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Business and Enterprise

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: Folio

The majority of folios followed the format outlined in the subject outline and the School Assessment Sample Materials Submission form. It was pleasing to see a range of topics being covered in folios.

**The more successful responses**

* had task design, which allowed students the opportunity to meet the performance standards at a higher level
* indicated students had been exposed to a variety of assessment tasks (e.g. extended writing, test, response to stimulus, multimodal), providing greater opportunity for them to achieve in the higher band grades
* came from students who accessed a wide range of materials and were able to link to the theory and successfully address all assessment design criteria in their response
* included tests that were designed to allow for higher-order thinking, often used stimulus, and made reference to practical examples
* were in response to tasks that required students to include detailed theory and extensive research, thus challenging and extending them
* focused on a smaller number of specific features from the assessment design criteria, which enabled better responses
* exhibited the ability to apply theory to examples and analysis using industry and economic data that was linked to the local community.

**The less successful responses**

* demonstrated limited depth of information (e.g. business legal structure)
* lacked depth in their evidence for knowledge and understanding
* provided evidence of limited analysis and evaluation
* occurred in tasks for which the task design limited students in achieving at the higher grade levels; for example, tests that did not allow students the opportunity to analyse and evaluate.

**General information**

* there was concern from moderators about the number of tests undertaken in some folios. Undertaking too many tests limited student ability to demonstrate analysis and evaluation consistently at a higher grade level
* teachers who still allocated a numerical value in tests are reminded they need to assess specific assessment design criteria for each question (e.g. knowledge and understanding; analysis and evaluation; communication; application)
* teachers are advised to ensure that there is no repetition of concepts tests in tasks
* teachers are reminded that all pieces of work in the folio are weighted evenly
* teachers and students are encouraged to explore more than just the ownership structures involved in business structures
* students and teachers are encouraged to keep abreast of legislative changes.

Assessment Type 2: Practical

The practical is designed for students to inquire, analyse, plan, and undertake an activity. Generally, there was an improvement in the standard of the tasks compared to previous years.

**The more successful responses**

* arose where teachers provided students the opportunity to use both written and multimodal forms
* allowed students the opportunity to apply more complex theory and not just basic knowledge in the task
* were when tasks went beyond business plan basics and included more detail and depth
* were in tasks that provided students with the flexibility in their production
* were in tasks where students had choice; they were able to show creativity and originality, resulting in higher levels of achievement
* incorporated theory into their practicals.

**The less successful responses**

* where students undertook a business plan, included only basic knowledge and did not include all requirements (e.g. detailed financial documents)
* did not make best use of the word-limit of 1500 words.

**General information**

* Teachers and students are encouraged to submit all evidence to support practicals. This includes all URLs and date details when accessing online materials (which must represent what the teacher viewed during the course of the practical)
* when completing a multimodal task, students must still be within the word-limit requirements (i.e. a combined oral and written piece must be the equivalent of 1500 words)
* where students complete a practical in a group, evidence needs to be provided for each student and the evidence needs to clearly identify the contribution of each student to the tasks/components.

Assessment Type 3: Issues Study

In 2016, issues studies were completed to a high standard. There was a good variation in topics that were relevant to business.

**The more successful responses**

* were in tasks where students were able to choose their own topic
* demonstrated depth in their responses, when students could relate their chosen topic back to business and highlight its impact
* accessed primary sources and used a wide range of secondary resources, and were able to show greater levels of analysis and evaluation
* were linked to the local business community
* were relevant to business and were clearly able to establish the impact on stakeholders
* followed the recommended format and took the time to draft and edit their work to produce a polished piece.

**The less successful responses**

* dealt with topics that are no longer relevant (e.g. carbon tax, terrorism)
* did not link any theory to the chosen issue or theme
* were unable to establish the link to stakeholders and the impact of the issue or theme
* provided limited analysis and evaluation.

**General information**

* when students were given choice, that is, variety of topics, they tended to perform better
* generally, students had improved their referencing; however, teachers and students are encourage to apply a consistent approach.

## **External Assessment**

Assessment Type 4: Report

Students are required to write one formal business report that may be either a situation analysis or an enterprise report. The report should be a maximum of 2000 words.

Generally, the situation analysis was of a higher standard this year than in previous years, with many students writing reports that effectively analysed business with regards to business theory in the current Australian economic climate.

