

Business and Enterprise

2014 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: Folio

The weighting of the folio is 40% for a 10-credit subject and 30% for a 20-credit subject. The folio is part of the school assessment component for both a 10-credit subject and a 20-credit subject. For a 10-credit subject, students undertake two or three assessments. For a 20-credit subject, students undertake four to six assessments. One assessment must come from the core topic and the remaining assessments may come from the option topic(s). For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

* knowledge and understanding
* analysis and evaluation
* communication
* application.

Teachers mostly provided the correct samples for moderation as outlined in the Business and Enterprise subject operational information. Teachers are further encouraged to access the Business and Enterprise minisite for advice on preparing Stage 2 materials, and on completing the correct Variations — Moderation Materials form if student work is missing.

The quality of work was pleasing; content was assessed in areas of knowledge and understanding, analysis and evaluation, and application. Generally, there was improvement in task design; however, teachers are encouraged to ensure that students have the opportunity to meet the performance standards on more than one occasion.

Folios that covered a variety of topics provided students with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in depth. In particular, those that allowed research and engagement with small to medium business in Australia also provided the opportunity to analyse and evaluate with meaningful responses.

Many schools complete a test, which generally provides students the opportunity to respond to extended-response questions. Of particular note, tests that linked questions to industries provided students with more opportunity to analyse and evaluate. Teachers are encouraged to ensure that materials are up to date and reflective of what is currently happening in Australia, in particular with respect to new laws.

Please refer to the 2015 Business and Enterprise subject outline for more information on Assessment Type 1: Folio.

Assessment Type 2: Practical

The weighting of the practical is 30% for a 10-credit subject and 20% for a 20-credit subject. The practical is part of the school assessment component for both a 10‑credit subject and a 20-credit subject. Students undertake one practical for a 10‑credit subject and at least one practical for a 20-credit subject. Each practical is derived from an option topic. Students inquire, analyse, plan, and undertake the assessment on a focus of particular interest in their selected option topic(s). For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning primarily in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

* knowledge and understanding
* communication
* application.

It is pleasing to note that there has been an improvement in the task design of the practical.

The more successful practicals included students creating their own products, or using an existing company’s name to introduce a new product (that does not exist). This provided students with a base to work on and use their own ideas which often involved marketing a product or running an enterprise. Teachers are encouraged to ensure that the task provides students with the opportunity to effectively apply business theory to current practices.

Of concern were practicals that were completed in groups. Teachers and students should clearly identify which student completed which components, and teachers must award grades appropriate to each student. Each student should submit their own piece of work, including all evidence, rather than a group package.

Many students used technology extremely well, with the generation of marketing tasks using high-end graphics programs and the creation of efficient websites.

Word count was again highlighted as a concern in the practical. Teachers should adhere to the SACE Board word-count policy, in particular, in the use of multimodal presentations — the length of such presentations should be appropriately balanced with any written material so that the combination conforms to SACE policy.

Please refer to the 2015 Business and Enterprise subject outline for more information on Assessment Type 2: Practical.

The practical is a developing assessment component and teachers are advised to ensure that they are familiar with the changes outlined in the 2015 Business and Enterprise subject outline. (These changes are outlined in the ‘Summary of Subject Outline Changes 2015’ document, which can be found on the Business and Enterprise minisite).

Assessment Type 3: Issues Study

The issues study is weighted at 30% for a 10-credit subject; the weighting for a 20-credit subject is 20%. The issues study is the *external assessment* component for a 10-credit subject. It is part of the *school assessment* component for a 20-credit subject. For both a 10-credit subject and 20-credit subject, students undertake one issues study in which they identify and investigate a theme, development, or current issue in business and enterprise. The issues study should be a clear, concise and polished piece of writing up to a maximum of 1000 words for a 10-credit subject, and a maximum of 1500 words for a 20-credit subject. For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning primarily in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

* knowledge and understanding
* analysis and evaluation
* communication.

The issues studies were generally completed well. The more successful tasks clearly outlined or identified a statement or research question and related to an industry relevant to the students’ local area. In cases where students had the opportunity to choose their own issue or had a variety of issues to select from, they demonstrated a higher level of analysis and evaluation.

