2021 Tourism 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

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated comprehensive understanding of tourism concepts and models
* used a wide range of tourism terminology appropriate to the task
* perceptively analysed and evaluated tourism concepts and models (e.g. emphasising the interconnections between industry sectors or career pathways) and de-emphasised descriptive aspects
* made effective use of annotations as part of the written analysis, often incorporating source and/or model analysis within the annotations; while these still contributed to the word count, the nature of the annotations (being analytical) meant that the source analysis and other skills demonstrated made more efficient use of words than deploying extended prose
* were written in response to task designs that incorporated a wide range of skills and performance standards across several tasks, with each task having a narrow focus on specific standards and skills; this allowed students to achieve the ‘in-depth’, ‘comprehensive’, and ‘insightful’ standards required in the A-band
* were supported by task designs that reflected the specific features selected for that task (e.g. directing students to evaluate the validity, bias, and accuracy of sources in response to AE2 was included as a specific feature for assessment).

The less successful responses commonly:

* bombarded the reader with as many tourism terms as possible, which were not always relevant to the task
* recalled information and facts rather than analysing and evaluating concepts and models
* lacked an acknowledgement of sources
* were written in response to tasks that challenged students to demonstrate evidence against many elements and/or performance standards within one task (e.g. needing to evaluate many models/sources rather than a specific focus on a smaller number).

Assessment Type 2: Practical Activity

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated obvious connections between primary and secondary sources
* signified an understanding of the distinction between primary sources of information (e.g. personally collected or generated by the student by means of interviews, observations, or surveys) and practical tourism skills (e.g. presentations and conducting tours)
* exhibited an ability to apply practical tourism skills in comprehensive and diverse manners
* included a wide range of skills and performance standards across several tasks, with each task having a specific and narrow focus on standards and skills; this allowed students to achieve at the A-band
* made effective use of annotations as part of the written analysis, often incorporating source and/or model analysis within the annotations; while these still contributed to the word count, the nature of the annotations (being analytical) meant that the source analysis and other skills demonstrated made more efficient use of words than implementing extended prose
* were written in response to well-focused task designs that provided opportunity to demonstrate achievement at the highest standard within the word count.

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not use primary sources of information to demonstrate knowledge and understanding
* separated primary and secondary sources rather than integrating them within the response (e.g. presenting evidence from an interview or survey as a stand-alone paragraph with no secondary sources used to help explain the findings when IA1 was used for assessment)
* were assessed at a high standard against a specific feature when no evidence of the specific feature was present in the response.

Assessment Type 3: Investigation

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated obvious connections between primary and secondary sources
* provided insightful evaluation of sources for validity, bias and accuracy
* included well-supported conclusions and recommendations within set word limits
* developed a clear and specific inquiry question that had an ‘evaluative nature’ to guide the investigation
* took a deep, highly focused approach to the task
* made effective use of annotations as part of the written analysis, often incorporating source and/or model analysis within the annotations; while these still contributed to the word count, the nature of the annotations (being analytical) meant that the source analysis and other skills demonstrated made more efficient use of words than adopting extended prose.

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not use primary sources of information to demonstrate knowledge and understanding. Some students from several schools misunderstood the nature of primary sources, including YouTube interviews or podcasts; students must personally collect or generate information themselves for it to be classed as a primary source
* exceeded set word limits, thus their conclusions and recommendations were often not assessed; moderators have specifically been instructed that information embedded in a table is to be included in the word count when concepts and models are analysed
* did not effectively evaluate sources of information for bias, validity or accuracy. Some responses included source evaluation in an appendix (thus not part of the word count). Schools have been instructed not to included appendices beyond the set word count; they will not be assessed.

External Assessment

Assessment Type 4: Examination

This assessment type requires students to undertake a 130-minute written examination on the subject’s core themes. Students analyse various tourism-related sources of information, and apply their knowledge and understanding of tourism to both familiar and unfamiliar contexts. The examination comprises two sections: Part A: Short Responses and Part B: Extended Responses.

This was the second year that the Tourism examination was online, and markers noted that there were very few incomplete ‘papers’, with the vast majority of students at least making an attempt to provide an answer in the space provided. The few students who did not complete Part B clearly ran short of time, perhaps suggesting that they experienced difficulty in managing their time effectively. Those who presented dot point responses obtained some marks for at least demonstrating a modicum of knowledge and understanding of tourism concepts and issues.

