2022 Child Studies Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the 2022 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

Subject adjustments for the 20-credit subject were approved by the SACE Board in 2022 to support schools and students with any pressures associated with COVID. Teachers are encouraged to check the adjustments available, which continue into 2023 and are published on the website, utilising those which may be of assistance to their situation.

Assessment Type 1: Practical Activity

At least one practical application must be undertaken individually. The remaining practical activity or activities may be undertaken individually, in pairs, in groups, or as a whole class.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning primarily in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

* investigation and critical analysis (research task) and/or problem-solving (action plan)
* practical application
* evaluation.

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated clear analysis of a topic/issue rather than just providing a recount of information
* used an appropriate variety of valid sources to support arguments or viewpoints in research tasks
* used appropriate higher order vocabulary and subject specific terminology in written tasks
* appropriately acknowledged sources and were consistent in the system of referencing used
* identified issues within action plans that directly related to the practical tasks, rather than identifying and presenting research related to the issues
* had action plans and evaluations which were well structured and linked to specific features of the assessment design criteria
* demonstrated an appropriate range of processes
* provided evidence of a range of captioned images that directly addressed the process undertaken to complete the practical
* included practical tasks that directly related to the research or problem solving undertaken rather than stand-alone activities
* evaluated the process used by explaining how they responded, why they did something and what the outcome was
* evaluated the impact of technology on the health and well-being of children, rather than discussing the technology used
* were those where each task showed a clear focus on an area of study, combined with a targeted number of specific features which were to be addressed, allowing for a detailed and insightful response
* were in response to contemporary tasks that engaged students

The less successful responses commonly:

* included research tasks that were too complex or covered too many components to be addressed within the 500-word maximum
* focussed on a response giving personal opinion, rather than demonstrating analysis
* had a limited range of sources or did not make effective use of the sources available
* relied on overseas sources rather than Australian even when addressing issues specific to a local context
* provided lists of dot-pointed issues without discussing these factors or did not identify specific factors impacting problem-solving within action plans. Some responses tended to treat this section as research rather than decision-making
* lacked evidence of practical application
* included practicals that were not specific to the health and well-being of children but rather a parent or family member
* provided a recount of the practical activity in evaluations rather than providing insightful or well-considered evaluation of the processes and outcomes
* featured too many specific features to address, particularly in the evaluation, which hindered students producing responses that were ‘insightful’ or ‘in-depth’
* focused on the technology they used, rather than evaluating the impact of this technology on the health and wellbeing of children

Assessment Type 2: Group Activity

Students work in groups to plan, organise, and implement action to meet a teacher directed challenge that focuses on the health and wellbeing of children. A group activity must relate to a specific area of study from the subject outline and consist of:

* group decision-making
* a group practical application
* an individual evaluation report.

For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning primarily in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

* problem-solving
* practical application
* collaboration
* evaluation.

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated evidence of having participated in group decision-making rather than producing a group action plan
* used a range of ways to communicate evidence of group decision-making such as mind-maps, tables, etc
* provided clear evidence of collaboration (e.g. through the use of screen shots of planning conversations between students)
* addressed collaboration as part of the group decision-making
* were in response to tasks that provided multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate leadership
* provided an evaluation of the student’s own performance, as well as the group’s collaborative efforts
* adopted effective implementation strategies and task allocation amongst group members
* focused on ways in which the health and well-being of children would be benefitted
* involved students actually working with a child/children which allowed for more relevant and insightful evaluation

The less successful responses commonly:

* recounted the tasks or processes performed by the individual/group rather than evaluating them and their effectiveness
* included food related tasks that did not focus on healthy food initiatives or choices, therefore making it difficult to establish a link to specific features that relate to the health and well-being of children
* did not provide evidence of collaboration
* were only provided one opportunity to demonstrate achievement against the collaboration criteria
* were written as action plans rather than group decision-making plans

