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Language and Culture

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

For this assessment type, students are required to respond to texts in the target language. The responses can be in English, the target language, or a combination of both. Students are required to analyse linguistic, cultural, and stylistic features, interpret meaning, and reflect on the ways in which culture is created, expressed, and communicated.

**The more successful responses**

* were produced when tasks required students to discuss aspects of culture and language to greater depth
* demonstrated understanding of particular features of language in the text
* expressed well-informed understanding of communication across cultural boundaries
* were a comparison of short texts
* critically reflected on how language and cultural background related to identity in the Australian context.

**The less successful responses**

* were brief responses to more literal questions related to features of language or meaning of the content of the text, rather than open-ended questions allowing for expansion of ideas
* focused either exclusively on language or on culture, but not both
* demonstrated no personal reflection or opinions related to identity.

**General information**

Teachers are encouraged to further develop their understanding of the requirements of this assessment type.

Assessment Type 2: Interaction

For this assessment type, students are required to interact with others to exchange information, ideas, opinions, and/or experiences in the target language in spoken form.

**The more successful responses**

* demonstrated spontaneity in interaction and answers to questions
* included extended responses to questions, showing a good command of language with a confident use of more complex structures and a wide vocabulary
* communicated well-prepared ideas in a coherent manner
* included reflection on personal culture and language in the community and the Australian context.

**The less successful responses**

* demonstrated difficulty in maintaining a conversation beyond short expressions
* expressed limited personal opinions or reflection on their linguistic and cultural situation
* indicated a lack of preparation and a lack of accuracy in communicating desired ideas.

**General information**

Teachers should ensure that assessment task sheets are included with the USB drive or disc containing the recording of the interaction, so that the moderators know the topic and the assessment design criteria being assessed.

Assessment Type 3: Text Production

For this assessment type, students are required to create written texts in which they express information, ideas, opinions, and/or experiences in the target language.

**The more successful responses**

* employed a wide variety of structures, expressions, and vocabulary
* expressed ideas in depth on a topic, allowing for a wide understanding of cultural life, personal views, and interests
* used a narrative or story form in the target language to convey ideas and information
* showed a cohesive understanding of comparative cultural settings.

**The less successful responses**

* expressed limited ideas in language, often with errors obscuring meaning
* were sometimes incomplete, e.g. a letter without a formal ending
* communicated a narrow scope of knowledge, e.g. a formal letter, rather than a more relevant task allowing for greater breadth to demonstrate ideas and expression.

**General information**

Teachers are encouraged to further develop their understanding of this assessment type’s requirements so that students may respond in their language and achieve at the highest level.

## External Assessment

Assessment Type 4: Investigation

The external investigation assesses a student’s ability to write a report in English on research into the language and culture of the student’s community in relation to changing identities and challenges in the Australian context. The standard of responses varied in 2016.

**The more successful responses**

* were based on a clear focus question that allowed for comparison between the student’s cultural background and language, and the Australian culture and language.
* included a clear focus on cultural traditions, e.g. the roles of men and women, and how these are changing in the Australian context, and also included a consideration of traditional language and how it is changing in the Australian context
* demonstrated how the student conducted his/her research
* showed evidence of a wide range of research material, including interviews with community members for information and opinions, rather than relying on the Internet exclusively
* referred to and quoted a number of resources, including interviews, observations, and readings listed in a bibliography
* reflected on personal values, beliefs, ideas, and practices, and what was learnt by undertaking the investigation
* featured a clear introduction and conclusion to the investigation
* were written in the student’s own language and personal voice.

**The less successful responses**

* focused purely on a traditional cultural topic that did not allow for any consideration of changes in the community and in the Australian context
* lacked mention and analysis of language and its changes in different cultural contexts
* gave little or no consideration to a reflection on the changing identity in the Australian context
* relied almost exclusively on Internet sources for information
* provided no personal reflection on values, beliefs, ideas, and practices about the topic
* lacked a clear introduction and conclusion to the investigation
* consisted of a few significant points repeated in multiple ways rather than a breadth of points.

**General information**

Teachers are encouraged to further develop their understanding of the assessment requirements, which include a consideration of both language and culture.

## 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 or the cover sheet. Teachers are asked to:

* submit the correct number of tasks for each assessment type
* submit assessment task sheets for each assessment including the assessment design criteria being assessed, particularly for the interaction
* clearly show the full SACE registration number on each piece of a student’s work
* provide an approved learning assessment plan (LAP) and an addendum (if necessary).

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Chief Assessor