2021 Chinese Background Speakers Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the 2021 assessment cycle, gives an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, and the quality of student performance.

Teachers should refer to the subject outline for specifications on content and learning requirements, and to the subject operational information for operational matters and key dates.

School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Folio

There are three assessments in this part: interaction, text production, and text analysis. Teachers designed three to five tasks for this assessment type, which provided students with the opportunities to address all of the specific features which are stated in the performance standards in the subject outline.

When designing assessment tasks for the folio, teachers need to ensure that they provide the students with the opportunity to address all of the specific features (i.e. I1, I2, E1, E2, E3, IR1, IR2 and IR3) as stated in the performance standards in the subject outline.

Interaction

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated a clear understanding of the purpose, audience, and context of their texts, and this understanding influenced the ways in which the text was structured, and the language was used
* featured highly competent expression of opinions in response to open-ended questions, without being overly reliant on a script, particularly in the assessment design criteria of Ideas and Expression
* supported and justified their opinions with logical and coherent evidence
* created the desired interest, impact, and engagement of the audience, through judicious use of language
* used highly developed and appropriate language
* employed a variety of communication strategies effectively.

The less successful responses commonly:

* provided general information on the topic, rather than detailed analysis and explanation of the topic
* needed more preparation to respond confidently, and in greater depth, to unscripted questions and comments
* required constant teacher guidance
* lacked evidence from a range of sources
* were based only on personal experience in the discussions.

Note: In discussions, care should be taken to give students the opportunity to expand on answers. Folio — Interaction tasks should have different content to the oral presentation tasks.

Text Production

The more successful responses commonly:

* were based on a specified contemporary issue, and the teacher had focussed on one text type and explicitly taught the language and structure relating to this text type
* were based on more specific questions than ‘Write an essay on …’ or ‘Write a response to ...’, and clearer instructions of a specific task (context, audience, and purpose of writing) were given
* provided detail and justification of their ideas
* used a range of sophisticated expressions and appropriate cohesive devices
* fulfilled the task requirements of addressing an issue, as specified in the subject outline
* fulfilled the task requirements of conveying opinion about the issue, as well as providing supporting information
* utilised information and ideas arising from the text to form and express their own opinions.

The less successful responses commonly:

* provided, for example, a recount of a film, or information on a topic, without considering different perspectives
* stated what they had read and presented the data/information without adequate analysis
* bore limited relevance to the topic and purpose, with superficial expression of ideas, and a lack of detail
* were incoherent and poorly structured.

Text Analysis

The more successful responses commonly:

* analysed and explained the content, purpose, and audience of the texts
* responded to questions in the candidate’s own words, with appropriate textual references to support their opinions.

The less successful responses commonly:

* identified the key issue but did not incorporate examples from the texts effectively, when supporting the student’s own views.
* It is important to be clear about the requirements as set out in the subject outline and give students opportunities to fulfil these requirements. Some good text analysis tasks allowed students to compare the perspectives, ideas, and opinions in the texts, thus demonstrating their competence in the essential part of this assessment — the Evaluation and Reflection assessment design criteria. It was difficult for students to demonstrate specific feature ER2 (Analysis of linguistic, cultural, and stylistic features) if the written task only required them to respond to a text. The text analysis task needs to be designed to give students the opportunity to analyse, evaluate and reflect on linguistic and cultural aspects, based on their research and learning.

Advice for improvement

When designing assessment tasks for the folio, teachers need to ensure that the assessment tasks provide the students with the opportunity to address all the specific features (i.e., I1, I2, E1, E2, E3, IR1, IR2 and IR3) which are stated in the performance standards in the subject outline.

When designing the Interaction task for the folio, teachers need to ensure that the task provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their capability to interact in Chinese. A presentation with one or two questions does not provide this opportunity. Topics for the Interaction Assessment should not be the same as the oral examination sample questions on the SACE website.

