2021 Workplace Practices Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the 2021 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

The more successful responses commonly:

* enabled students to choose and research topics from their industry area with greater flexibility, especially in the industrial relations topic
* had scope to allow students the opportunity to reflect and evaluate
* were tasks that allowed students to personalise the focus of their tasks where possible, allowing for relevance of reflection and evaluation
* were tasks that connected to industry, allowing students to show understanding at a higher level
* allowed students the depth to explore instead of being overly structured or scaffolded
* connected investigated content to personal learning or industry
* had been given many opportunities to meet the performance standards assessed across the three tasks
* were written with a specific industry focus and utilised primary sources, often interview or survey data that the student gathered themselves (i.e., incorporated primary data of surveys, interviews in their texts)
* showed strong knowledge and understanding by incorporating the student’s own experience and sources that were located
* referenced their sources
* showed clear evidence of research and an analysis of their findings
* identified how current experiences and skills could be transferred to find employment.

The less successful responses commonly:

* were over-scaffolded, overly structured, question-answer responses, and did not allow for student voice or individual industry focus
* were oversimplified tasks of presenting material and answering questions without further research
* had limited or no Reflection and Evaluation in enough tasks, which affected the grade
* had a specific genre to produce which showed limited IA and KU
* had minimal evidence of understanding, lacked detail or were often unfinished, and had no substantiation of investigation.

Assessment Type 2: Performance

The more successful responses commonly:

* involved students providing supporting evidence to support their learning experiences and showing Knowledge and Understanding
* demonstrated very clear student voice throughout journal/logbook evidence, explaining what they were doing and why, making clear links between theory and practice
* had all required components: evidence of students’ voice showing Knowledge and Understanding of what they were doing, Teacher’s Report to Moderator; Supervisor’s Report; or VET evidence of completion (where relevant)
* included specific dates, hours of work, detailed account of thoughts and learning connected to specific activities and duties, reflection on skills developed, photographic evidence and supporting teacher documentation
* commented on / discussed aspects of work such as Workplace Health and Safety, employability skills etc.

The less successful responses commonly:

* were missing required components: evidence of student voice in Performance showing Knowledge and Understanding, Teacher’s Report to Moderator; Supervisor’s Report; VET evidence of completion (where relevant)
* used overly scaffolded worksheets or workbooks which limited student voice
* used reflections from a different assessment type for Performance (AT3 being used for AT2, which does not meet requirements)
* were very brief journal entries or just short answers to journal questions with few details apart from the fact that the required hours were completed
* were more a recount of what was done but not demonstrating their Knowledge and Understanding of the course or student learning

Assessment Type 3: Reflection

The more successful responses commonly:

* were tasks that provided students with the opportunity to provide evidence from the three Performance Standards assessed, especially ‘Reflection and Evaluation’
* addressed all the required criteria – KU, IA and RE
* self-reflected and connected learning to industry practice and their future, rather than recount only
* completed two tasks with separate topics (e.g., personal plus workplace reflections, demonstrating KU)
* were written in relation to job-specific skills and employability skills required for a position
* were successful personal reflections featuring extended elaborations on the graduate qualities and/or employability skills and attributes related to future pathways
* included reflection on future aspirations
* allowed students to address the criteria in a variety of ways/formats.

The less successful responses commonly:

* were descriptive recount tasks, without Reflection and Evaluation
* had Reflection and Evaluation but little evidence of Investigation and Analysis throughout
* used student evidence from a different assessment type (e.g., AT2 Performance as a reflection task, which does not meet the criteria)
* were given a task to reflect on the folio course content, which did not allow the student to address KU or IA
* lacked depth and only discussed some experiences and examples
* were limited to recount only.

External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Investigation

The more successful responses commonly:

* students were able to meet the Performance Standards to a sophisticated standard when focussing on a local, national and/or global issue related to their chosen industry, rather than life in general
* allowed students to choose their own focus question and investigation in consultation with the teacher
* were related to actual experiences and aspirations of students, not just theoretical. For some students the fact that they were very passionate about the industry and what they were investigating came through clearly, which allowed them to achieve at a higher level, particularly in Reflection and Evaluation
* (for the issues investigation) started with a very specific, appropriate research question, worded as an issue, that students could engage with and investigate. Overly general topics limit demonstration of KU or IA at a high level
* (for the practical investigation) enabled students to demonstrate their involvement in a real-world (rather than imagined) activity. Evidence included videos, pictures, and feedback from relevant people on a completed process. This allowed students to reflect on and evaluate their learning throughout in a real, rather than in an imagined, sense
* (for the practical investigation) gained feedback on final product from knowledgeable sources and used this to make changes or to inform the Reflection and Evaluation. Stronger examples incorporated a feedback and redesign step in their work, giving them an opportunity to discuss and reflect on the learning and then self-evaluate and document their redesign or areas of improvement
* used a wide range of sources, including primary and secondary; this applied to both the issues investigation and the practical investigation options
* compared and analysed the findings between sources and their own thoughts or experiences
* when interviews or surveys were used, more successful responses analysed what data revealed, not just repeat the comments gathered (e.g., indicating surprise at unusual or unexpected findings)
* 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
* (for the practical investigation) the final Reflection and Evaluation was about the product or process, rather than about the writing of the investigation
* had numerous examples of Analysis, Reflection and Evaluation embedded throughout the student evidence.

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked a direct link between the industry focus and the student’s chosen topic. Scholarly research questions without the industry link made it difficult to adequately assess Knowledge and Understanding
* included a single topic for whole class using the same resources
* included tasks completed for another subject
* did not apply information to their own career/employment context
* included brief answers in a highly scaffolded process that did not allow students to reflect on or evaluate their learning/performance
* confused timelines for task completion with demonstrating the investigation or analysis. Stating intentions limits evidence of demonstrating research and analysis of information
* had topics that were too broad and with no industry focus. This often-included questions appropriate for a Research Project, rather than a Workplace Practices Investigation
* had the research and investigation as implicit, rather than explicit; particularly in practical investigations attempting to apply learning from VET to a real situation without further research
* Confused terms unrelated to Workplace Practices with the subject requirements, which impacted Reflection and 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
* focussed on a reflection on their personal limitations rather than a Reflection and Self-Evaluation of how the product or issue impacts on their own career decisions
* used unreliable, or not-relevant evidence that did not relate to their actual context which impacted Knowledge and Understanding
* simply listed facts and statistics, included graphs or included verbatim responses to interview questions, rather than analysing and evaluating the information
* included important evidence outside of the word count
* were overly simple tasks (practical) that limited research to allow students to achieve at a higher level in Investigation and Analysis
* included only a finished product (practical) with no other supporting evidence to demonstrate investigation, analysis, reflection, or evaluation. This was often the case when videos were produced without submitting supporting evidence.
* were general COVID-10 issue investigations that acted more as information reports and did not address the impact specifically to the student’s chosen focus industry. General Information report-only style meant students were unable to provide a personalised reflection or evaluation on their learning.