2019 Women’s Studies Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the previous year’s 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: Text Analysis

Students undertook one or two text analysis assessments, in which they analysed, for gender bias, the representation of gender in a text or texts, including cultural texts. Texts that were commonly analysed included: films, lyrics, music videos, video games, paintings, and fairytales.

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

* knowledge and understanding
* gender analysis
* communication.

The more successful responses commonly:

* integrated the language of gender analysis into perceptive analyses of gender in particular social locations. The concept of construction was clearly articulated
* emphasised both the diversity of women’s experiences and the similarity of experiences of women under different forms of patriarchal power
* used a range of engaging texts demonstrating the diversity of women’s experiences (GA 1 and C1)
* analysed specific parts of the texts and the effect/view of women presented.

The less successful responses commonly:

* were a simple recount with a descriptive and narrative approach; gender was described, rather than explored and omitted the use of the language of gender or if present, not used perceptively
* did not explore the diversity of women’s experience
* did not utilise the full word count.

Assessment Type 2: Essay

Students undertook one gender analysis assessment in the form of a persuasive written essay of a maximum of 1200 words.

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

* gender analysis
* investigation and evaluation
* communication.

The more successful responses commonly:

* had a question which led to a persuasive response
* referenced sources of information and ideas development
* used a wide range of sources/evidence to support their position.

The less successful responses commonly:

* were a narrative rather than a persuasive essay
* had limited acknowledgment of sources.

Assessment Type 3: Folio

Students undertook three gender analysis assessments. These assessments took a variety of forms of presentation and popular assessments included: a speech, an analytical report, a newspaper article and the analysis of art and advertisements.

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

* gender analysis
* investigation and evaluation
* communication.

The more successful responses commonly:

* illustrated perceptive and analytical insights in a creative form. More students used poetry, pod casts and videos to present their responses
* included varied task types and offered students a broad way of demonstrating the performance criteria for each element of the folio
* analysed the concepts of identity in terms of class, sexuality, race, culture and religion
* met the 1000 word count for each task equally
* covered three of the Key Issue areas.

The less successful responses commonly:

* described the diversity of experiences of women, but did not analyse in relation to the construction of gender
* did not utilise the full word count to demonstrate their depth and breadth of understanding in relation to the construction of gender and gender relations
* focused on similar issues/topics across the three tasks.

External Assessment

Assessment Type 4: Issues Analysis

Students undertook and negotiated a detailed, in-depth, independent investigation of a gender issue that was derived from one of the issues in Key Issues in Women’s Studies. The students produced an analytical and evaluative piece of writing of a maximum of 2000 words.

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

* knowledge and understanding — KU1
* gender analysis — GA1 and GA2
* investigation and evaluation — IE1
* communication — C1, C2, and C3.

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated an understanding of gender and how it impacted a range of women and disempowered them socially, economically and politically
* presented a strong analysis of gender socialisation that is implicit in such disempowerment
* investigated, analysed and deconstructed a number of particular examples in relation to their question
* demonstrated sophisticated, accurate and consistent use of the language of gender analysis that enhanced their point of view, in a persuasive style
* demonstrated in-depth investigation and acknowledged all sources, and used consistent referencing.

The less successful responses commonly:

* read as a Health or Society and Culture essay, lacked a gender analysis focus. This has been a consistent issue across the years
* had a question that did not allow students to identify gender bias. For example, were unable to compare women’s rights in comparison to men’s. There were many essays on sex trafficking, feminism, abortion, FGM but students found it difficult to discuss how the issue related to gender bias
* used generalisations without specific illustrations and lacked depth and diversity of investigation
* did not use the full word-limit to demonstrate in-depth investigation and diversity of women’s experiences
* focused on how the issue can be improved/strategies of empowerment in great detail but this is not a performance standard addressed in the Issues Analysis
* narrated and described, rather than analysed gender related to the chosen issue.