2019 Tourism Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the previous year’s 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 Folio involves ‘at least two critical analysis assessments’, which allow students to ‘interpret and critically analyse secondary sources of information in tourism contexts’ (p.38). While student evidence of learning is often presented as reports, a range of other formats are used in this assessment type such as essays, magazine articles, oral presentations, brochures, or websites. Some teachers use supervised assessment structured similar to Part A or Part B of the examination. The purpose of this assessment type is to provide students with the opportunity to use their ‘tourism knowledge, understanding and skills to evaluate a tourism phenomenon’ (p.38). It is important that students have the opportunity to present evidence of their learning in a range of forms, to incorporate visual and graphical evidence, and to use the language and concepts of tourism.

The focus on students developing their understanding of tourism knowledge and concepts, and ability to critically analyse information, make the Knowledge and Understanding and Analysis and Evaluation assessment design criteria critical in this assessment type. In 2019, the Communication assessment design criterion was introduced into this assessment type. Teachers must ensure they update their assessment tasks and Learning and Assessment Plans to reflect this amendment to the assessment requirements.

The more successful responses commonly:

* included a range of secondary sources
* sourced and referenced information accurately
* included models and concepts appropriately
* demonstrated knowledge and understanding of a range of concepts and models across the assessment type
* focused on interpretation and analysis of perspectives on one tourism trend, development or contemporary issue
* used text structures such as headings and mini-questions appropriately in reports
* displayed detailed understanding of tourism knowledge, concepts and/or models
* focused on analysis and evaluation of information to help them present informed opinions, conclusions and recommendations
* evaluated the extent to which models applied to specific case studies
* accurately evaluated their sources of information and provided reasoned justifications for their decisions
* were developed in response to tasks designs which included:
* correct assessment specifications such as the 1000 words for a written text or a maximum of 6 minutes for an oral presentation, or the equivalent in multimodal form
* the appropriate assessment design criteria for the assessment type
* instructions that related to the selected specific features
* task requirements which were clear and achievable within the word count.

The less successful responses commonly:

* provided a descriptive recount of potential impacts of tourism
* focused on description of a trend, development or tourism issue rather than on analysis or evaluation
* provided some evaluation of sources of information either inconsistently or without explanation (such as a 5-star rating with no explanation of how the rating was achieved), or did not evaluate their sources
* did not include concepts or models in their work or, if included, did not integrate them into their work in a meaningful way; for example, they might have included a diagram of a model and then not used it to help them analyse or evaluate the trend, development or tourism issue
* did not reference their sources of information or use their research to substantiate their conclusions and recommendations
* were developed in response to tasks designs which:
* included incorrect assessment specifications for the word/time limit or did not specify limits such as time limits on supervised tasks
* included specific features that did not relate to the assessment instructions; for example, where AE2 was included on the rubric and students were not directed to evaluate the validity, bias or accuracy of sources in the task instructions, students often did not present evidence of their evaluation of sources but were assessed in the A or B band for this specific feature
* encouraged description rather than analysis and evaluation, limiting students’ ability to achieve in the A band across the assessment type
* required students do too many things within the word limit such as apply multiple models to a tourism site or include detailed descriptions prior to analysis of their information, thus limiting the depth of their analysis
* converted a numerical grade to the A+ to E scale without matching evidence presented in supervised tasks to assessment design criteria and specific features
* focused on lower order questions in supervised tasks, limiting opportunities to demonstrate evidence of interpretation and critical analysis of secondary sources of information.

Assessment Type 2: Practical Activity

This assessment type requires students to develop and demonstrate practical tourism skills and involves the collection of information from primary sources. Students must complete at least two tasks in this assessment type. For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning in relation to the Knowledge and Understanding, Investigation and Application, and Communication assessment design criteria. Common practical activities included class visits to museums and nature parks, where students were required to use primary source methodology, including interviews, personal observations, experiential learning, and a range of surveys. Superior tasks required students to develop their own data collection instruments while facilitating access to sites.

Teachers are reminded that where industry publications are used to present findings as an example of a practical tourism skill, students must incorporate evidence from their primary sources. Where industry publications are developed solely from secondary sources or where primary sources are not central to the task, student evidence might not meet the specifications of this assessment type.