Students tended to find Questions 1 and 2 easiest to deal with, while they found Questions 4 and 6 to be more of a challenge.

Markers noted the following general features that contributed to the quality of student responses:

* Better responses demonstrated evidence of advanced time management skills. This included restricting responses to the space provided in Part A; the size of the response box was a general guide of the length of response required. In Part B, those who spent too long on Part A were more likely to run out of time towards the end of the examination, thus submitted brief responses to Questions 5-7. It is important to give students opportunities to practise writing concise answers in timed, supervised conditions throughout the year, which will prepare them for examination conditions.
* Successful answers showed evidence of detailed analysis supported by evidence, especially to questions with command verbs such as ‘explain’, ‘describe’ and ‘justify’. Merely listing or stating conclusions, strategies or recommendations without supporting reasons or evidence resulted in responses that lacked depth of analysis.
* Superior responses highlighted students’ ability to do as questions directed by referring to specific sources or to specific data in sources as evidence for their conclusions or recommendations. Similarly, better responses followed the questions’ instructions by referring to explicit tourism terminology such as environmental impacts, the collaboration of businesses and governments, or the actions of responsible tourists.
* Finally, especially relevant to Part B (where marks were allocated for clear written expression [C1] and accurately using tourism terminology [C2]), students who could communicate in a concise and structured manner, with accurate spelling, grammar and sentence construction, tended to write higher quality responses. The marking team noted that there were more structured answers, particularly in relation to extended responses, as a distinctive feature this year; however, rushed dot points and very short answers tended to produce less successful responses. Markers also remarked on the increased number of responses that demonstrated poor communication skills. While incoherent and ineffective responses were not penalised in Part A, assessment of Part B was significantly affected.

Assessment Design Criteria

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning especially in relation to KU1 and KU2, AE2 and AE4, IA2 and IA4, and C1 and C2.

* Discussion of assessment design criteria is the same as previous years.

Part A: Short Responses

Question 1

(a) The more successful responses commonly:

• referred to the sources provided

• cited specific data on senior tourist characteristics.

The less successful responses commonly:

• did not highlight significant features of data

• interpreted the graph or tweet inaccurately

• merely described general trends or features.

(b) The more successful responses commonly:

• gave a detailed explanation, including reasons for staying in a destination longer such as having more disposable income and ‘free time’ (retired) than younger tourists or having a preference for stability rather than travelling from destination to destination

• cited specific data on senior tourists’ length of stay.

The less successful responses commonly:

• provided irrelevant responses

• focused on description rather than analysis of information.

(c) Sound responses commonly:

• referred to specific data or information from the source to support their answer

• provided logical and well-considered explanations that 32% of senior tourists don’t tend to travel for financial reasons (e.g. pension/superannuation fund limitations) and 10% of senior tourists don’t tend to travel for family reasons (e.g. spending time with family/grandchildren may make them less likely to travel).

Weaker responses commonly:

• were not able to infer relevant reasons from the data

• merely mentioned or listed a possible reason without following the instruction of the question to ‘explain’ the reason.

(d) Responses that achieved high marks commonly:

• evaluated Plog’s model by discussing limitations such as assuming all senior tourists are psychocentric or allocentric when in reality this group is not homogeneous, or discussed the difficulty of labelling tourist activities as adventurous (allocentric) or non-adventurous (psychocentric), or reasoned that some senior tourists enjoy both adventurous and non-adventurous activities, or argued that tourist attitudes and preferences change over time.

Low-scoring responses commonly:

• argued that a limitation is the age of the model (the question specifically directed students not to discuss this aspect)

• demonstrated very little understanding of Plog’s tourism model

• discussed the tourists themselves rather than evaluating the model.

Question 2

(a) More successful responses commonly:

• referred to the sources provided

• cited specific data relating to HVTs finding Australia a desirable location.

Less successful responses commonly:

• did not highlight significant features of data

• interpreted the graph or infographics inaccurately

• merely described general trends or features.

(b) Sound responses commonly:

• were able to synthesise information from more than one source to demonstrate their understanding of challenges to attracting HVTs to South Australia, citing examples such as Source C showing HVTs’ preference for 5-star hotels and South Australia’s lack of them, as well as the size of Australia and expense of travelling to South Australia from gateway cities such as Sydney, Melbourne and Perth.

