

Food and Hospitality

2014 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.

A total of 1989 students completed the 20-credit subject in Food and Hospitality in 2014, an increase of nearly 200 students from 2013. A very small number completed the 10-credit subject.

## School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Practical Activity

Research Task (Investigation and Critical Analysis)

The research component is an important aspect of the practical activity as it provides students with an opportunity to practise a formal style of writing, using both primary and secondary resources. Teachers should review the layout of their tasks to ensure that the design of the task meets the requirements of the subject outline, using the selected performance standards from investigation and critical analysis. Where research tasks clearly identified an area of study and were scaffolded with a well-defined focus on a contemporary issue related to the food and hospitality industry, students had an opportunity to investigate in depth and show critical analysis. However, many students experienced some difficulty responding to the task within 500 words. Although the SACE Board has identified alternative forms of presentation, whatever the form selected, students need to provide clear evidence of their research.

An interesting range of contemporary trends was evident in task design. However, not all topics selected allowed for higher-level discussion or in-depth investigation. Teachers should revisit their assessment plan annually and update tasks where they have continued to ask students to ‘form an opinion’, ensuring the language used is clear and consistent with appropriate terminology. The research task should prepare students to write in the format required for the investigation. Where teachers had formatted the task by asking a range of questions, or had proposed a very broad issue, students struggled to respond to the task at a high level against the performance standards.

The A grade band students were able to perceptively critically analyse and investigate the contemporary issue in depth, particularly when the task required students to look at a range of data using both primary and secondary sources. Well-utilised primary and secondary research that was relevant and well considered in its presentation (with quotes, graphs, tables, etc.) clearly supported assessment decisions at the higher levels of the performance standards for investigation and critical analysis. Teachers generally demonstrated confidence in relation to the selection and use of performance standards to determine levels of achievement.

The Internet was heavily relied on for sources of information, often with little relevance to the local setting. Students should be encouraged to make their voice clear in the research. Students who achieved a high level of success supported their research with selected quotes, data, and statistics, ably satisfying specific feature ICA3 (of the assessment design criteria). They also used a balance of appropriate primary and secondary sources of information.

Teachers should support students to use appropriate referencing systems and should familiarise themselves with current referencing guidelines on the SACE website.

Action Plan (Problem-solving)

Teachers who based their assessment tasks on issues related to an area of study enabled students to meet the higher levels of achievement in the area of problem-solving. Well-constructed action plans clearly reflected the link between the area of study and the problem identified. Where this did not occur, students often struggled to identify appropriate issues.

Often there were too many specific features of the assessment design criteria being assessed for problem-solving. Limiting the number will often provide students with opportunities to achieve higher outcomes against the performance standards. Stronger links are needed to address both the hospitality and the food industry. It is essential that teachers design tasks focused on contemporary food and hospitality trends, and make a clear link between the focus in the action plan and the practical application.

Students should be presented with a task that allows them to identify and discuss factors that they can problem-solve in relation to the food and hospitality industry. It was noted that some students identified a range of factors but showed little discussion linked to the task. Where the task was unclear, students had little opportunity to demonstrate success. Most students could identify factors effectively, although many generic factors were still evident which did not address the context of Food and Hospitality or the area of study in depth. The higher-achieving students were discerning in the factors chosen, and were able to link them strongly to the area of study — enabling them to have a clear understanding of the context. In several classes, students addressed too many factors and were less astute in their discussion.

The decision-making about problem-solving and implementation strategies was clearly evident in most cases, with students making relevant decisions to support the factors identified. Higher-achieving students could make clear, informed decisions, often linked to regional foods and local community networks.

Students should be supported to show depth and understanding of problem-solving and the range of reasons that led to decision-making. Many students identified implementation strategies in dot points, allowing them to address the requirements for their practical and justification in greater depth, resulting in achievement at a higher level. Teachers should assist students to ensure that the implementation strategies relate clearly to the practical implementation and decisions made.

The practical activity is designed to make clear links with the research or decisions contained in the action plan. Where teachers had included ‘evidence of practical’ in the task design, students were supported in providing clear evidence of their work. Many teachers submitted comprehensive evidence of student learning that demonstrated many aspects of the practical application against the relevant assessment design criteria. When this was the case, the grades awarded for the practical application were able to be supported at moderation. Many teachers provided valuable feedback to students on their individual assessment pro formas, thereby supporting student learning.

