# Government of South Australia LogoSACE Board Logo2024 Media Studies Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the 2024 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.

The Subject Renewal program has introduced changes for many subjects in 2025, and these are detailed in the change log at the front of each subject outline. When reviewing the 2024 Subject Assessment Advice, it is important to consider any updates to this subject to ensure the feedback in this document remains accurate.

# School Assessment

Teachers can improve the moderation process and the online process by:

* ensuring students clearly put the question/topic at the top of their response
* adhering to the subject outline. It was noted that teachers utilised varied word counts outside of the subject scope (in LAPS), along with inconsistency in task design
* thoroughly checking that all grades entered in Schools Online are correct
* ensuring the uploaded tasks are in correct file formats and are able to be opened.

Assessment Type 1: Folio

Most folios consisted of two media explorations (maximum of 1500 words combined, if written) and one media interaction study (800 words maximum, if written). Generally, students explored three topics, allowing them to fully explore the four key media concepts through knowledge and understanding, research and analysis, and communication, as specified in the subject outline.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* ensuring that they allow enough scope in the word/time limit and question/topic for students to thoroughly research and analyse the required media topic
* creating tasks that allow students to address bias in a meaningful manner
* allowing students to respond in more than one mode for each assessment task
* ensuring that all task sheets clearly state the requirements of the task, with assessment criteria and word/time limits clearly visible
* ensuring that all relevant Performance Standards are addressed, in particular the understanding of facts, opinions and bias in media products (KU3) and the analysis of the ways in which groups and individuals are represented in the media (RA2)
* encouraging individual and personal responses to the Media Interaction task that have been selected by the student
* supporting students to be more self-directed in their learning.

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* (in RA1 and RA 2 responses) were characterised by the inclusion of multiple media sources, which were meticulously selected to support their arguments. This multiplicity of sources not only strengthened the credibility of their work but also provided a well-rounded perspective on the subject matter
* addressed the element of bias clearly in response to the requirements of KU3 and RA1and gave specific examples of how it was present
* (in regard to KU3 RA1 RA2 and RA3) focussed on analysis rather than mere description. This analytical approach involved a deep dive into the underlying principles and concepts of the media being studied, demonstrating a higher level of critical thinking and engagement with the material
* had interactions that included a reflective component where students analysed their own interactions with the media. This self-reflection was not just an add-on but was integrated into the overall analysis, providing insights into how their personal engagement with the media influenced their understanding and interpretation of the concepts at play. This reflective practice highlighted the dynamic interplay between the individual and the media, enriching the overall analysis
* did not limit their scope of research to a single media type, such as film, but rather engaged with a diverse array of media forms. This breadth of engagement allowed for a richer and more comprehensive analysis
* discussed not just how they were influenced by media, but also how they could influence media and gave specific examples of how this occurred
* provided evidence of understanding in a considered and analytical manner, frequently citing specific current examples from their own research (both primary and secondary) to illustrate key media concepts
* explicitly addressed the required features with evidence of detailed understandings relating to key media concepts and specific codes and conventions
* produced a media interaction task that was an immersive, personal interaction with a media product, form, or concept, which was very different from the media exploration. It clearly consisted of first-person language and a sense of exploring a personal relationship within the wide range of interactions of the media
* employed terminology confidently to show understanding of all four key media concepts, including close analysis of media conventions.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* had a lack of variety and depth in sources. The limited number of sources used weakened the credibility and richness of their arguments. Additionally, these responses tended to be more descriptive rather than analytical, which diminished the critical engagement with the material
* did not address all performance standards. Bias and how audience could influence media were areas that were commonly lacking
* did not strongly indicate how they had authentically interacted with a media area and how it influenced them
* did not address representation of groups and individuals by the media (RA2)
* provided a recount with little analysis
* were focussed too much on process, describing the media in the interaction study, rather than analysing specific aspects of their own interaction.

Assessment Type 2: Product

Most productions focussed on the creation of individual works; however, there were also many good examples of collaborative productions. Generally, this task was addressed in the form of two productions accompanied by two explicit producer’s statements.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* ensuring that students have been sufficiently informed of the media conventions within the designated task and given opportunities to build skills within the area
* giving students clear time limits on their task sheets
* choosing production tasks that allow enough variation in responses to cater for the skills present in the whole class
* ensuring that all productions are carefully designed and planned for a selected audience.