Weaker responses commonly:

• were not supported by data from the sources

• did not specifically apply the challenges to South Australia, as directed by the question.

(c) Responses that achieved high marks commonly:

• suggested and justified (by referring to specific data or information from sources to support their answer) appropriate strategies that tourism businesses in Australia could put in place to attract HVTs, such as creating an advertising/marketing campaign that suggests Australia is safe or secure; the creation of festivals or events that celebrate drivers (such as food/wine- or coastal- or nature-based); investing in and constructing 4-5 star accommodation; incentives to stay longer (a package combining accommodation and activities).

Weaker responses commonly:

• merely mentioned or listed possible strategies without following the instruction of the question to ‘justify’ the strategy with valid data from sources or more detailed explanations.

Question 3

(a) More successful responses commonly:

• referred to the source provided

• argued that the image could be used to advertise a pristine, nature-based location, appealing to those who prefer remoteness (far from the madding crowd).

(b) Responses that achieved high marks commonly:

• discussed both Sources B/C and Source A

• reasoned astutely that attractions such as those illustrated in Sources B and C, rather than appealing to the tourists who preferred the features mentioned in the previous question (Source A), appealed to those who preferred history and heritage, the built or urban environment, destinations that are popular (mass tourism).

The less successful responses commonly:

• failed to contrast Sources A and B/C

• did not recognise that Sources B and C focused on history and heritage, the built or urban environment, destinations that are popular (mass tourism).

(c) Sound responses commonly:

• referred to specific aspects of Source A (e.g., water, clean air, mountains, etc.)

• understood and explained how mass tourism could cause environmental damage in the form of air pollution, water pollution, erosion of lake banks or mountains from overtourism, noise pollution (causing a decrease in wildlife numbers), destruction of habitat, over-fishing, and the destruction of aesthetic qualities via overcrowding and creation of additional infrastructure/facilities leading to land clearing.

Weaker responses commonly:

• listed forms of environmental damage without explaining them

• proposed forms of environmental damage that were not relevant to Source A.

(d) Responses that achieved high marks commonly:

• suggested appropriate strategies that collaborating government authorities and tourism businesses might implement to protect destinations from environmental damage, such as deliberate site-hardening to protect the lake banks from erosion; placing a limit on the numbers of tourists in the destination (thus limiting accommodation/attractions); charging higher fees for accommodation (via an increase in taxes) or adding a levy for environmental conservation; creation of an environmental interpretive centre (to educate tourists regarding environmental management/conservation), etc.

Low-scoring responses commonly:

• listed various strategies to protect the environment but did not explain them in any detail.

Question 4

(a) The more successful responses commonly:

• explained the relationship between the Butler Sequence and Doxey’s Irridex by referring to how an increase in the number of tourists will most likely lead to an increase in development, accompanied by local residents’ irritation

• used specific terminology from the Butler Sequence and Doxey’s Irridex (e.g., ‘development’, ‘antagonism’, and so forth).

The less successful responses commonly:

• were able to explain the models separately but did not explain the relationship between these two models

• provided broad, unsubstantiated descriptions of tourism without linking their discussion to specific aspects of the models.

(b) The more successful responses commonly:

• gave a detailed explanation, citing economic benefits (increase in revenue, which can be spent on a variety of things for the community, or increase in employment, or increase in government investment on infrastructure, or more greatly enhanced economic multiplier effect), sociocultural benefits (increase in knowledge of local culture, or increase in respect for and pride of local culture), and environmental benefits (with an increase in revenue, some of this money can be allocated to environmental conservation / protection). Most students focused on economic reasons.

The less successful responses commonly:

• listed a potential benefit without explaining it in any detail.

(c) Sound responses commonly:

• demonstrated an excellent understanding of what is meant by responsible tourism

• provided logical and well-considered explanations of economic practices such as spending money on locally owned products and services, which will enhance the positive economic multiplier effect and increase employment of locals, or cultural practices such as respecting the local culture via language, dress and behaviour, or learning about and being immersed in the local culture.

Weaker responses commonly:

• did not refer to or understand the concept of responsible tourism

• merely mentioned or listed ways that responsible tourists could enhance a destination economically or socially/culturally without following the instruction of the question to ‘explain’ the ways.