The evidence for the practical activity was pleasing to see this year. Most students had provided both written feedback on the practical activity against the assessment design criteria, as well as visual evidence — mostly in the form of a sequence of coloured photographs to support the evidence.

Students provided a range of evidence that supported their practical in areas of technology and application of safe food handling and, to a lesser extent, provided evidence of techniques and quality control in preparing and serving food. Students who presented thorough and thoughtful evidence of the practical application were then able to articulate the processes and outcomes in the evaluation.

Some samples of work showed evidence that teachers had used a marks scheme to grade students on their practical work. Teachers are encouraged to assess the selected assessment design criteria using the language of the performance standards, if designing a teacher grade sheet. It was helpful when moderators could view teacher feedback which supported assessment decisions for the practical. Teachers are strongly encouraged to support students to incorporate photographic evidence of processes together with the finished product or outcome to address performance standards, so that grades for the practical performance can be validated.

Outdated practical marks pro formas should no longer be used. Teachers should familiarise themselves with the shading of performance standards and making a judgment about student work according to the shaded areas. Some student evidence was over-marked in the practical for a low-skill product.

Individual Evaluation Report

Many teachers have changed their learning and assessment plans to reflect the reduction in the number of required evaluation reports in the practical activity. This action significantly reduced the workload for students and allowed for strategic placement of these evaluation reports, identifying specific features to enhance tasks selected. Where teachers had identified one or two assessment design criteria relevant to the task, students were more likely to address the task with sufficient insight to achieve the higher levels of the performance standards within the word-count.

Evaluation reports should have clear links to practical tasks and an area of study. Where the teacher structured the task appropriately, students were given a better opportunity to not only reflect on their practical application, but also to make a connection between the decisions contained in the action plan and the key findings of their research. The standard of work in the A grade band reflected a sophisticated evaluation of processes and outcomes to reflect on the final stage of the practical application.

Higher-achieving students demonstrated their ability to identify the processes behind outcomes. In some cases, students struggled to reflect on processes and outcomes ‘insightfully’. Where teachers were still encouraging students to discuss strengths and weaknesses, evaluation of the processes and outcomes of the practical application was often superficial.

Technology was not addressed effectively in many reports where specific feature E2 (of the evaluation assessment design criterion) was identified. When designing their tasks, teachers need to make clearer links between the scaffolding of the task and the aspects of technology identified from the area of study. This provides students with a clear opportunity to appraise the technology used in the practical application. Over-assessment of specific features E1 and E4 on all tasks was evident from many schools. The task design did not always allow for an in-depth evaluation of contemporary trends related to food and hospitality. Where teachers allowed students to submit their report with an oral or multimodal presentation, there must be sufficient evidence of the presentation to confirm the grade awarded.

Evaluations that were scaffolded against the specific features being assessed were much more likely to achieve the higher-grade levels, addressing the assessment design criteria.

Assessment Type 2: Group Activity

Group Decision-making (Collaboration)

The group activity demonstrated a wide range of practical applications, including the ‘long’ lunch, healthy take-away, three-course dinners for staff, fine dining for an old scholars’ reunion, cocktail/finger foods for large groups, food trucks, breakfasts, and outdoor BBQ catering, as well as the more common lunches and high teas for guests within the local school community. The structure of the group decision-making task did not always support students in identifying factors and problem-solving challenges related to the task. Issues need to clearly identify with, and relate to, the area of study addressed. The task design for the group activity must address healthy eating practices within the group practical activity, and therefore needs to be addressed in the group decision-making task. Some students addressed healthier cooking methods or focused on the use of fresh, seasonal produce, while others addressed healthy eating guidelines in their planning. Without the focus on healthy eating, teachers are unable to make a valid assessment against the specific feature C2 in collaboration.

Students generally showed evidence of being able to identify and discuss issues as a group. The group activity requires students to make collaborative decisions and state implementation strategies. Teachers generally chose to assess specific features P1 and P2 in problem-solving, in line with the task description. Teachers must ensure that each member of the group has a copy of the group decision-making task in their package, and that group roles are clearly identified for all members of the group. There was evidence of improved understanding of the requirement of group roles, and the word-count was generally adhered to.