The more successful responses commonly:

* used primary data collected by a student on a field trip or tourism activity (class or individual)
* used secondary sources to help explain findings; for example, research on Doxey’s irridex was used to help explain why the host community is unhappy with the impact of tourism at a site at which the student visited and collected primary data
* presented findings from their primary sources of information in a clear and organised manner
* included obvious evidence that a practical activity was undertaken such as their own photographs or survey results
* demonstrated that students had clearly visited places and collected information at that place (‘A practical activity is an assessment that in most cases is undertaken beyond the classroom and involves the collection of information from primary sources’ p.39)
* provided detailed, substantiated recommendations and conclusions relevant to the site, trend or development being studied
* used a wide range of visual and graphical evidence to present findings and demonstrate their ability to investigate a tourism trend, development or issue, and to apply their tourism knowledge, concepts and models in a range of contexts
* included a range of primary sources of information across the assessment task; for example, using different types of data collection in each practical activity. Common primary sources of information included but were not limited to surveys of people at a venue/attraction/event, interviews with industry professionals, recorded personal observations using photographs or bi-polar surveys, and tallies of frequencies. Using different primary sources in each practical activity allowed students to develop a wider range of possible primary sources prior to completing their Investigation.

The less successful responses commonly:

* provided a recount of a class excursion
* did not provide evidence of learning from primary sources; in some cases, primary sources could only be inferred through the task design rather than being clearly evident in the student’s work
* did not include tourism models or concepts in either practical activity
* did not use visual and graphical evidence effectively to present findings and demonstrate their ability to investigate a tourism trend, development or issue, and to apply their tourism knowledge, concepts and models in a range of contexts
* used the same primary source of information in both practical activities — i.e. only using observations recorded through photographs as the primary source of information across the assessment type
* relied mostly on secondary sources
* used primary evidence from online searches as their own; to meet the specifications of this assessment type, students must collect their own sources of information
* focused on doing an activity such as designing tours and holidays without clear and convincing application of primary sources of information. These tasks often restricted the extent to which students could demonstrate their ability to apply their tourism knowledge, and tourism concepts and models within the word or time limits for this assessment type.

Assessment Type 3: Investigation

This assessment type requires students to identify a tourism trend, development, and/or contemporary issue for investigation. Students identify, select, analyse, and evaluate primary and secondary sources of information and make recommendations based on their findings. Students must complete one task in this assessment type. For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning in relation to the Knowledge and Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation, Investigation and Application, and Communication assessment design criteria. Although teachers are able to select a sub-set of specific features from the assessment design criteria, care must be taken to not exclude specific features that relate to the crux of the investigation. Omitting specific features such as AE1, AE2, AE4, IA1, C3 or C4 is not advised.

The more successful responses commonly:

* maintained a focus on a tourism trend, development or issue
* focused on solutions and responses to a tourism trend, development or issue rather than on descriptive elements
* included both primary and secondary sources of information, as specified by IA1
* focused on local areas that could be investigated in depth and on repeat occasions
* were underpinned by a clear question or hypothesis
* used models and/or concepts effectively
* demonstrated a clear purpose
* chose topics/questions where it was possible to collect primary source data
* provided a large amount of recent substantiation
* showed the author was invested in the outcome. A small number of investigations were drawn from student experiences with a tourism trend, development or issue.

The less successful responses commonly:

* provided a descriptive response rather than an analytic or evaluative response
* did not include visual or graphical evidence such as maps, graphs, tables, photographs, drawings, charts or statistical data
* included diagrams of models unmodified to suit their trend, development or issue
* used models that did not fit the trend, development or issue, or were included but not incorporated into the text
* incorrectly used concepts such as sustainability, or classified economic impacts as sociocultural impacts
* did not use primary sources of information
* did not refer to secondary sources of information
* featured a limited use of tourism terminology
* did not accurately reference primary or secondary sources
* did not complete their response within the word limit requirements for this assessment type, thus presented the work in ways that contravenes the SACE Board’s word count policy
* did not focus on tourism
* did not evaluate validity, bias and/or accuracy of sources effectively.

External Assessment

Assessment Type 4: Examination

This assessment type requires students to undertake one 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.

As in previous years, there was some disparity in marks achieved between Part A: Short Responses (Questions 1–4) and Part B: Extended Responses (Questions 5–7). This year, markers reported that fewer students submitted incomplete papers. Those who did not complete Part B often ran out of time, perhaps suggesting that they experienced difficulty in managing their time effectively. Students should apportion their time according to the number of marks allocated for each question.

Students tended to find Questions 2 and 4 easiest to deal with, while they found aspects of Questions 3 and 6 challenging.

