# Government of South Australia LogoSACE Board Logo2024 Spiritualities, Religion and Meaning Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

This subject assessment advice, based on the 2024 assessment cycle, provides an overview of student performance in school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. It provides information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, and the quality of student performance.

**A note on submitting assessments in oral and multimodal format**

For *Spiritualities, Religion and Meaning*, students are able to present their assessments in written, oral, or multimodal formats. Where presenting work in oral or multimodal form, 6 minutes is the equivalent of 1000 words. During the 2024 assessment cycle, teachers need to ensure students are aware that the recording of videos should not be sped up to condense content into the maximum time limit.

Oral or multimodal submissions where a recording has been sped up can be flagged by moderators. When these submissions are flagged by markers/moderators for excessive speed, schools will be asked to provide a transcript. Markers/moderators are advised to mark/moderate based on the evidence in the transcript, only considering evidence up to the maximum word limit (e.g. up to 2000 words for AT3).

It is important that prior to submission, recordings and sound files submitted are checked for clarity. Some of the multimodal sound files provided in school assessed moderation (AT1 and AT2) samples were hard to hear or had been sped up considerably in order to reduce the duration to below the prescribed time limit. If the speed of the recording makes the speech incomprehensible, it not only affects the accuracy of transcriptions, but also impacts the ability of markers/moderators to identify evidence of student achievement against the performance standards.

**A note on subject adjustments**

The Subject Renewal program has introduced adjustments for many subjects in 2025, including for this subject. These adjustments are summarised the Subject outline change log at the start of the 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

Assessment Type 1: Reflective Analysis

For a 10‑credit subject, students complete two reflective analysis tasks.

For a 20‑credit subject, students complete three reflective analysis tasks.

Students engage in reflective analysis to respond to a source or stimulus related to a big idea. The 2024 student cohort embraced a range of AT1 tasks. These reflected many interesting and varied activities, including in-person and virtual visits to sacred places, places of worship and spiritual contemplation, guest speakers, film stimuli etc.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* ensuring students are clear about the purpose and/or goal of the task
* ensuring students incorporate a clear, focused *Big Idea* in the introduction to the piece.

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated clear evidence of reflection and practical application, integrating a variety of spiritual and religious perspectives while considering their impact on communities
* effectively incorporated spiritual/religious teachings, presenting diverse viewpoints, and connecting them to personal experiences, thus enhancing the reflective and analytical components of the task
* followed a structured approach that included context-setting, analysis, and evaluation
* engaged deeply with a wide range of relevant sources beyond those provided by the teacher, ensuring their reflections considered both local and global spiritual and religious influences. These sources include religious art, liturgies, contemporary films, television, podcasts, articles, journals, books, and virtual tours
* demonstrated significant personal engagement with the material, often displaying a deep emotional connection and empathy
* integrated quotations and examples seamlessly, particularly in discussing doctrinal/scriptural texts, other religious faiths, and related rituals and traditions
* discerned relevant information and offered succinct analyses and well-substantiated reflections displaying an awareness of the complexity of spiritual and religious ideas. Reflections were evidenced with a variety of both primary and secondary sources
* focused on certain specific features in each task rather than attempting to cover the complete range available, allowing for an in-depth exploration of concepts
* demonstrated a clear understanding and application of the influences of spirituality and religion in both local and global contexts, with specific references to sources.

Overall, these successful responses were marked by a comprehensive, in-depth exploration of concepts and demonstrated a clear understanding of the subject matter.

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked depth and critical engagement, tending to recount rather than reflect or analyse
* relied on a single spiritual or religious perspective and superficial understanding of the content
* followed a prescribed or heavily scaffolded structure that demonstrated little personal engagement with the source material
* resorted to dictionary definitions of spiritual or religious terms instead of drawing on scholarly sources, religious figures, or scripture to provide more meaningful insights
* described and summarised, lacking the depth of analysis sufficient to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the concepts
* included generalised comments without explaining the personal/shared meaning and influence of spiritual or religious perspectives
* included long disjointed quotations that were not effectively integrated into the analysis
* demonstrated limited individual learning and failed to unpack or reframe the information meaningfully, reflecting a lack of deeper engagement with the task.

