# Workplace Practices 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: Folio

This assessment type relates specifically to the Industry and Work Knowledge area of study and tasks can be presented in a range of suitable formats. For a 10‑credit subject, students undertake at least one folio assessment. For a 20‑credit subject, students undertake at least three folio assessments.

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

* + knowledge and understanding
  + investigation and analysis
  + reflection and evaluation.

The more successful responses commonly:

* addressed each of the criteria twice across the three tasks in a 20-credit subject
* allowed students to investigate and analyse rather than just reproduce the ideas or opinions of others
* were industry focussed where students were motivated to work on something relevant to their own future, such as a future career path. This inbuilt flexibility allowed students to choose personal and specific resources relevant to the task
* were designed, where possible, to suit the student’s industry context
* incorporated Investigation and Analysis as a specific component of tasks when appropriate, so that learning was explicit rather than implied
* included reflection in at least two of three tasks for a 20-credit subject
* allowed for students to investigate a topic related to their own industry focus, rather than a ‘one size fits all’ topic, chosen by the teacher
* showed clear evidence of research and an analysis of findings.

The less successful responses commonly:

* assessed performance standards that were not written on the tasks sheet or not assessed in this Assessment Type, such as Application
* did not include Reflection and Evaluation in any of the three tasks in a 20-credit subject
* asked students to undertake basic 'find and copy' tasks (e.g. find job statistics, create a brochure, make a PowerPoint presentation, find a job advertisement), but did not ask the students to analyse, reflect on, or evaluate any of this information
* provided a recount of information and were purely descriptive information giving, with little or no analysis, reflection or evaluation
* were over-scaffolded, overly structured and did not allow for any student voice
* conformed to a specific word limit (not required in Subject Outline) and therefore did not necessarily allow scope for the student to address criteria to a higher standard.

Assessment Type 2: Performance

For Assessment Type 2: Performance, students must complete 25-30 hours of Vocational Learning for a 10 Credit Subject, or 50-60 hours for a 20 Credit. Examples of Vocational Learning can be found in the Subject Outline. Evidence of Vocational Learning must include significant ‘student voice’ for the higher grade bands to be successfully reached.

For this assessment type, students are assessed on:

* + knowledge and understanding
  + application.

The more successful responses commonly:

* included all three required forms of supporting evidence:

1. Student evidence of learning, which may be a journal, photo-story, or portfolio (i.e. what is informally referred to as ‘student voice’ showing knowledge and understanding), collected from 50 to 60 hours of activities related to performance for a 20-credit subject, or 25 to 30 hours of activities related to performance for a 10-credit subject
2. Workplace Supervisor’s Report (available on the SACE website), or a Statement of Attainment or academic record from an RTO
3. A Teacher’s Report on Student Performance — Vocational Learning form, or a Teacher’s Report on Student Performance — VET. These forms (available on the SACE website) provide commentary by teachers providing supporting evidence of student’s engagement in a work-related context. These forms are available on the SACE website.

* where scaffolding formats were used, responded to guided, open-ended questions, which enabled students to better demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.

The less successful responses:

* lacked evidence to demonstrate knowledge and understanding (for instance, no student voice)
* included student evidence that tended to include more recount or reflection (which is not assessed in Performance) and therefore did not demonstrate knowledge and understanding to a high level
* included photos, but with little or no annotations to demonstrate the students’ knowledge and understanding or application
* provided only Statement of Attainment (VET) or Workplace Supervisor’s Report with no other evidence to support the grade awarded
* were not supported by the appropriate forms (listed above). It was therefore difficult to confirm the grade given
* were fill-in answer booklets and overly scaffolded.

Assessment Type 3: Reflection

For this assessment type, students must reflect on their learning specifically in the Vocational Learning Component of the course. Students can reflect on a range of learning throughout the program, which is outlined in the Subject Outline. For a 20-credit subject, two reflections are required. For a 10-credit subject one reflection is required. The reflections should be packaged as Assessment Type 3: Reflection (not as an addendum to Assessment Type 2: Performance).

For this assessment type, students are assessed on:

* + knowledge and understanding
  + investigation and analysis
  + reflection and evaluation

The more successful responses commonly:

* for a 20-credit subject, reflected on and evaluated two different experiences, rather than two work placements or two different semesters of the same VET course
* responded to tasks that were not overly scaffolded, allowing students to explore and expand on their own individual experiences
* had Investigation and Analysis and Reflection and Evaluation interwoven rather than in separate sections
* responded to tasks that had themselves as the focus, for example, a personal reflection or a workplace reflection
* connected their learning to their future pathway(s)
* reflected on and evaluated the learning achieved throughout their workplace experiences and in class over the whole year
* were able to identify specifically what they learnt and how they overcame issues
* self-evaluated, including future aspirations.