Assessment Type 2: In-depth Study

Students were required to carry out an in-depth study (IDS) of one contemporary issue of their choice. There are three assessments for the in-depth study:

* an oral presentation in Chinese (5–7 minutes)
* a written response to the topic in Chinese (maximum of 1000 characters)
* a reflective response in English (maximum of 600 words).

The three assessments should differ in context, audience, and purpose, and be supported by evidence of research, text analysis and evaluation, and planning and preparation. While it is appropriate for teachers to advise on suitable issues, the IDS must be a product of independent study rather than a response to a topic taught to the whole class.

The more successful responses commonly:

* focussed on a specific topic that was of interest or relevance to the student
* analysed findings from a variety of sources and synthesised information (written responses in Chinese)
* used sophisticated linguistic structures and featured expressive communication
* consistently observed conventions of text types
* used appropriate referencing methods, correctly referencing quotes and the ideas of others, which were then elaborated upon in the student’s own words
* presented the process of their IDS research in a spontaneous and independent way, without over-reliance on pre-prepared answers or reading from a script (oral presentation in Chinese)
* demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the subject of the study, such as the different views of society on this issue, the points of contention, international views (e.g. compare the issue in China with different countries), etc.
* used surveys, statistical data, and examples to make their points more convincing
* presented a clear idea of what the student wanted to achieve in this assessment and provided insightful evaluation of the topics. They focussed on specific aspects, providing detailed analysis and/or explanation of how the texts studied informed their own understanding and perspectives on the topic (reflection in English).

The less successful responses commonly:

* chose broad and general topics, making it difficult for students to demonstrate the Ideas assessment design criterion to a high level
* presented data/information as a series of quotes without attempts to analyse and explain the information, ideas, or perspectives
* presented merely general information on the topic or simply described the process of their research rather than providing a personal reflection on cultural perspectives, or profound learning of the topic (reflection in English)
* were brief and superficial, only using simple sentence structures and vocabulary, thereby lacking clarity of expression.

Advice for improvement

* carefully choose the topic — teachers may guide their students to choose an appropriate topic which allows students to demonstrate their capabilities in this assessment (either too narrow or too broad a topic will have an impact on the depth of the study)
* students need to develop research skills in how to conduct research (research methodologies), how to select relevant information, how to analyse information and how to draw a conclusion
* read experts’ and scholars’ books, articles, and statements on the issue of your topic as much as possible, and use them to support your opinions

External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Examination

Students undertake one 15-minute oral examination and a 130-minute written examination on the prescribed themes which are stated in the subject outline (pages 32–34).

Oral Examination

The more successful responses commonly:

* interacted on refreshing, meaningful, and interesting topics that were carefully chosen
* provided evidence of research that was conducted appropriately and thoroughly
* demonstrated an excellent knowledge and deep understanding of their research topics
* demonstrated excellent research skills such as analysis and data selection (selecting useful resources), logical reasoning, abstract summary, and conclusion
* interpreted experts’ theories accurately and used them as references to justify their views
* expressed themselves clearly, logically, and coherently using sophisticated language (grammatical rhetoric and vocabulary) and fluency
* provided a profound and insightful reflection on their study including their own values, beliefs, ideas, and experiences
* were confident and well prepared for the discussion (the oral examination).

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked depth in the topic of their research — resulting in discussion of issues at a surface level
* lacked focus on the topic
* lacked the ability for comprehensive analysis and abstract summary
* selected an inappropriate research topic (e.g. the topics were either too broad or too narrow, which limited the content and the depth of the research)
* were unable to provide an insightful and deep reflection on their learning
* were unable to explain their opinions clearly, logically, and coherently
* were unable to provide evidence of learning (e.g. resources studied, current situation of the issue in society, experts’ opinions on the issue)
* lacked the knowledge and skills to conduct research
* responded without considering the questions being asked by the examiners
* gave memorised or rehearsed answers rather than spontaneous responses.

