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Cross-disciplinary Studies

2016 Chief Assessor’s Report

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## Overview

Chief Assessors’ reports give 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, the quality of student performance, and any relevant statistical information.

## School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Commentary

A commentary should illustrate and evaluate the ways in which the selected disciplines, or aspects of a discipline, contribute to the solution of one or more contemporary problems or issues. It should be a maximum of 1000 words if written or a maximum of 6 minutes for an oral presentation, or the equivalent in multimodal form.

**The more successful responses**

* Were in response to assessment tasks which were designed to allow students to clearly address the specific features being assessed, especially for analysis and evaluation.
* Reflected assessment tasks that had a small number of open-ended questions and which required students to write a report or an extended response.
* Came from students who responded to an issue related to their learning interest.

**The less successful responses**

* Were often a reflection of a task design that did not allow students the opportunity to address the specific features being assessed, especially for analysis and evaluation.
* Included questions which required students to draw images or sketches; this reduced their ability to demonstrate in-depth analysis and evaluation.
* Were well below the specified word-limit of 1000 words.

**General information**

Teachers are encouraged to leave feedback on tasks to indicate to moderators where they see the evidence to support the grade they are giving.

Assessment Type 2: Group Project

This assessment type is designed to assess each student’s ability to work collaboratively in a group to plan, organise, and implement a group project that focuses on a learning requirement or an aspect of the content. Students must be given the opportunity to collaborate in the decision-making process and to share responsibilities in the responding to the project.

**The more successful responses**

* Demonstrated collaboration skills in a range of situations.
* Were from students who were able to reflect in depth on their learning relative to the learning interest.
* Applied their knowledge and understanding to solve problems and to develop further questions in relation to the relevant disciplines.

**The less successful responses**

* Did not reflect individually on student contributions to the task and did not clearly identify and reflect on what their role was within the group project.
* Often occurred when students changed groups during the course of the project.
* Were found to be when a task design did not provide the opportunity for students to complete the task to a high standard, especially in relation to the assessment design criteria of analysis and evaluation, and application.
* Did not provide sufficient evidence for moderation verification of the collective outcome, the individual outcome, or a combination of both.

**General information**

If electronic evidence is submitted, it is important to clearly identify the students involved.

In some instances it may be necessary for the student to work with the teacher to complete the task.

Assessment Type 3: Presentation and Discussion

Students select an aspect of their learning from across the program for a presentation followed by a discussion. The presentation and discussion combined should be a maximum of 15 minutes; of this, the presentation should be a maximum of 7 minutes.

**The more successful responses**

* Presented their learning through an oral presentation and provided all of their evidence for moderation.
* Had discussions where the teacher asked open questions that allowed students to demonstrate evidence of learning against performance standards.
* Completed the discussion individually and not in a group.

**The less successful responses**

* Included no evidence or recording of the discussion.
* Were affected by teachers asking closed questions that prevented students from achieving in the higher grade bands.
* Did not include selected items such as photographs, data, and images to support their presentation and demonstrate their learning.

**General information**

To support the moderation process, it is helpful if teachers ensure that the recordings of the presentation and the discussion are accessible (i.e. the file of the recording on the USB drive or disc can be opened) and audible.

## External Assessment

Assessment Type 4: Analysis

A range of analysis tasks were presented for this assessment type. Teachers provided a variety of stimuli for student to respond to, including previously viewed articles and issue responses, as well as unseen short-answer and extended-response questions. Teachers are asked to ensure that only 60 minutes is permitted for each analysis task under supervision.

**The more successful responses**

* Were from students who had open-ended and extended-response questions.
* Required students to analyse data in order to complete an extended written response.
* Established that the students had a clear understanding of the learning interest and were able to analyse and evaluate information from a variety of sources.

**The less successful responses**

* Required students to respond to a number of short-answer questions, which did not allow them to show in-depth analysis and evaluation.
* Were assessed against a marks scheme, which is not appropriate, as student evidence should be assessed against the performance standards.
* Addressed questions that only focused on one specific feature.
* Included questions that asked students to draw a picture, which gave them no opportunity to demonstrate in-depth analysis and achieve in the higher grade bands.

**General information**

Teachers are reminded to ensure that they include an answer sheet for each analysis with their external assessment to support the marking of this task. Answer sheets are not required to be attached to each student’s work. Teachers are reminded that student work should be identified by SACE registration number only and that no teacher comments should be made on student work.

## Operational Advice

School assessment tasks are set and marked by teachers. Teachers’ assessment decisions are reviewed by moderators. Teacher grades/marks should be evident on all student school assessment work.

Teachers should ensure that:

* they provide a learning and assessment plan (LAP)
* they provide a complete set of task sheets for all assessment tasks
* disciplines are clearly identified on the front of each task
* assessment type is clearly identified on the front of each task.

## General Comments

Students who achieved in the higher grade bands were able to clearly demonstrate an understanding of their learning interest through an integration of disciplines being covered. Teachers are strongly encouraged to highlight this integration in the development of their learning interest, assessment plan, and task design.

When assessing the specific feature KU3, it is important that teachers clearly identify on the task sheet the capabilities that are being assessed. Those students who were able to address the capabilities directly and link their understanding to the learning interest achieved higher grades. When students are being assessed for the specific feature AE3, there must be the opportunity for them to reflect on their learning through the task. It is critical that the disciplines being addressed are clearly stated on the task sheet, as this assists both students and moderators.

Finally, when teachers are developing or evaluating their program, they are encouraged to ensure a strong learning interest is evident. Some programs were primarily an extension of a subject already provided within the Stage 2 curriculum and needed to demonstrate explicitly the disciplines being drawn on and the learning interest being developed.

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Chief Assessor