The less successful responses commonly:

* had only one reflection task where two were required (20-credits)
* reflection included, however, no (self) evaluation
* were mostly a description of tasks performed in work experience or a VET Course
* reflected on a task undertaken in the Folio, such as a Mock Interview. This duplication often meant that Reflection and Evaluation was also poorly addressed in the Folio section of the course
* conformed to a specified word limit (not required in Subject Outline) and therefore, did not necessarily allow scope for the student to address criteria to a higher standard.

# External Assessment

## Assessment Type 4: Investigation

For this Assessment Type, students undertake either a practical or issue investigation. Students should be encouraged to choose the investigation type that best suits their learning needs and style, rather than a task that the whole class undertakes.

For a 10‑credit subject, the investigation should be a maximum of 1000 words if written or a maximum of 6 minutes if oral, or the equivalent in multimodal form.

For a 20‑credit subject, the investigation should be a maximum of 2000 words if written or a maximum of 12 minutes if oral, or the equivalent in multimodal form.

For this assessment type, students are assessed on:

* + knowledge and understanding – KU1 and KU2
  + investigation and analysis – IA1 and IA2
  + reflection and evaluation – RE1.

The more successful responses commonly:

* responded to a task that allowed students to choose their own focus question and investigation
* had a specific industry focus that supported the undertaking of their investigation
* directly related their investigation to their industry focus in a meaningful manner either in the introduction or in the concluding reflection and evaluation on their learning
* had focus questions or practical tasks that were specific, rather than overly general topics such as ‘discrimination’ or ‘WHS’ which do not allow the student any ability to focus on an actual response; similarly, ‘quoting a job’ and other general topics limited student ability to meet the performance standards to a high level
* used a wide range of sources, including secondary and primary sources; this applied to both the issues investigation and the practical investigation options
* when interviews or surveys were used, students analysed what this data actually revealed, not just repetition of exactly what the information told them
* clearly demonstrated an understanding of the difference between presenting information (such as facts, statistics, and graphs) and analysing the information and what it has taught students about their chosen topic
* used the language of the performance standards, such as ‘investigation’, ‘analysis’, ‘understanding’, ‘evaluating’, and ‘reflecting’, to demonstrate how they are actively meeting the performance standards in a manner that was not scaffolded
* specifically for the issues investigation - started with an appropriate question, worded as an issue, that students could engage with and investigate
* specifically for the practical investigation - enabled students to demonstrate their involvement in a real-world (rather than imagined) activity related to their focus industry. This enabled them to reflect on and evaluate their learning in regard to their own career decisions, and how this issue will impact on them as they transition to the workforce, resulting in higher-level evidence of reflection and evaluation.

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not make a direct link between the industry focus and the student’s chosen topic
* used a teacher generated template, which often did not allow students to address all of the Performance Standards to a high standard given the nature of the information collected
* responded to a generic topic or task, which limited student ability to engage effectively with the topic. This could include topics such as ‘Drugs in the workplace’, ‘How do I become self-employed?’, ‘WHS PowerPoints’ or generic, class topics where the teacher provided the research such as ‘Are business leaders paid too much?’
* had topics that were too broad and with no industry focus, such as ‘Why is budgeting important?’, ‘How do I become self-employed?’, ‘The history of technology’ or ‘Finding the perfect recipe.’
* were overly scaffolded
* lacked Investigation and Analysis when students created ‘How To’ or ‘Safety Guides’
* had the research and investigation as implicit, rather than explicit; this was particularly evident in practical investigations where students applied their learning from VET to a real situation, without undertaking any further investigation or analysing their knowledge and understanding to any extent. It was generally found that students undertaking the Practical Investigation were less likely to meet this performance standard to a high level
* used evidence such as surveys conducted with friends, interviews with people not closely associated with their topic, or Internet sources from overseas that did not relate to their actual industry context
* included investigation and analysis, or reflection and evaluation in the appendix, meaning that it cannot be assessed by markers
* included only a finished product (practical) with no other supporting evidence to demonstrate investigation, analysis, reflection, or evaluation
* concluded without completing a reflection on, or an evaluation of, their findings in relation to the world of work and their own future in their chosen industry
* for Practical Investigations, responded to tasks that asked students to imagine their involvement in a particular work-related task, without ever actually completing the task — meaning that students could not analyse, or reflect on, or evaluate a process
* focussed on a reflection on the information found or their own processes (such as time management), rather than a Reflection and (self) - Evaluation of how the information informed and impacts on their own career decisions.