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

* Better responses exhibited evidence of advanced time management skills. This included restricting responses to the space provided in Part A. In Part B, students who wasted their time rewriting the questions were more likely to run out of time towards the end of the examination. 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’.
* Superior responses highlighted students’ ability to do as questions directed by referring to specific sources as evidence for their conclusions or recommendations. Referring to specific sources often created the difference between successful and less successful responses.
* Finally, especially relevant to Part B (where marks were allocated for performance standards C1 and 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.

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

1. The more successful responses commonly:

* referred to the sources provided
* cited specific international (e.g. Tasmania and NSW) and domestic data (e.g. NT and NSW).

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not highlight significant data changes (larger numbers).

1. The more successful responses commonly:

* recognised the difference between international and domestic data
* provided a reasonable explanation for the data, arguing for WA international data that visitors spent less or stayed for a shorter time, and for NT domestic data that there were fewer visitors perhaps because of factors such as access, ineffective advertising or a decrease in tourist motivation.

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not provide a detailed explanation of the data.

1. Sound responses commonly:

* referred to specific data from the sources to support their answer
* evaluated the statement by presenting arguments both for and against, even though they concluded by favouring one side
* recognised the larger proportion of domestic visitors but realised the importance of Australia’s national brand and the contribution of international tourists to the economy.

Less successful responses commonly:

* did not recognise the importance of both (evaluate = two sides) international and domestic tourists
* were unable to discuss valid reasons either for or against the statement
* did not demonstrate an understanding that interstate and intrastate tourists related to the domestic data.

1. Responses that achieved high marks commonly:

* understood the role of the government in tourism
* presented strategies such as reducing taxes on tourism businesses, using more effective advertising or marketing campaigns, creating major events, or investing in infrastructure and attractions.

Less successful responses commonly:

* were unable to provide an explanation of their strategies
* did not discuss government strategies, mentioning instead the role of the tourism industry or businesses (e.g. packaging, increasing accommodation prices)
* explained the same or a similar strategy twice.

Question 2

1. More successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated an understanding of Doxey’s irridex (not provided this year, although the subject outline specifies this and other models)
* cited specific examples in the sources (e.g. euphoria is perhaps shown in Source B, with local excitement over tourism; there was no real evidence of apathy; most responses discussed the irritation/anger evident in Sources A and C with locals irritated by overcrowding, being ‘forced out’, increasing rental prices, and the changing nature of local product markets; resignation was mentioned by those focusing on locals feeling like they were ‘forced out’.

Less successful responses commonly:

* did not apply the irridex model to the sources provided
* lacked an explanation in relation to Doxey’s irridex
* focused on incorrect models such as the Butler Sequence.

1. Sound responses commonly:

* referred to at least two sources
* clearly understood the terms ‘overtourism’ and ‘carrying capacity’, relating the second term to the Butler Sequence
* discussed specific ways in which a destination might exceed its economic, cultural or environmental carrying capacity, focusing on clear examples such as price increases, overcrowding, commodification or environmental degradation.

Less successful responses commonly:

* discussed ways to increase the carrying capacity rather than ways in which the carrying capacity is exceeded
* did not refer to the sources provided
* stated a valid reason but provided little or no explanation.

1. Responses that achieved high marks commonly:

* understood the role of tourism businesses
* presented strategies such as reducing carrying capacity by limiting tourist numbers, increasing prices, limiting hours of operation, or closing attractions for replenishment; some argued for increasing the carrying capacity by building more infrastructure or via deliberate site-hardening.

Less successful responses commonly:

* were unable to provide an explanation of a listed strategy
* discussed strategies that businesses could use to profit from overtourism rather than avoiding it.

1. Responses that achieved high marks commonly:

* focused on the intent of the question, which was how responsible tourists could minimise their sociocultural impact on destinations
* discussed the practices of responsible tourists such as respecting locals and their customs, obeying laws, buying local products, using local services or even refraining from exceeding the area’s carrying capacity, visiting less-populated places, or being educated.

Less successful responses commonly:

* identified and explained what tourism businesses, rather than responsible tourists, could do
* discussed environmental rather than sociocultural impacts, as the question requires.

Question 3

1. More successful responses commonly:

* referred specifically to the source, providing quote(s) from it
* understood not just how the government might be involved in tourism but explained why, focusing on factors such as investment/funding in infrastructure and provision of resources or employment leading to growth.