Teachers were often challenged when assessing students who had been absent for the group practical task, particularly when only one group task was set. When students were able to participate in two group activities, they had a better opportunity for successful achievement against the performance standards. Teachers are reminded that documentation of the task allocated to each student within the group decision-making task must be attached to every individual student’s task, together with evidence of the practical application. It is important for teachers to allocate the same grade for all students in the group for the group plan.

In order to support the highest grade level (A+) in the group activity, teachers must clearly demonstrate that all areas of assessment support an A grade. The individual evaluation report must be in the A grade band, as well as the group practical application and the collaboration.

Group Practical Application

Many teachers designed appropriate group activities related to a specific area of study, which often had a catering focus. While there were many examples of excellent student evidence in the group practical application, teachers should continue to support students to submit clear evidence of this task. Some students did this effectively with photographic evidence together with annotations to explain processes against the performance standards. Some teachers provided shaded performance standards, but there was often no detailed evidence to support the grades awarded for the practical activity. Some tasks were seen to be very challenging for the group, particularly large-scale catering events. Overall, student work demonstrated active and thoughtful involvement, with opportunities to showcase student work within the local community.

Individual Evaluation Report

Students were able to reflect on their individual processes and outcomes, but many students struggled with evaluating the effectiveness of the group performance. It was clear in many reports that some of the group members were absent or did not fulfil their roles adequately within the team. Specific features E1 and E3 were addressed more effectively than specific features E2 and E4. Where students were successful in their evaluation, they were very honest in their appraisal of group and individual performances.

## External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Investigation

Stage 2 Food and Hospitality focuses on the contemporary and changing nature of the food and hospitality industry, hence student research should be based on an issue that relates to both food and hospitality, with an industry focus. It was clear that students who achieved at a high level in the investigation had closely followed guidelines from the subject outline relating to Assessment Type 3: Investigation.

It was pleasing to see that many students were able to present detailed investigations that demonstrated analysis. It was obvious that these students understood the requirements of the investigation and that they had benefited from teacher advice on planning, research, drafting, and appropriate presentation. Generally, those students who carefully selected a contemporary issue that clearly related to the food and hospitality industry, and conducted research using a variety of appropriate methods, were then able to critically analyse and present their findings at a high level.

It was obvious that many teachers had provided advice to students as to how to structure the investigation, which enabled them to present information clearly. Most papers followed a common format, with an introduction outlining the research question, scope and methodology of the investigation, followed by a discussion of findings under focusing questions, and finally a conclusion where students were able to draw together and add to their analysis. It was clear that this structure was an effective method for students to present evidence against the specific features. In papers without a scope, research often lacked focus and direction. Students who limited their scope allowed sufficient space to present their findings and conclusions in appropriate depth.

The following section discusses, in turn, each of the specific features of the assessment design criteria that were used in assessing the investigation.

ICA1: Investigation and critical analysis of contemporary trends and/or issues related to food and hospitality

Time spent in the planning phase, with appropriate guidance to select an appropriate issue, appeared to be a critical factor for students to have the best opportunity to achieve successful outcomes. Students should be encouraged to develop original and innovative ideas, so it was pleasing to see where many classes had addressed a wide range of issues.

Students need to identify a relevant contemporary issue related to a selected area of study and state this issue as a research question or hypothesis. In the better papers, students made clear links to a selected area of study, documenting this in the intended scope of the investigation and thus providing a focus and direction for research.

As the subject outline states, the list of topics under each area of study is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive, and the issue must be selected carefully to ensure that a strong link to the food and hospitality industry is achievable. The link to hospitality should be explicit, as students may be disadvantaged if their investigation is not clearly linked to the hospitality industry. This means that issues purely related to nutrition, such as diets for athletes, are not appropriate, nor are those related to domestic food. Teachers should advise students that, as two of the specific features (ICA1 and E4) specifically refer to ‘issues related to food and hospitality’, students have limited opportunity to achieve success against these criteria if their topic is outside the scope of the subject.

In the higher-achieving investigations, students selected a relevant or current issue which enabled them to examine perspectives, develop an argument, and show critical analysis. Other investigations seemed to be based on a topic rather than an issue, and this seemed to be chosen because of easily accessible research material. Investigations that were topic based were often lacking in critical analysis and often failed to meet the performance standards to a high level.