(d) Responses that achieved high marks commonly:

• exhibited an excellent understanding of the costs (negative impacts) and benefits (positive impacts) on the tourism industry of the increasing numbers of tourism in Europe

• referred to specific aspects of sources provided, discussing costs in some detail: inflation in tourism hotspots, overcrowding, pollution, environmental damage, economic leakage, commodification, increase in crime, and restriction to a narrow mass tourism experience and reduction in experience of authentic culture

• explained benefits in some detail: increase in revenue / employment for tourism businesses or the host community, enhancing the multiplier effect and spending on infrastructure / attractions / environmental conservation, or an increase in tourists’ cultural knowledge / respect for the destination.

Low-scoring responses commonly:

• restricted their interpretation of ‘cost’ to negative economic impacts alone

• listed a cost and a benefit to the tourism industry but did not write in sufficient detail, following the instruction of the question to ‘discuss’ these factors.

Part B: Extended Responses

Given the amount of reading and level of higher-order cognitive skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation required in Part B, teachers should give their students plenty of practice in completing extended responses under timed conditions. The Communication assessment design criterion (C1 and C2) receives special attention in this section of the examination; thus, students are encouraged to write well-structured and fluent paragraphs, to refer to specific sources when directed, and to use relevant and accurate tourism terminology. Markers specifically noted the poor communication skills exhibited in a large percentage of responses. This feature negatively affected the quality of student work and reduced the marks awarded to extended responses.

Question 5

This question required students to refer to a range of sources to discuss the benefits of Indigenous tourism for both tourists and the host community. Markers reported that responses were generally structured in paragraphs or with clear sub-headings, but that some responses lacked a logical structure and were replete with spelling and grammatical errors. While markers expected responses to be lengthy and detailed, cognitive demands for this question were relatively low when compared with Question 6.

The more successful responses commonly:

* drew on a wide range of sources to answer the question
* confidently and accurately applied various tourism models from their studies to the unfamiliar context of Indigenous tourism
* used appropriate formal communication, utilising relevant and accurate tourism terminology
* explained how tourist benefits include ‘authentic’ engagement or ‘deeper local connection’ (Sources 1, 5 and 7), learning aspects of Indigenous culture (Sources 1, 5, 7 and 8), thus implying an increasing respect for Indigenous culture
* recognised that local communities can expect to benefit through the breakdown of cultural financial barriers (Source 7), by the opportunity to lead their own Indigenous culture or tell their own stories or ‘speak for Country’ (Sources 1 and 5), by the protection of sacred places/culture/tradition (Sources 2, 3, 4 and 5), and economically as tourism dollars are injected (Source 7) and employment is increased (Sources 1, 2 and 8)
* argued that both tourists and local (Indigenous) communities would benefit from a greater degree of ‘healing’ or ‘reconciliation’ (Sources 6 and 7).

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not refer to the sources provided or only discussed one or two sources as the basis of their response
* did not write structured, coherent paragraphs
* quoted from the sources without explaining in any detail how tourism benefited tourists and host communities
* focused only on benefits to tourists or to host communities instead of discussing how both stakeholders benefited from Indigenous tourism
* were unable to draw a solid conclusion regarding the overall benefit of Indigenous tourism for both tourists and host communities.

Question 6

This question primarily assessed students’ ability to evaluate (make a judgement on) Sources 3, 6 and 8 for potential bias and validity, and was the least successful response in the examination. It was much more cognitively demanding than Question 5 (thus less writing was expected for the same number of marks); consequently, it acted as a constructive discriminator of student grades in the examination. The requirement, thus the ability, to ‘evaluate’ the extent of bias and validity tended to determine the quality of the responses. ‘Extent’ is important here because some sources possess a greater degree of bias and/or validity than others. This should be articulated in the response.

