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Community 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.

Community Studies in 2016 was offered as two distinct subject areas, Community Studies A and Community Studies B. Community Studies B enables students to remain embedded in a SACE-accredited subject and undertake similar tasks or skills, but to be assessed against different performance standards. Unlike the existing Community Studies A, the new subject does not require the writing of a contract.

## School Assessment — Community Studies A

Assessment Type 1: Contract of Work

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

* planning and organisation
* communication and interaction
* fulfilment of contract of work
* reflection.

**Planning and Organisation**

**The more successful responses to PO1, PO2, and PO3**

* Investigated community activities that allowed students to develop relevant skills and knowledge in topics about which they were passionate.
* Had contracts with clear, individual planning and strategies for achieving goals.
* Broke down their activity into manageable steps, allocating an appropriate amount of time for each.
* Used these individual steps from the contract as a checklist to monitor the progress of their community activity.
* Provided a clear explanation of their choice for focusing on a particular capability or capabilities and how this related to their learning and development of skills in the community activity.
* Articulated their current knowledge and skills insightfully, discussing which skills they needed to build upon to successfully fulfil their contract.
* Selected capabilities from the 2016 subject outline, focusing on literacy, numeracy, and one other capability.

**The less successful responses to PO1, PO2, and PO3**

* Allocated large amounts of time for the community activity, without breaking it down into smaller more manageable parts; for example, 100 hours to build a product.
* Applied capabilities that were inconsistent with the 2016 subject outline.

**Communication and Interaction**

**The more successful responses to CI1, CI2, and CI3**

* Featured well-scaffolded folios to ensure all communication and interactions were covered throughout their record of evidence.
* Included checklists or broke down journal entries into subheadings, allowing students to achieve the specific features.
* Presented a journal table divided into sections such as tasks performed, time taken, community interaction, response to feedback, knowledge and skills gained, development of capability, and reflection on progress of the community activity.
* Sought ongoing feedback from community experts.
* Responded to a range of feedback in addition to feedback from their mentor, including from classmates and members of the wider community.
* Documented progress through clearly annotated images explaining the ‘what’, ‘why’, ‘how’, and outcome of the activity.
* Provided clear evidence of their presentation on the outcome of the community activity through planning and reflection on feedback provided. This included drafts of the presentation, photos of evidence, well-labelled multimodal formats, feedback forms from the audience, and a reflection on the success of the presentation and feedback received.
* Included an example of a published article from the local newsletter with links to online feedback forms.

**The less successful responses to CI1, CI2, and CI3**

* Relied on over-scaffolding, limiting the students’ independent voice in relation to their progress.
* Provided limited evidence of their presentation.
* Omitted ongoing feedback or had feedback that was limited to a feedback form at the end of the activity.

**Fulfilment of Contract of Work**

**The more successful responses to FC1, FC2, FC3, FC4, and FC5**

* Submitted detailed evidence of the fulfilment of their contract of work.
* Presented relevant information, focusing on quality over quantity.
* Annotated research through Post-It notes or highlighted material. Journal entries next to a screen shot of online secondary sources or videos were particularly effective.
* Clearly articulated how the source helped them to develop knowledge, skills, or their capability or capabilities to complete their community activity.
* Covered numeracy well. For example, included annotated budget sheets, or showed their understanding of the concept of spatial awareness (planning how to set up a location for an event, planning plays in sport, using choreography, or blocking the stage for a play), or demonstrated how numeracy applies in music theory.
* Explicitly discussed the understanding of new terminology or how the language in text types such as brochures may vary to appeal to a target audience.

**The less successful responses to FC1, FC2, FC3, FC4, and FC5**

* Provided limited evidence of individual contribution in a collaborative project. Students need to clearly articulate their individual contribution which equates to 60 hours of work for a 10-credit subject and 120 hours for a 20-credit subject.
* Presented a large amount of printed research without annotations indicating the relevance.
* Did not submit a folio of evidence of their progress or completion of their community activity.

**Reflection**

**The more successful responses to R1**

* Reflected throughout the folio on decisions made in achieving steps in their contract of work, including the positives and negatives of decisions made and how they learnt at each step to develop knowledge, skills, and their chosen capability or capabilities.

**The less successful responses to R1**

* Recounted their experience with limited reflection.

