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Women’s 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: Text Analysis

The majority of the texts chosen allowed the students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of gender construction within the text. A varied range of challenging and appropriate tasks were set by teachers. An analysis of a group of different films was again the most popular text type, while print media, lyrics, Renaissance paintings, fairy tales, and video games were also analysed by many students.

**The more successful responses**

* Explored the role of gender relations and discussed different perspectives.
* Analysed and evaluated the ways in which aspects of identity (such as age, affluence, and sexual identity) affected women’s experiences.
* Adopted a reflective approach to gender analysis and considered how the privileges of race, class, and ethnicity have affected their own experiences.
* Analysed gender and identity as a social construction that is shaped by each society.
* Established a connection between women’s identities and their social location.

**The less successful responses**

* Recounted the text rather than analysed gender within the text.
* Did not use the language of gender perceptively.
* Focused on one society or similar societies.

Assessment Type 2: Essay

The essay appeared to be the most challenging assessment type for students. A wide variation in the quality of students’ written essays was evident.

**The more successful responses**

* Had a focused question, which allowed scope for analysis and strong viewpoints.
* Used persuasive language.
* Used a feminist framework for the exploration of the differences and commonalities between women.

**The less successful responses**

* Were a narrative rather than a persuasive essay.
* Had limited acknowledgment of sources.
* Lacked cultural diversity and experiences of a range of women.

Assessment Type 3: Folio

**The more successful responses**

* Demonstrated in-depth investigation and evaluation of the ways in which various social structures, cultural practices, and ways of thinking disempowered women.
* Displayed perceptive and insightful evaluation of a range of strategies for empowerment.
* Established a connection between women’s identity and their social location, and analysed the consequences.
* Considered the construction of femininity and masculinity and the various ways it disempowered women.
* Presented sophisticated arguments about how, when, where, and why women were disempowered and the consequences for them and society more broadly.

**The less successful responses**

* Lacked depth of investigation.
* Made little reference to the various roles of women in the private and public sphere.
* Made minimal references to gender and struggled with the use of gender-specific language.

**General information**

* Evidence for oral presentations needs to be provided.
* Tasks which enabled students options for developing responses allowed them to achieve at the higher grade levels.
* A summary sheet showing the specific features assessed across the three tasks with highlighted, performance standards demonstrated by the student, is recommended, as it allows an overview of the folio marking.

## External Assessment

Assessment Type 4: Issues Analysis

The standard of the issues analysis was consistently higher than that of previous years. Students chose a wide range of issues to analyse, including the exploitation of women in the armed forces, sharia law, Romani Gypsy culture, and historical issues. such as hysteria in the Victorian period and women in the fifties.

**The more successful responses**

* 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.
* Discussed and analysed the chosen issue within a feminist framework.
* Demonstrated in-depth investigation and acknowledged all sources, and used consistent referencing.
* Viewed the issue from a range of female perspectives.

**The less successful responses**

* Lacked a specific question and had a statement instead.
* Did not use the full word-limit.
* Included visual images with little reference to them, or which made no content contribution to the analysis or development of the persuasive content.
* Described the disempowerment of women rather than a strong analysis of gender that is implicit in such disempowerment.

## 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.

Materials requested for moderation must be clearly labelled. The assessment type, assignment task sheet, word-count, and name and/or SACE registration number must be included. If special provisions are used, then these must be explicit and well documented on the Variations — Moderation Materials form. It is very helpful to the moderators, who are looking to confirm grades, if teacher grades are evident on all student school assessment work.

Teachers and students are reminded that student names and school names or numbers should not be present on the issues analysis task for external assessment.

## General Comments

Overall, the standard of work displayed by students was higher than in previous years.

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Chief Assessor