Local issues or those recently in the media more commonly led to successful and interesting investigations, such as those based on issues from newspapers or hospitality industry journals. Markers were pleased to see new and contemporary ideas being explored by students. These included investigations related to the impact of food trucks and how they compete with bricks-and-mortar traders, a variety of issues related to the influence of sustainability on hospitality including waste-minimisation strategies, and the impact of social media on the food and hospitality industry. In the higher-achieving investigations, students were able to link their contemporary ideas to the local setting and provide specific examples.

A well-crafted research question or hypothesis was the basis for enabling the development of critical analysis. For example, ‘How viable are independent coffee boutiques in Adelaide?’ is a better starting point for an investigation than ‘Coffee boutiques in Adelaide’. The first version leads to a comparison and debate of the issue, while the latter leads to a project-style presentation of information. Additionally, when the answer to a research question is too obvious, it is difficult for students to achieve well-considered depth in their response.

Students were advantaged when investigations were structured with three or four focusing questions linked to the hypothesis or research question. In the high-level investigations it was clear that students had selected open focusing questions allowing them to demonstrate analysis. For this reason, students should be discouraged from using focusing questions that are closed or predictable.

In the stronger investigations, students were able to show critical analysis by comparing and contrasting their research findings, and showing an ability to synthesise their findings. One way this was done was by drawing on a range of sources of information from various perspectives under each focus question, rather than presenting limited data. Evidence could then be presented to demonstrate use of expert primary sources, together with sound, up-to-date secondary sources as a basis for analysis and discussion. The higher-achieving investigations showed depth, with students thinking critically and thoroughly teasing out data and information. In these investigations, students tended to compare and contrast information and offer reasons for certain data or results related to their selected issue. It was clear that a debate from a range of viewpoints, or from the perspective of all key stakeholders, enabled students to develop an argument and fostered analysis. Where students provided key examples to support discussion or statements, their points were more relevant and focused.

ICA2: Analysis of information for relevance and appropriateness, with appropriate acknowledgment of sources

Most students drew on research from a range of relevant sources and demonstrated appropriate research skills. Those who achieved highly against the performance standards conducted quality research with primary sources which were strongly connected to the investigation, enabling students to present credible and highly relevant primary information. In the more successful investigations, students synthesised, compared, and analysed primary and secondary data under the selected focusing questions, rather than presenting descriptions of survey results question by question.

Most students used a combination of primary and secondary sources. Students who planned their research path well had a range of data on which they could draw to analyse findings.

The most successful students sourced sound, up-to-date secondary sources, such as newspaper or journal articles, as the basis for discussion and analysis. Where students were less successful, they often relied on personal opinion or loose generalisations that were not substantiated by credible sources.

While accessing suitable primary data may pose a challenge, many students were enterprising and successful by using a range of strategies including utilising blogs, online menu information, and hospitality review sites. Although students generally accessed reliable and relevant sites, they should be wary of relying purely on Internet sources, as this can limit their ability to examine the issue thoroughly. Where Internet sources are used, students should be discerning and take care not to assume that data from international settings can be extrapolated to food and hospitality in Australian settings.

The more successful investigations often used relevant information that directly related to a local context. Students should also aim to be objective in their presentation of findings.

While a customer survey may be an appropriate research strategy for some issues, students should consider the most appropriate target group. For example, in some instances primary research was limited to presentation of the results of a simple survey of classmates, which often resulted in a lack of informed opinion and did not allow for deep analysis.

It was clear in some investigations that information from primary sources was under-utilised, as sources were mentioned in the scope but there was little evidence of findings presented under the focus questions. Students are reminded that all relevant data should be analysed and included within the main body of the investigation.

Appendices and copies of surveys are not to be submitted.

Most students demonstrated the ability to appropriately reference their sources. Some students tended to link large sections of quoted material with very little discussion or interpretation. The most successful investigations gave pertinent evidence in the form of quotes, with relevant and well-explained examples that supported the argument or discussion. The use of succinct and highly relevant quotations used within sentences, or with appropriate explanation, ensured students could demonstrate their own knowledge, understanding and analysis without losing their ‘student voice’.

Students are encouraged to include primary sources in the reference list, and are advised to access the referencing guidelines on the SACE website.