**General information**

Students chose a variety of community activities reflecting their interests and passions. Community activities were developed that were relevant to the students’ learning styles, cultural background, and personal experiences. Community activities included:

* Promoting animal welfare through creating a children’s book documenting the rescue of a dog
* Organising celebration days for cultural events
* Raising awareness for contemporary social issues or charitable organisations through the arts
* Up-cycling both clothing and objects for charity and educating others about sustainability
* Organising and running front of house for dance or drama productions
* Coaching a team
* Mentoring younger students in the arts
* Volunteering in child-care centres, aged-care facilities, and charitable organisations.

Working with community organisations or developing events in the wider community enabled students to build strong connections with others and respond to ongoing feedback. While students will draft and edit their contract, only the final, signed contract needs to be included in their folio.

Folders should be soft-covered, with each section clearly indicated. Organised students included section headings such as: ‘Planning and Organisation’, ‘Contract’, ‘Record of Evidence’, ‘Community Activity’, ‘Presentation’, and ‘Feedback from Expert’. This enables moderators to clearly find evidence of student work.

Students who are enrolled in another SACE subject and are considering converting to Community Studies A may be better served by enrolling in Community Studies B, as it provides students with greater opportunity to gain credit for completed assessment tasks in their initial SACE subject.

## External Assessment — Community Studies A

Assessment Type 2: Reflection

The overall standard of reflections for 2016 was enhanced, with students competently using the 200-word summary to succinctly focus and review their chosen investigation. Well-designed scaffolding, aligned to the relevant performance standards, helped students focus, thus enhancing their ability to reflect in depth, rather than simply recount information.

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

* reflection.

**Reflection**

**The more successful responses to R2**

* Clearly demonstrated students’ skill development over the year, providing evidence of learning that occurred through new experiences and wider community involvement.
* Were based on detailed contracts of work that provided evidence of the development of the student’s literacy and numeracy skills and other selected capability or capabilities, enabling insightful reflection.
* Focused on only one or two capabilities (in addition to literacy and numeracy), enabling students to provide evidence of learning in greater depth.
* Gave specific examples of new knowledge and skills, justifying how these were used and valued.

**The more successful responses to R3**

* Referred to community feedback from mentors in the wider community, enabling students to reflect upon the value of the activity to the community.
* Clearly detailed what the student gained from their activity and how it would benefit them in the future.
* Adhered to the structure suggested in the current subject outline.
* Adhered to and clearly indicated the word-limit.
* Were carefully drafted and edited and provided a concise conclusion to ensure effective communication of knowledge and skills.

**The less successful responses to R2 and R3**

* Aligned their work to the 2015 five capabilities, making meeting the current performance standards more difficult.
* Did not address numeracy and literacy in depth.
* Did not address value to others.
* Relied entirely on teacher-generated scaffolding rather than individualising their response.
* Presented unedited work.
* Did not fully use the suggested word-length.

## School Assessment — Community Studies B

Assessment Type 1: Folio

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

* knowledge and understanding
* planning and organisation
* application and reflection.

**Knowledge and Understanding**

**The more successful responses to KU1 and KU2**

* Included physical evidence of practical application through video, annotated photos, critical analysis of performance, peer assessment, feedback sheets, or self-assessment in practical-based subjects.
* Included and applied subject-specific terminology correctly.
* Demonstrated and correctly used subject-specific key concepts.
* Clearly identified where evidence of KU1 or KU2 could be found.

**The less successful responses to KU1 and KU2**

* Provided only a list of achievements, without evidence of personal achievement or involvement.
* Made minimal reference to the skills and knowledge base of the original SACE subject.

**Planning and Organisation**

**The more successful responses to PO1**

* Provided physical evidence of planning, including mind maps, drafts, statements of intention, ideas development, shopping lists, seeking and responding to feedback, maths formula sheets, notes of discussions with the teacher, journal entries, sequential sketches, or recordings on USB drives of practicals.
* Linked their achievements to the Community Studies B performance standards.

**The less successful responses to PO1**

* Listed only a bibliography or reference list, rather than the steps of planning for the activity.
* Provided only a final assignment or test, with no indication of planning.
* Provided teacher-generated revision notes, rather than personal planning.