Less successful responses commonly:

* did not refer to the source provided
* were unable to explain why government involvement in the tourism industry was important
* merely stated an answer without explaining what was written.

1. Responses that achieved high marks commonly:

* identified two specific sectors in each response
* described how these two sectors might work together in Tasmania, articulating (for example) how the accommodation and transport sectors might collaborate to offer some sort of package, or the coordination and transport sectors might work together to advertise Tasmania or even Antarctica.

Less successful responses commonly:

* did not mention two specific tourism industry sectors
* described how the tourism industry could benefit from increased numbers rather than how sectors might collaborate.

1. Sound responses commonly:

* understood and explained the concept of Hobart being a ‘gateway’ city
* focused on Hobart’s proximity to Antarctica, providing ease of access or a useful stopover destination.

Less successful responses commonly:

* did not demonstrate an understanding of the term ‘gateway’ by merely repeating the question or quoting from the source without explaining the response.

1. Responses that achieved high marks commonly:

* demonstrated a clear understanding of indirect employment
* discussed how people will be employed in the tourism industry beyond Hobart airport (e.g. tourism throughout Tasmania) or even beyond the tourism industry
* related their discussion specifically to the Multiplier Effect.

Less successful responses commonly:

* explained how extending the length of Hobart’s runway might create direct employment (construction industry)
* limited their discussion to the construction of the runway rather than other possible additions such as accommodation or advertising.

Question 4

1. More successful responses commonly:

* were able to list employment opportunities that were relevant to Indigenous people, including tour guides, creators of products, construction of infrastructure, transporting tourists, working in accommodation facilities, and so forth
* recognised Indigenous people’s connection with the land or the environment, as indicated in the sources.

Less successful responses commonly:

* were not relevant to the tourism industry.

1. Sound responses commonly:

* demonstrated a perceptive understanding of ways in which an injection of money from the tourism industry might create sociocultural benefits for local communities
* discussed ways such as increasing community pride and wellbeing, the creation of euphoria, the development of infrastructure, and the reduction of negative behaviours.

Less successful responses commonly:

* explained the creation of jobs (despite being instructed by the question not to discuss this aspect)
* merely listed or stated a response without following the instruction of the academic verb in the question: explain.

1. Responses that achieved high marks commonly:

* explained various strategies in some detail such as advertising Indigenous tourism’s unique experiences, encouraging tourists to stay longer and be involved in Indigenous activities, collaboration between various sectors, reduction of prices, and the development of more authentic experiences.

Less successful responses commonly:

* only identified the strategies without explaining them in any detail
* discussed an increase in the number of tourists without reference to increasing the demand for Indigenous cultural experiences.

1. Sound responses commonly:

* referred specifically to at least one source that was provided
* showed an astute understanding of ways in which Indigenous tourism might impact on the environment
* focused on positive impacts such as environmental protection or conservation, increasing tourists’ understanding by means of education, and so forth; negative impacts included exceeding the environmental carrying capacity, leading to overuse, erosion, and factors such as air/water/sound pollution.

Less successful responses commonly:

* did not refer to the sources provided or to Indigenous tourism
* discussed economic and sociocultural impacts rather than environmental effects
* only listed the environmental impacts without explaining them in any detail.

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.

Question 5

This question required students to refer to a range of sources to discuss how tourism in Tasmania might create both benefits and costs. Markers reported that responses were generally structured in paragraphs, but that many responses focused on costs or negative impacts rather than providing a balanced view. 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 tourism in Tasmania
* used appropriate formal communication, utilising relevant and accurate tourism terminology
* explained how Source 1 presents the protection of the pristine environment, echoed by Source 2, which indicates that an increase in the number of tourists would make the state the ‘world destination for ecotourism’
* recognised that Source 2 also highlights an ‘economic boon’ for Tasmania, injecting $2.3 billion into the economy and investing money (the Multiplier Effect was relevant here) into creating 4000 extra hotel rooms
* argued that Source 4 supports Source 2, especially the concept of an ‘economic boost’, as does Source 6, ‘particularly in regional areas’
* outlined how an influx of tourists might damage the pristine environment (Source 1), which is supported by Source 2, which states that some locals are concerned about the ‘threat to the state’s…environment’; this concern is also mentioned in Source 3’s focus on ‘serious risks to Tasmania’s wilderness brand’ and Source 4’s discussion of ‘Tasmania’s famed wilderness world heritage area’, as Freycinet’s ‘wastewater system’ will not be able to cope
* recognised economic costs in Source 2 in terms of ‘insensitive development’ and Hobart’s Lord Mayor being concerned (Source 4) about infrastructure and regional communities
* explained how sociocultural costs are raised in Sources 2 (‘the threatening of ‘local lifestyle’ by ‘overtourism’), and 3 (‘cultural heritage values’ being damaged)
* applied an existing knowledge of the tourism industry to discuss sociocultural benefits of tourism, even though they were not highlighted in the sources provided
* contended that the primary benefit of tourism was economic.