Advice for improvement

* Develop language skills (e.g. using communication strategies, using sophisticated linguistic structures and cohesive devices).
* Fill in the SACE oral examination outline form clearly as an important part of the preparation.

Written Examination

Section 1: Listening and Responding

Question 1

The more successful responses

* were able to demonstrate a thorough understanding of both arguments expressed in the two texts
* were able to analyse, evaluate, compare, and contrast both points of view on the tertiary education entrance examination and selection reform from the two texts
* were able to provide and justify their own opinion on the issue
* used the correct convention (an article for a Chinese education magazine)
* the expression was clear, logical, and coherent.

The less successful responses

* did not fully understand the issues that were presented in the texts
* simply repeated (or copied) what was in the texts without any analysis, evaluation, comparison, or contrast of the opinions in the texts
* did not cover both sides of the argument
* did not present personal opinions
* used an incorrect text type (not an article or in article form but without a title)
* lacked logic and structure in their writing
* lacked the ability for comprehensive analysis and abstract summary
* ideas were not relevant to the texts
* used incorrect characters, punctuation marks, paragraphs and/or formatting
* use Pinyin instead of characters

Section 2: Reading and Responding

Part A

Question 2(a)

This is an easy question requiring a factual answer.

The more successful responses

* displayed comprehensive understanding of the text of why it is difficult to retain China’s intangible cultural heritage, such as being time-consuming, hard work, can be lonely, need to study hard, crafts are very complicated, long-term training.

The less successful responses

* misunderstood the text and or the main points of the text
* displayed only partial understanding of the question
* were unable to convey their opinions/explanations clearly.

Question 2(b)

This question required students to have a good knowledge of Chinese rhetorical techniques and literary devices. A lot of students lost mark(s) for this question.

The more successful responses

* correctly identified two rhetorical techniques used in the text and explained the effects of each technique in the context of the text clearly and accurately

The less successful responses

* incorrectly identified one or two rhetorical techniques used in the text
* did not explain or only partially explained the effects of each technique in the context of the text
* the explanation was unclear and inaccurate
* displayed only partial understanding of the question.

Question 2(c)

This question required students to interpret and explain the meaning of the statement from the text.

The more successful responses

* displayed comprehensive understanding of the meaning of ‘非遗的本质是生命性，即活态的；一旦失去活态，便不再是非遗’.
* their interpretation was accurate, and their explanations were clear
* were able to further elaborate that a craft is not an object, and that the skills need to be taught by masters, for the crafts to survive in future generations
* were able to point out that crafts are a living thing because each learner uses his own thinking to make the same skills unique, hence improving / enhancing the skills from age to age

The less successful responses

* misunderstood the meaning of the text
* did not include comprehensive understanding of the text
* did not present their explanation clearly and logically
* were unable to explain the text correctly
* were unable to explain the meaning.

Part B

This part of the examination required students to interpret and analyse a written text and answer the questions in English.

Question 3(a)

The more successful responses

* were able to interpret the meaning of the two idioms 史无前例 and 层出不穷 in the context of the text accurately
* were able to explain them in English clearly and correctly.

The less successful responses

* misunderstood the idioms
* were unable to explain the idioms in the context of the text correctly
* did not explain the idioms in the context of the text
* did not explain the idioms in the context of the text in English
* answered the question in Chinese characters

Question 3(b)

The more successful responses

* were able to identify the literary device used by the author in the text and explained its purpose in the context of the text clearly and correctly in English.

The less successful responses

* were unable to identify the literary device
* were unable to explain its purpose in the context of the text correctly
* did not respond to the question clearly in English
* answered the question in Chinese characters.

Question 3(c)

The more successful responses

* displayed comprehensive understanding of why the author concludes that the Chinese Civil Code ‘必将给中国社会带来深远的影响’ and support their answer with reference to the text
* were able to explain their opinions clearly and correctly in English.