**Application and Reflection**

**The more successful responses to AR1**

* Used features including Post-It notes or highlighting sections of work, especially in STEM-based subjects, to reflect on a task and how the information gained could subsequently be used.
* Were evident when, after a test, a student reflected on achievement, and evaluated what a next step would be or how the information could be used, through audio recordings of discussion with the teacher or a written response.
* Used a variety of evidence, including reports, products, assignments, or performances.
* In practical-based subjects, reflected on how and where their skills were applied or their techniques could be improved.
* Connected learning to the wider community.
* Was evident when AR1 was an integral part of the task design.
* For late transitions to Community Studies B, especially for STEM-based subjects, included a retrospective reflection task based on earlier assignments to demonstrate their understanding of the subject application to the wider community.

**The less successful responses to AR1**

* Included tests which, by their nature, often did not allow for critical reflection.
* Used recount of a task, rather than reflecting on their learning.
* Did not include a reflective-based task.

**General information**

Well-presented folios for Community Studies B (both the 10-credit subject with two tasks and the 20-credit subject with five tasks) had the following features:

* Used the Community Studies B school assessment cover sheet to indicate which tasks provided the best evidence against the specific performance standards.
* Clearly labelled tasks.
* Included the assignment task details.
* Clearly indicated the achievements for each task against the Community Studies B performance standards.
* Had teacher feedback on student work.
* Made clear the skills and knowledge base that the student brought from the SACE subject for Community Studies B.

Students undertaking Community Studies B are advised to keep any work, including drafts, from their previous SACE subject, in order to select the assignments which best show how the student has met the Community Studies B performance standards.

## External Assessment — Community Studies B

Assessment Type 2: Community Application Activity

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

* planning and organisation
* application and reflection.

**The more successful responses to PO1**

* Closely tied their planning to their related Stage 2 SACE subject.
* Were negotiated and planned investigations.
* Used planned feedback sheets and acted upon responses, contributing to more insightful reports.

**The less successful responses to PO1**

* Focused on the actual activity completion, with little regard for planning, and exploration.

**Application and Reflection**

**The more successful responses to AR2**

* Clearly addressed their selected capability or capabilities and the application to their community application activity. For example, articulating the literacy needed for the management and promotion of skateboarding competitions.
* Aligned their new research closely to their base SACE subject, consequently displaying new subject-relevant knowledge in response to the Community Studies B performance standards.
* Clearly differentiated between a recount and a reflection.
* Displayed an evident structure for their report.
* Adhered to the structure suggested in the current subject outline.
* Adhered to and clearly indicated the word-limit or time-limit for Community Studies B.
* Were carefully drafted and edited to ensure effective communication of knowledge, skills, and selected capabilities.

**The less successful responses to AR2**

* Recounted or summarised their activity without addressing the relevant subject-specific knowledge and skills.
* Did not address the selected capabilities or how they applied to their activity.
* Demonstrated minimal independent application to their project.

**The more successful responses to AR3**

* Clearly illustrated student engagement and interest in their investigation resulting in strong, personal reports; for example, a drone and camera project to check on ewes lambing.
* Demonstrated a high correlation between new learning and the Community Studies B performance standards.
* Reflected on the application of their SACE subject-based knowledge and skills to their investigation.
* Demonstrated community involvement or connection.
* Acknowledged the value of the skills and knowledge gained in undertaking the community application activity.
* Showed evidence of sound scaffolding in the community application activity report and reflection, ensuring all relevant learning requirements were met.
* Elaborated on information using appropriate conjunctions; for example, ‘because’, ‘therefore’, and ‘as a consequence of’.

**The less successful responses to AR3**

* Relied on tightly scaffolded questions which did not adequately address the learning requirements of Community Studies B.
* Predominantly consisted of recount, rather than an analysis of knowledge and acquired skills.
* Had limited evidence to support the selected capability or capabilities.

**General information**

* Attendance by teachers at implementation workshops and clarifying forums was evident in the strong understanding and application of the Community Studies B performance standards.
* Multimodal work was provided by many students in both school and external assessment components. Schools checked that the work could be viewed and in a format required by the SACE Board.
* Grades/marks, shaded performance standards sheet, and feedback to students should be evident on all student work for school assessment.

## 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 are strongly urged to refer to the subject operational information regarding preparing and packaging materials for the school and external assessment components.

Community Studies

Chief Assessor