# Women’s Studies 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: Text Analysis**

Students undertook one or two text analysis assessments, in which they analysed, for gender bias, the representation of gender in a text or texts, including cultural texts. Texts that were commonly analysed included: films, lyrics, music videos, video games, paintings, and a series of advertisements.

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

* + knowledge and understanding
  + gender analysis
  + communication.

The more successful responses commonly:

* had a well- structured question or focus that allowed for gender analysis
* adopted a reflective approach to gender analysis and considered how the privileges of race, class, and ethnicity have affected their own experiences
* emphasised the diversity of women’s experiences, but also the similar experiences of women under different patriarchal power, eg diversity and commonality
* analysed and evaluated the ways in which aspects of identity (such as age, affluence, and sexual identity) affected women’s experiences
* as per previous years, established a connection between women’s identities and their social location.

The less successful responses commonly:

* were descriptive and narrative in approach; gender was described, rather than explored
* as per previous year, recounted the text, rather than analysed the construction of gender within the text/s
* omitted the use of the language of gender or if present, not used perceptively
* as per previous years, focused on one society or similar societies.

**Assessment Type 2: Essay**

Students undertook one gender analysis assessment in the form of a persuasive written essay of a maximum of 1200 words.

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

* + gender analysis
  + investigation and evaluation
  + communication.

The more successful responses commonly:

* focused on a single aspect of a topic, thus enabling depth of discussion
* as per previous years, used a feminist framework for the exploration of the differences and commonalities between women
* demonstrated high levels of skill in the applied use of the language of gender
* were able to reference sources of information and ideas development
* wrote in a persuasive style
* allowed the students to construct their own focus and essay question.

The less successful responses commonly:

* were a narrative rather than a persuasive essay. Students were often more successful when they were able to focus on a clear intent
* were scaffolded heavily and the question was the same for all students in the class
* identified strategies for effecting change, but did not engage with the evaluation of such strategies
* as per previous years, acknowledgment of sources was limited
* lacked reference to the cultural diversity and experiences of a range of women.

**Assessment Type 3: Folio**

Students undertook three gender analysis assessments. These assessments took a variety of forms of presentation and popular assessments included: a speech, an analytical report, a newspaper article and the analysis of art and advertisements.

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

* + gender analysis
  + investigation and evaluation
  + communication.

The more successful responses commonly:

* as per the previous years, demonstrated in-depth investigation and evaluation of the ways in which various socials structures, cultural practices and ways of thinking disempowered women
* illustrated perceptive and analytical insights in a creative form
* included varied task types and offered students a broad way of demonstrating the performance criteria for each element of the folio
* addressed all specific features of the Assessment Design Criteria
* analysed the concepts of identity in terms of class, sexuality, race, culture and religion
* critically explored feminist theory
* analysed identity and gender as a social construct in relation to intersectionality, the Indigenous perspectives and the challenges presented by the LGBTQIA perspectives.

The less successful responses commonly:

* identified strategies for effecting change, but did not evaluate them
* described the diversity of experiences of women, but did not analyse in relation to the construction of gender
* were poorly constructed
* did not utilise the full word count to demonstrate their depth and breadth of understanding in relation to the construction of gender and gender relations
* as per previous years, made minimal references to gender and struggled with the use of gender-specific language.

# External Assessment

**Assessment Type 4: Issues Analysis**

Students undertook and negotiated a detailed, in-depth, independent investigation of a gender issue that was derived from one of the issues in Key Issues in Women’s Studies. The students produced an analytical and evaluative piece of writing of a maximum of 2000 words.

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

* knowledge and understanding — KU1
* gender analysis — GA1 and GA2
* investigation and evaluation — IE1
* communication — C1, C2, and C3.

The more successful responses commonly:

* as per previous years, demonstrated an understanding of gender in a personal sense and as an attribute that shapes a sense of identity, and in a political sense, as a pervasive social construction that can facilitate or hinder social relationships and access to institutions
* engaged closely and analytically with the most complex questions e.g. Why does trafficking exist rather than a description of what it involves
* demonstrated sophisticated, accurate and consistent use of the language of gender analysis that enhanced their point of view, in a persuasive style
* as per previous years, demonstrated in-depth investigation and acknowledged all sources, and used consistent referencing
* as per previous years, viewed the issue from a range of female perspectives.

The less successful responses commonly:

* as per previous years, lacked a specific question and had a statement instead
* did not use the full word-limit to demonstrate in-depth investigation and diversity of women’s experiences
* as in all assessment types, students narrated and described, rather than analysed gender related to the chosen issue
* as per previous years, described the disempowerment of women rather than a strong analysis of gender that is implicit in such disempowerment
* included visual imagery with little reference to them, or which often made no content contribution to the analysis or development of the persuasive content.