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* had producer’s statements that supported the production tasks by clearly stating how they used or challenged conventions and included specific evidence relating to their production task, including using photographic evidence when applicable
* took into account multiple aspects in response to how they used technologies and made sure that they were aware of how their decisions would influence the audience
* took great care to ensure that their final productions did not have noticeable issues with obvious aspects that caused their audiences to question what was trying to be conveyed
* designed productions that made sense to the audience or were at least clearly explained in their producer’s statements
* adhered to time limits and had strong structural elements that either adhered to or challenged conventions with a clear design present, that was referred to in their producer’s statement
* used strong media terminology in their producer’s statements that directly related to their productions
* in the producer’s statement addressed the importance of failure, and trial and error, rather than just the successes
* included explicit reference to their intended audience in the producer’s statement and used audience feedback to support the intention and success of the product
* created products that clearly displayed understandings against the performance standards, which was particularly evident where students used, or challenged, the codes and conventions
* demonstrated a clear understanding of the conventions of the product and developed a clear sense of narrative
* displayed expertly executed and sophisticated production techniques appropriate to the genre being used or challenged.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* merely described what they had done in their productions when reflecting in their producer’s statements and did not discuss how their production influenced the audience
* neglected certain production techniques such as sound or lighting
* needed to do more research on how to adhere to the conventions of their chosen production type or challenge the conventions with knowledge. As too many students had issues with avoidable aspects such as framing or overly wordy scripts
* did not use appropriate media terminology in their producer’s statements
* neglected fine editing skills when producing video content, such as sound levelling or using appropriate sound recording equipment, this showed a lack of comprehensive planning and a lack of highly proficient technology use
* did not submit a separate, individual producer’s statement for each production
* used the producer’s statement to explain production challenges rather than referencing the intended audience and their response
* did not clearly discuss their specific role in a group production within the producer’s statement
* lacked a consideration of planning and production techniques
* did not address, use, or challenge the codes and conventions of the media form employed
* incorporated a significant amount of material that was not the student’s own work.

# External Assessment

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* ensuring that the topic and issue being investigated is current and directly related to the media
* encouraging students to develop one major guiding question rather than a series of minor questions
* promoting references to a variety of theories relating to the key media concepts
* verifying that a range of media texts are addressed and that secondary & primary sources are used and cited correctly
* checking that any surveys undertaken will actually provide useful information and have a reasonable sample size with an appropriate variety of respondents
* encouraging the use of precise media terminology that is specific to the media form being investigated.

Assessment Type 3: Investigation

The prevalent current media issues investigated in 2024 again included the uses of social media, the role of Influencers and the concept of ‘brain rot’. Media coverage of Trump and the US Presidential election, the influence of TikTok, ‘Fast Fashion”, cancel culture, and the ongoing controversies surrounding AI were also explored. Fortunately with respect to AI, most investigations examined AI’s effect specifically as it related to the media industry and less referred to its use in other areas.

The more successful responses commonly:

* followed the brief for the media investigation and chose to investigate an issue that had been subject to public debate within the media in the last twelve months. This was referenced in the introductory paragraphs
* chose a topic then formulated a question that helped the student remain focused on a media-based concept
* presented clearly structured pieces that assisted the reader to follow their research, analysis, and conclusion
* analysed a variety of media sources and were not limited to either a single source or source type
* used media concepts to analyse and investigate the media
* referred to various theories applicable to the key media concepts
* analysed relevant and contemporary, qualitative, and quantitative evidence to give greater depth to their research
* made use of primary sources and understood that primary sources are not just surveys but can also include immediate, first-hand accounts of a topic, from people who had a direct connection with it
* utilised images such as graphs, tables, and charts to support discussion throughout the investigation.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* chose a single piece of media to investigate (for example, a movie or style of movie) and did not consider other media sources or types
* chose topics outside the defined scope of the investigation, or were not current
* produced little evidence that demonstrated an understanding of the key media concepts
* did not address all performance standards, most notably, KU3 and RA1
* were heavily scaffolded which limited individual research
* allowed their own bias to influence their investigation resulting in essays of personal opinion
* presented a content analysis of the sources used rather than using them to focus on an issue
* used primary sources like surveys with questions that did not provide any insight into the issue
* did not reference, particularly when the investigation was presented orally or multi-modally. Sources need to be integrated into the response in a manner fitting the text type chosen.