The more successful responses commonly:

* clearly identified examples of bias in the sources: we would expect Source 3 (a news article) to be objective (not biased), and there is no evidence of biased reporting in this article, while we would expect the Indigenous custodian of Biamanga Cultural Area to be opposed to visitors swimming in sacred site and ‘violating the spirituality of it’; Source 6 presents the perspective of a non-Indigenous Australian tourist – only one person’s opinion, and while this skews the judgement of Indigenous tourism, it is also balanced because it looks at positive and negative factors; in terms of Source 8, we would expect a government source to be objective, thus there is no evidence of emotive or persuasive language – the source is very formal and objective, dominated by statistics, which show no evidence of bias (although there night be selection bias)
* astutely discussed the validity of the sources: Source 3 is a respected government news service, adding to its credibility, while the quotation from the chair of the Biamanga National board of management also adds to credibility/validity, as he was directly affected by tourists; the status of the interviewee in Source 6 is unknown, but the source is still valid as it conveys one tourist’s perspective; valid arguments both for and against Indigenous tourism are presented, although the validity is decreased by the false assumption that Indigenous tourism involves ‘travel to remote areas’ (e.g., Tandanya and Morialta Falls Walking Tours are urban experiences); finally, Source 8 is a respected government source (DFAT), supporting the argument of an ‘Indigenous tourism surge’ with statistics; however, the source of these statistics is not shown, and we can only assume them to be accurate
* effectively transferred the language and terminology concerning bias and validity from the compulsory Research Project to the tourism context.

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not discuss all three sources
* understood the terms ‘bias’ and ‘validity’ but could not articulate what constitutes each term
* only referred to the date of publication when discussing the validity, rather than discussing the author’s credentials or experiences
* only interpreted validity as a judgement on the quality of the author (e.g. Source 3 being written by the ABC) rather than those who were quoted within the source
* recounted the content of the sources without evaluating them for bias and validity
* discussed the reliability of the sources without arguing how the extent of bias and validity contributed to their reliability
* assumed that the white Australian tourist’s perspective (Source 6) was biased and lacked validity merely because they were not Indigenous
* misused the words ‘bias’ (e.g. ‘Source 6 contains some bias…’) and ‘biased’ (e.g. ‘we would expect Source 3 to be unbiased because…’).

Question 7

This question primarily assessed students’ ability to use the sources to outline and justify strategies that would contribute to the sustainability of Indigenous tourism in Australia for both international and domestic visitors. Students were required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the tourism concept of sustainability by defining it (KU2), and applying their knowledge of sustainability to a new, perhaps unfamiliar context (IA4). They also needed to develop three well-supported recommended strategies by specifically referring to the sources provided and to their own knowledge of the tourism industry.

The responses that achieved high marks commonly:

* used appropriate formal communication, employing relevant and accurate tourism terminology
* clearly identified (via the wording of separate paragraphs, by numbering, or by clearly labelled sub-headings) three distinctly different strategies
* justified their chosen strategies by referring to sources provided and to their own knowledge of the tourism industry
* considered the role of various stakeholders in contributing to this Indigenous Tourism Plan (e.g., tourism businesses, host communities, government agencies, tourists)
* drew on models and concepts studied throughout the year to provide an explanation for their strategies
* used a wide range of tourism terminology
* clearly and convincingly applied their knowledge of sustainability to the context of Indigenous tourism
* discussed strategies such as:
* an advertising/marketing campaign focusing on authentic Indigenous tourism (Sources 1, 4, 5 and 7), involving a range of activities (Source 8), and including the notion that it is not remote (Source 6)
* employment of Indigenous peoples (Sources 1, 2, 5 and 7) as tour guides, rangers, producers of cultural artefacts, educators, curators, etc.
* Indigenous ownership (not just employment) and management of tourism businesses (Sources 3 and 5), thus the need for government training
* government subsidies/investment to allow smaller groups, thus ‘deeper local connection’ (Source 7)
* protection, preservation, and maintenance of sacred sites (Sources 2 and 3)
* limiting numbers of tourists (smaller groups) in order to ‘allow for a deeper local connection’ (Source 7), thus a more authentic experience (Sources 4, 5 and 7)
* renaming sites in local language / dual naming systems (Source 3).

Low-scoring responses commonly:

* were incomplete (sometimes due to running out of time)
* focused only on government activities that were imposed on Indigenous businesses and communities
* developed strategies without referring to specific sources as evidence
* repeated the same or similar responses in several strategies
* listed strategies but did not provide substantiating evidence or an explanation
* did not clearly structure their response (in paragraphs or by numbering), making it difficult for markers to distinguish each strategy
* focused only on domestic or international tourists (the questions directed students to discuss both).