The less successful responses

* misunderstood the statement
* were unable to explain the idioms in the context of the text correctly
* did not explain their opinions about the statement clearly
* did not explain their opinions clearly in English
* answered the question in Chinese characters.

Section 3: Writing in Chinese

Question 4

Option 1

The more successful responses

* demonstrated a thorough understanding of the issues concerning the generation gap
* provided a comprehensive analysis of the root cause of the generation gap and evaluated the issues with justifications
* provided recommendations /conclusions for resolving the issue
* used the correct text type conventions (an article for a youth magazine)
* used complex grammar structures and sophisticated vocabulary to express their thoughts clearly, logically, and coherently.

The less successful responses

* expressed ideas that were not quite relevant to the question
* showed a lack of knowledge and understanding of the issue
* lacked comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the issue
* lacked depth: their thoughts were at a superficial level
* did not stick to the point
* points were not clearly, logically, or coherently expressed or justified
* used an incorrect text type, (not an article for a youth magazine)
* lacked accuracy and appropriateness of expression (e.g. no complex grammar structures or sophisticated vocabulary; incorrect paragraph structure; incorrect characters; etc.).

Option 2

The more successful responses

* demonstrated a thorough understanding of the impact of overseas Chinese -speaking communities on Chinese culture and identity.
* provided analysis and discussion on the impact of overseas Chinese -speaking communities on Chinese culture and identity.
* were able to explain the impact of overseas Chinese -speaking communities on Chinese culture and identity
* used the correct text type conventions (a speech)
* used complex grammar structures and sophisticated vocabulary
* expressed their thoughts clearly, logically, and coherently.

The less successful responses

* expressed ideas that were not quite relevant to the question
* showed a lack of knowledge and understanding of the topic
* showed a lack of depth — their thoughts were at a superficial level
* did not stick to the point
* included opinions that were not clearly, logically, and coherently expressed or justified
* used an incorrect text type (not a speech)
* lacked accuracy and appropriateness of expression (e.g. no complex grammar structures or sophisticated vocabulary; incorrect paragraph structure; incorrect characters; etc.).

Option 3

The more successful responses

* demonstrated a deep understanding of the meaning of ‘getting rid of spiritual poverty’ (思想脱贫)
* provided a clear explanation of their understanding of the importance of ‘getting rid of spiritual poverty’ with examples and made comparisons to justify their view
* proposed a plan that they think would work with explanations why they think their plan will work
* used the correct text type (a formal letter to the editor)
* used complex grammar structures and sophisticated vocabulary to express opinions clearly, logically, and coherently.

The less successful responses

* expressed opinions that were not quite relevant to the question
* showed a lack of knowledge and understanding of the topic
* showed a lack of depth: the discussion was at a superficial level
* did not stick to the point
* used an incorrect text type (not a formal letter to the editor)
* gave opinions that were not clearly, logically, and coherently explained or justified
* lacked accuracy and appropriateness of expression (e.g. no complex grammar structures or sophisticated vocabulary; incorrect paragraph structure; incorrect characters; etc.).

Option 4

The more successful responses

* demonstrated a thorough understanding of the differences between young writers and writers of older generations in China
* use one young successful Chinese writer as an example to reflect on why they are successful
* evaluated, explained, and justified their opinions
* compared how they differ from writers of older generations
* used the correct text type conventions (an online article)
* used complex grammar structures and sophisticated vocabulary to express their thoughts clearly, logically, and coherently.

The less successful responses

* showed a limited knowledge and understanding of the topic
* were not quite relevant to the question
* did not stick to the point
* showed a lack of depth
* didn’t provide an example (a specific young writer)
* didn’t compare them with a writer from an older generation
* expressed opinions that were not clearly explained or justified
* used an incorrect text type (not an online article)
* did not present their ideas logically and coherently
* lacked accuracy and appropriateness of expression (e.g. no complex grammar structures or sophisticated vocabulary; incorrect paragraph structure; incorrect characters; etc.).