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not refer to the sources provided at all or only discussed one or two sources as the basis of their response
* interpreted ‘costs’ only in an economic sense rather than seeing them as negative impacts
* mainly focused on the costs of tourism rather than providing a balanced view
* did not write structured, coherent paragraphs
* quoted from the sources without explaining in any detail how tourism created a cost or a benefit
* were unable to draw a solid conclusion regarding the overall sustainability of tourism in Tasmania; the Triple Bottom Line model of sustainability (economic, environmental and sociocultural costs and benefits) was most relevant in this question.

Question 6

This question primarily assessed students’ ability to evaluate (make a judgement on) Sources 1, 2 and 5 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.

The more successful responses commonly:

* clearly identified examples of bias in the sources: we would expect Source 1 to be positively biased, advertising only the positive aspects of the Tasmanian environment; Source 2 overall was unbiased, as it presented arguments for and against tourism in Tasmania, but the quotes embedded in the article certainly presented one-sided opinions; finally Source 5, even they were government statistics, contained deliberately chosen data that demonstrated a significant increase in the number of tourists, thus the source is definitely positively biased
* astutely discussed the validity of the sources: Source 1 was an accurate representation of the wilderness reality, and originating from a government department and .com website increased its validity; we would expect objective journalism from Source 2, and the validity of the source was increased by including quotes from a credentialed source and considering both sides of the argument, while the validity of the source was decreased by the inclusion of vague concepts such as ‘some locals’ and ‘several people’; we would expect government statistics appearing in Source 5 to be accurate, yet the fact that some statistics are from a .com website might decrease their validity, and the validity of these statistics might also be reduced because the sources of the data are sometimes inaccurate and might have been extrapolated
* 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
* did not recognise the inherent bias in Source 1 (a photograph) or Source 5 (statistics)
* listed some points without providing reasons for the conclusions that were made
* only interpreted validity as a judgement on the quality of the author (e.g., Source 2 being written by the ABC) rather than those who were quoted within the source.

Question 7

This question primarily assessed students’ ability to use the sources to develop strategies that would achieve a balance between economic profit and environmental preservation. 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 four 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
* utilised the four-point outline presented in Source 7 to structure their response (not compulsory, because some used Source 6, discussing the social, economic and environmental impacts of tourism)
* clearly identified (via the wording of separate paragraphs or by numbering) four distinctly different strategies
* justified their chosen strategies by referring to sources provided and to their own knowledge of the tourism industry
* drew on models and concepts studied throughout the year to provide an explanation for their strategies
* used a wide range of tourism terminology
* discussed strategies such as:
* attracting visitors via an advertising campaign. This will create a growth in the number of tourists (Sources 1 and 5). The advertising campaign could focus on the pristine condition of Tasmania’s environment and could encourage tourists to be environmentally responsible
* grow access: a strategy might involve developing Hobart’s airport, thus increasing the number of flights, or increasing the number of boats/ships docking in Tasmania
* high quality visitor infrastructure: according to Source 4, this is necessary, but local taxes support this. A strategy to protect locals economically might involve increasing the prices for tourists, thus funding the infrastructure. Another strategy might involve improving the wastewater system at Freycinet, which would improve the environment as well
* building capability/capacity/community: see previous strategy; another strategy might be to involve the locals, especially Indigenous groups, providing employment with a special focus on protecting the environment by educating responsible tourists
* limiting the number of tourists or hours of operation will protect the environment’s carrying capacity; this might be done by increasing the prices for tourists.

Less successful responses commonly:

* were incomplete (due to running out of time)
* did not focus on ‘striking the right balance’ between economic and environmental impacts; these responses often did not recognise that the question focused on sustainability
* 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
* referred only to the sources without a mention of their own knowledge of the tourism industry
* presented broad solutions that were not relevant to Tasmania’s tourism industry.