ICA3: Application of literacy and numeracy skills, and use of appropriate terminology

It was pleasing to see that the vast majority of students were successful against specific feature ICA3 and demonstrated strong literacy skills. The stronger investigations were those that appeared to have been carefully drafted and edited to minimise spelling and grammatical errors and to ensure a logical flow of ideas. Many students used subject-specific terminology effectively, and presented well-structured investigations. Successful students often depersonalised their work by writing in the third person which helped to achieve an objective tone.

In the more successful investigations, visual data, including charts and graphs, were well labelled and evaluated rather than just inserted. This is essential, as the evidence of learning produced by the student should be explicit and not require the marker to make inferences from the material provided. Students should continue to be discerning in their use of visual data, ensuring it is referenced if appropriate.

Many students demonstrated numeracy skills through their analysis of survey data. Generally this data was used well to inform results; however, students are reminded that graphs are not needed when there are only very limited variables.

E4: Evaluation of contemporary trends and/or issues related to food and hospitality in different settings

Students who demonstrated a high level of achievement against specific feature E4 were those who tended to show evaluation throughout their investigation. This was often seen, but limited to, evaluation at the end of each focus question, which was then drawn together in the conclusion at the end of the investigation. Students who only presented a short conclusion at the end of their paper were often unable to demonstrate the depth necessary to achieve at a higher level. In these papers students tended to recount findings rather than evaluate.

In the most successful investigations, it was clear that students had a deep understanding of their findings and were able to reflect on their meaning, as compared to those students who just summarised what they found.

In the more successful papers, students were able to weigh up perspectives, analysing their findings and coming to conclusions while avoiding generalisations. Students are reminded that the conclusion should be related to the research issue only, as students are not required to reflect on the success or limitations of the study itself, unless this is pertinent.

Students are reminded of the importance of not exceeding the specified word-count, so as to ensure markers are able to read their conclusion.

**Summary**

In summary the most successful investigations featured:

* a contemporary issue, providing the potential to critically analyse
* a local context, either being Adelaide or Australia, as appropriate
* a clear hypothesis or research question
* structured analysis and discussion around focus questions
* synthesis of primary and secondary data
* evidence from a range of perspectives
* appropriate use of visual and numerical data including graphs
* clear communication
* a conclusion which drew together key aspects of evaluation
* consistent referencing and a reference list
* adherence to the word-limit.

Students should be careful to de-identify their work by avoiding using student, teacher, and school names. No evidence of the teacher’s marking process should be evident on the investigation. Students should use the cover sheet provided by the SACE Board and note that the correct terminology for the external assessment task in Food and Hospitality is ‘investigation’.

Teachers should carefully follow the guidelines for conducting the investigation and not only check the Stage 2 Food and Hospitality minisite for information, but direct students to the minisite when completing this task.

## 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.

Packaging and presentation of materials for final moderation was an issue for some teachers. Separation of student work into Assessment Type 1 and Assessment Type 2 did not always occur, although Assessment Type 2 samples were generally easily identifiable.

Teachers should familiarise themselves with the requirements for the subject throughout the year from the SACE website. School-assessed work should be packaged in separate packages for both the practical activity and the group activity, as they are moderated separately. Materials should be selected for the students identified according to the SACE Board selection process for the collection of materials.

The requirement for a 20-credit subject is a minimum of seven tasks including the investigation (see ‘Evidence of Learning’ in the subject outline). Teachers must include an approved learning and assessment plan (with an endorsed addendum, if appropriate) as well as a set of assessment tasks with their package. Teachers should strongly encourage students to remove food orders, recipes, drafts, and other material which is not required in the assessment process. Individual student tasks should be stapled, together with a detailed task sheet and performance standards appropriately shaded to reflect grades awarded. Plastic sleeves are not required for individual student tasks. Teachers are encouraged to provide an overall matrix to show determination of final grades awarded for each student in the class.

Teachers are reminded that they need to award an I grade rather than an E grade for non-submission of work. Teachers used the Variations — Moderation Materials form effectively this year where work was not completed or was missing. However, some teachers did not adjust student grades for work not submitted. Changes to tasks from the original learning and assessment plan need to be verified by an endorsed addendum attached to the learning and assessment plan.

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