can take charge of situations and manage themselves and others. They will be able to plan and organise their daily tasks, manage risk, use resources effectively, work sustainably, review their own performance, and work well with others. This will go hand in hand with being adaptable. Employees with continually improving work-related skills will not only embrace the changes happening at Alex's Apples, accept the challenges and manage the new technologies and feel that their voice is valued so will be more likely to contribute to innovate and may generate ideas for further innovation.

Question 7c.

Mark	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	25	32	23	16	5	1.4

A 'distinguish' question requires students to directly comment on the differences between the concepts identified in the question. Many students struggled to do this. Their responses were often limited to definitions or descriptions of the two types of innovation. It was not possible to infer that because students knew what people-based and technology-focused innovation was that they also knew the differences between them. Therefore, full marks could not be awarded to responses that did not clearly enunciate this distinction.

The following is an example of a possible response.

A key difference between the two types of innovation is that technology focused innovation revolves around relying on the use of technology to innovate. This generally involves developing or incorporating new technology into existing processes. In contrast, people-based innovation prioritises changing the mindset of employees at all levels so that they generate new ideas and processes to support and deliver innovation. These approaches frequently lead to a difference in the emphasis on work-related skills. If a business adopts technology focused approach to innovation, they are likely to develop the technological skills of their employees so that they can adapt to new technology and deliver the benefits of the innovation. On the other hand, if the focus is on people generated innovation, work-related skills like working in teams, problems posing and solving and thinking, risk taking and acting proactively will be central.

Question 7d.

Mark	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	10	28	28	18	15	2.0

To be awarded full marks for this question students needed to comment on the opportunities and challenges that training poses for employers and employees. From the employer's perspective, the opportunities include increased safety and productivity, while challenges include increased costs, time and possible diversion from other key goals. Employees may benefit by improving their employability and job satisfaction but may find the new training stressful and difficult and may be required to complete it out of work hours, impacting their work–life balance.

The following is an extract from a possible response.

Employees may feel challenged by training to support the introduction of new technology and be uncertain of their ability to cope. However, the training assists employees to develop new skills, knowledge, and capabilities to operate the new technologies. This will not only increase their value to the employer but could increase their satisfaction and safety at work...

Question 7e.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	25	15	18	16	14	8	5	2.2

This question required students to use the stimulus material to scaffold an industry-centred analysis of the relationship between work-related skills and an innovative culture. Many students did not address all parts of the question and could not be awarded full marks. In addition, a significant number of students did not respond comprehensively to the 'analyse' command term and wrote a descriptive response to the process an industry had used to introduce an innovation. Students are reminded that they should not use prepared answers but rather use knowledge acquired during the course to address the precise questions asked.

The following is an extract from a possible response.

I am familiar with the agricultural industry. In a time when arable land is shrinking, and farmers cannot find enough farm hands to work the land and to harvest crops, new ways of farming need to be considered. Farmers need employees to have more expertise. There is a trend for fewer people working on the land and fewer people want to get their hands dirty anymore. Technology and machinery of all sorts are taking the place of people in many instances. Robots and automated machinery used for monitoring and managing crops are becoming more popular. Driverless tractors are also on the increase. This does mean higher initial costs for the farmer, however less employees are needed. It also means that farm hands may need to retrain to upskill or lose their job. Farmers will seek workers who have a combination

of work-related skills and the transferrable digital skills including being collaborative, creative, entrepreneurial, and especially have sound communication and problem-solving skills to encourage innovative practices and productivity. These days to have a career in agriculture that leads to further advancement means employees must become specialist professionals. This will result in the agricultural sector being able to provide quality food to those who can afford to pay for it, such as the emerging middle class in Asia. For example, the improvements to the efficiency and productivity of Alex's Apples will certainly enhance Alex's ability to sell his produce locally and in the overseas market.