It was noted that there were several issues undertaken by students which were not relevant to Australian businesses. Students are encouraged to select an issue that is recent and relevant to the Australian business environment. Students who accessed primary sources were able to demonstrate a depth of knowledge and understanding, and analysis and evaluation. It was also highlighted that the presentation of the issues studies was generally pleasing and included a variety of styles from reports to essays, which are all within the parameters of the subject outline.

Please refer to the 2015 Business and Enterprise subject outline for more information on Assessment Type 3: Issues Study.

## External Assessment

Assessment Type 4: Report

The report applies only to the 20-credit subject and is weighted at 30%.

The word-count continues to be an issue in this assessment type, with many reports significantly in excess of the required word-limit. It is imperative that teachers and students are familiar with the SACE word-count policy and consult the policy and the illustrative example on the Business and Enterprise minisite.

In ensuring word-count adherence, some students gave a running or cumulative word count in the footer of their reports.

Teachers are reminded about the following:

* Reports are not marked beyond the 2000-word limit.
* Student work submitted for external marking should have all teacher comments and assessment decisions removed prior to submission.
* All reports should be de-identified.
* The current subject outline must be used.
* Appendices should be brief, as per the subject outline.

Students are required to write one formal business report that may be either a situation analysis or an enterprise report.

### Situation Analysis

Students who performed well in the situation analysis generally were able to select businesses that allowed them significant scope to address the specific features of assessment, particularly those labelled KU2, KU3, AE1, and Ap2. The importance of good business selection cannot be overstated.

It was apparent that many reports were set to a template. While this scaffolding may help students, in some instances it was a clear limitation. Better reports were able to incorporate elements of course content specifically relevant to the business in considerable depth, whereas less successful reports generally dealt superficially with a wide range of areas that may or may not have had direct or significant relevance to the business.

While most reports addressed the specific features, AE1 continues to be the area in which students did not achieve as well. Better reports integrated current issues in the economic and business environment specifically relevant to the business while also effectively integrating and evaluating industry-specific issues and opportunities.

Many reports demonstrated considered knowledge and understanding of a variety of business concepts. Less successful reports focused generally on basic business theory, such as the business life cycle, human resource cycle, and the four Ps of marketing, while better reports delved deeper into more complex concepts, particularly in regards to business theory and the structures contained within the business.

Students generally communicated well. While less successful reports were written from the perspective of the business owner, better reports were written from an objective third-person perspective in a very professional manner appropriate to the audience. Sentence density in the better reports was also of a very high standard.

Most reports contained recommendations; however, many of these were superficial. The more successful reports made selective and constructive recommendations based on business theories that were specifically related to the business.

Students are evidently becoming more familiar with the conventions of referencing; better reports integrated references throughout the report on multiple occasions, whereas less successful reports were sporadic in their application of referencing. Figures that are not original should be referenced.

The range of sources contained in reports varied significantly. Students who were proactive were able to integrate information from an extensive range of sources, including interviews with a wide variety of people (owners, employees, competitors, customers, and guest speakers), excursions, websites, newspapers, academic articles, textbooks, surveys, and case studies. The less successful reports tended to use information only from several interviews with a business owner and from websites.

Students who performed successfully were able to address all specific features of assessment effectively; however, it was noted that there was a significant relationship between KU3, AE1, and Ap2 and how they were integrated into the report. Students who were able to effectively address and interconnect these specific features throughout the report generally achieved at the higher level.

### Enterprise Report

As in previous years, students completed fewer enterprise reports than the situation analyses. As has been the trend over the last several years, the reports are rising in standard; however, they are still not executed as well as the situation analyses.

Better reports demonstrated an in-depth business operation which ran for a significant amount of time. As such, these reports were able to integrate a wider variety of business theory, as well as analysis and evaluation of current issues, trends, and opportunities applicable to the business. The micro nature of many enterprises continues to be a limiting factor to success.

The more successful reports were able to effectively incorporate all financial documents accurately; however, many were still missing the bank reconciliation that is one of the requirements in the subject outline.

## 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.

Teachers should use the learning and assessment plan addendum when they have modified their plan. The packaging and presentation of materials was generally very good. Packages that were sorted into assessment types, which included task sheets being attached to student work, meant that the moderation process was able to run smoothly. Teachers are encouraged to include comments on student work as this assists in the moderation process. On several occasions it was noted that student work was missing from the chosen sample. If this work is not able to be submitted, then teachers need to complete and submit a Variations — Moderation Materials form, which can be found on the SACE website.

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