**Situation Analysis**

**The more successful responses**

* addressed areas that were specific rather than generic in nature
* performed well in knowledge and understanding through integrating a range of business theories, including PESTLE analysis, Ansoff Matrix, the 7 Ps of marketing, and others, that had specific relevance to the business they were analysing
* referred to a variety of business structures, including organisational, human resources, accounting, and decision-making, rather than only the business ownership structure
* competently incorporated business terminology. Communication in the reports tended to be of a better standard than previous years
* provided good referencing (to meet specific feature C3). Referencing appeared to be much improved on previous years
* incorporated graphs and figures seamlessly and were able to convey their analysis fully in a concise manner
* performed highly in application through applying business theory directly to the business in the form of recommendations, as well as applying their knowledge and understanding about current issues and trends affecting the business. These reports often had a wide range and variety of relevant and well-used sources (usually in excess of 30), including multiple interviews from a range of sources, such as owners, employees, and competitors
* adhered to word-limits. Word-count adherence also appeared to be better than in previous years, with some reports indicating cumulative word-counts on each page.

**The less successful responses**

* tended to be more generic in nature, often focusing on all areas of content briefly, rather than areas that were particularly relevant to the business in depth
* tended to use excessive tables throughout the report and were often descriptive in nature
* followed a generic template. While this scaffolding may be useful for some students, it was clearly a limitation on others. Teachers are encouraged to get students to think about the areas and issues that are relevant to the specific business, and develop these, thereby allowing each student to create a report that is unique to the business.

Enterprise Report

There were fewer enterprise reports submitted in 2016 than previous years, with the majority not achieving at a comparable standard to the situation analysis.

Teachers are reminded that enterprise reports must include all financial documents listed in the subject outline, particularly the balance sheet, income statement, and bank reconciliation.

Most enterprises conducted were school based, with business operations undertaken during school hours.

**The more successful responses**

* demonstrated engagement with the broader community. This engagement allowed reports to more effectively analyse current trends and opportunities, as well as analyse the broader market
* addressed specific feature Ap2 to a high standard. Students who were able to apply their knowledge and understanding of business theory, particularly related to financial matters, tended to do well against this specific feature.

**The less successful responses**

* tended to use generic data from the local council or industry associations, or wider economic data (such as interest rates) and apply it to their school-based business. In many cases, this information was not directly relevant to the enterprise, thereby limiting success against the analysis and evaluation specific features.

**General information**

* Generally, adherence to the word-count policy was good; however, there continue to be a high proportion of reports that exceed the word-limit. Teachers are reminded that the word-limit for Assessment Type 4: Report is 2000 words. It is advised that teachers and students become familiar with the SACE word-count policy. In particular, teachers are reminded that words in tables are included in the word-count.
* It was evident that a large percentage of reports followed a teacher scaffold. While this can benefit some students, it was clearly a limitation for students who were capable of achieving in the higher grade bands.
* Students who achieved in the higher grade bands were able to clearly identify the most relevant aspects of the business to discuss.
* Students are strongly encouraged to follow the correct conventions of a formal business report, such as including a table of contents, a list of figures, executive summary, subheadings, page numbering, and so on.
* Students should ensure that they follow correct referencing conventions by either using in-text referencing or footnoting. When using either of these conventions, students need to ensure they have all the relevant details included. ‘Class notes’ is not a valid reference.
* Generic tables, for example, a table of technology used by the business, tends to limit the amount of analysis and evaluation students can engage in.

Teachers are reminded about the following:

* All reports should have the generic front cover and be stapled in the top left-hand corner.
* Reports should not be bound.
* 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 stated in the subject outline.
* Covering too much content should be avoided — particularly if not relevant to the business.
* Students need to be strongly encouraged to avoid recounting; what they did will not satisfy the specific features of analysis and evaluation.

## **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.

Additional points to note:

* Teachers are required to complete the Variations — Moderation Materials form for missing materials.
* If there has been a change in the learning and assessment plan (LAP), use the addendum as required.
* Packaging moderation materials by assessment type (i.e. folio, practical, issues study) is encouraged.
* Teachers are encouraged to highlight the performance standards so that it is clear what grade has been allocated.
* It is helpful to moderators if an overall assessment summary sheet is included for each student.
* It is not necessary for students to include their appendices — teachers can retain these until results are confirmed.

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Chief Assessor