General information

* Moderation was hindered when incomplete samples of student work were submitted; teachers should ensure that all tasks for a sample are uploaded or a Variation to Moderation Materials Form is included in the teacher materials
* Teachers should familiarise themselves with the SACE Board Word Count Policy. Work that exceeds the prescribed word count can impact the ability of students to address all specific features within the specified conditions
* Appendices or additional evidence should not be submitted; these are not moderated and do not contribute to the student’s result for the task
* Specific feature E2, ‘Appraisal of the impact of technology on the health and wellbeing of children,’ should relate directly to the practical application
* Designing pamphlets or utilising baby simulators does not meet the requirements of a practical application
* Local sources are recommended to support contemporary issues/topics within an Australian context
* it is appropriate for group decision-making to be communicated in creative ways, such as mind maps
* Evidence of group decision-making must be included with every student’s work, not just one member of the group.

External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Investigation

This assessment type enables students to investigate an area of Child Studies of interest to them. The area chosen as the basis for the Investigation should focus on an issue related to children’s growth and development from conception to 8 years, as prescribed in the Subject Outline.

Students are encouraged to identify a relevant contemporary issue related to the health and well-being of children and state this issue as a research question or hypothesis. Students should relate their investigation to an area of study and define the scope. Generally, a good hypothesis or research question led to the production of logical and productive focus questions, which could then be researched extensively, critically analysed, and evaluated. Guidelines for ethical research are available on the website to support teachers and students.

While it is an individual task, it is expected the teacher will support and provide ongoing feedback to the student to help direct the investigation. ICA1, 2, 3 and E 4 are assessed in the investigation.

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* had a well-constructed hypothesis/research question, which invited deep analysis and enabled the student to present their investigation to a high standard within the word count
* clearly identified why the selected topic was an issue or trend and how it linked to an area of study
* included well-constructed introductions that defined the scope of the topic and provided clear direction and insight into what was to come throughout the investigation
* featured focus questions which were open, led to analysis and were linked to the health and wellbeing of the child
* focussed on the health and wellbeing of the child in the response to each focus question
* used a variety of recent and credible sources of information including relevant expert opinion from a range of sources eg videos, articles, podcasts
* referred to Australian sources and statistics where possible
* made effective use of graphics that were relevant to the area of research and added to the investigation by discussing appropriately to demonstrate their understanding
* when using graphs and diagrams, referred to and discussed the information being presented
* used data and expert theorists where appropriate to the topic
* mentioned the expertise of sources where appropriate and specified details of any critical observations
* analysed and interpreted within the body of investigation results/outcomes/conclusions drawn from surveys and/or graphs
* utilised a variety of credible sources, based on factual research, which supported comparison and evaluation and not based on student’s own opinion
* drew appropriate comparisons and contrasts between data sources
* referred throughout the investigation to a variety of credible and highly relevant sources to support arguments, rather than just providing a reference list at the end
* showed evidence of high levels of analysis, debate, and critical thinking throughout the discussion, culminating in a clear conclusion either at the end of each focus question or in the conclusion
* effectively brought the discussion of the topic question or hypothesis to a clear, concise conclusion while also evaluating any patterns or data relationships

The less successful responses commonly:

* addressed topics which were not appropriate to the defined age group (0-8 years)
* addressed broad questions which did not allow for specificity
* did not include the qualification or identify the area of expertise for relevant quoted sources
* featured focus questions which were broad and limited the ability of the student to show depth
* answered ‘what’ based questions (e.g. What is ASD?) which encouraged students to recount findings rather than analyse
* recounted facts/data or made unsupported generalisations rather than analysing information
* recounted information from sources, rather than using it to develop their argument
* relied on surveys that asked closed questions and produced predictable responses that did not contribute any meaningful data to the investigation
* presented data from surveys of an audience who had no real investment in or understanding of the topic
* focused on one side of an argument because of an expert they had focussed on
* relied on graphs and statistics to demonstrate numeracy when they were neither relevant nor necessary
* relied on a narrow range of resources or resources that did not offer a range of perspectives and limited depth
* included overseas data, often assuming it applied within a local context
* produced large sections of work without acknowledgement of sources.