In 2024, there was also a noticeable increase in responses that appeared to be partially or entirely AI-generated, especially when content consisted of vague generalisations with little personal connection to the source material.

Assessment Type 2: Connections

For a 10‑credit subject, students complete one connections task (please note, for a 10-credit course a maximum of 1000 words if written, or a maximum of 6 minutes if oral, or the equivalent in multimodal form).

For a 20-credit subject, students complete one connections task (please note, for a 20-credit course a maximum of 2000 words if written, a maximum of 12 minutes if oral, or the equivalent in multimodal form).

Students explore a concept or issue from a spiritual or religious perspective related to a big idea. They may develop a new or enriched understanding by connecting with others, e.g. peers, community members, elders, or online communities. They may also engage in other forms of research. Applying these insights, students undertake a task or activity in collaboration with others. They engage in reflective practice to evaluate the impact of their shared action and their learning about spiritual and/or religious concepts, ideas, and beliefs. Evidence for each student’s connections task must be assessed individually, and it must demonstrate the student’s individual role in, and contribution to, the task.

It was evident that learning communities positively embraced this AT2 assessment type with work demonstrating creativity and innovation.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* ensuring students are clear about the purpose and/or goal of the task
* ensuring students incorporate a clear, focused *Big Idea* in the introduction to the piece.

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* clearly articulated the purpose and/or goal of the task
* defined research strategies to enhance the practical aspects, enabling a deeper understanding, reflection and evaluation of the transformative action resulting from collaborative efforts
* analysed and acknowledged various relevant and appropriate sources of spiritual or religious perspectives
* established connections between their understanding and evaluation of how personal and shared meaning is influenced by spiritual or religious concepts, experiences, and beliefs
* integrated spiritual or religious perspectives seamlessly with their actions, rather than treating them as separate sections
* engaged in tasks that were stimulating, providing students with opportunities for sustained, productive, and authentic collaboration
* applied insights to a task or activity, engaging in reflective practice to evaluate the impact of their actions and learning
* showed how their actions were informed by spiritual or religious concepts, making explicit connections between their work and the ideas explored
* employed a variety of sources for feedback from peers, teachers, mentors, other school staff, and/or community members, as appropriate
* analysed feedback from others in conjunction with assessing their development of skills and learning
* reflected candidly when evaluating the impact of their action, or that borne of groups of peers, a church, or charity group - discussing many compelling means by which individuals and organisations were making a difference
* provided explicit and clear evidence of collaboration, communication, and connection, while offering specific examples of individual contributions to the task or activity. Authentic evidence of individual learning included photographs, surveys, data, and feedback
* presented information in a clear and succinct manner, ensuring that all key information addressing specific assessment features was contained *within* the word count, using appendices only for additional supporting evidence if deemed appropriate.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* displayed limited evidence of the intended achievements of the task
* lacked depth in connecting themes and actions to religious or spiritual traditions and perspectives
* recounted activities, rather than critically evaluating their impact
* were overly scaffolded, limiting students' opportunities for in-depth and insightful analysis and reflection
* lacked supporting materials, such as quotes and survey results that provided evidence of collaborative ways of working
* created opportunities for incidental collaboration or for students to work independently towards a common goal, rather than collaborating with a group of people with equal responsibility over a period of time to design and deliver an outcome
* presented the same evidence for each student within a group, without clearly identifying individual contributions or incorporating personal reflections
* offered description-based responses instead of engaging in analysis and reflection of the (individual and shared) actions taken
* provided simplistic and/or inaccurate explanations of spiritual/religious concepts or beliefs
* incorporated unacknowledged and unreferenced information that lacked personalised experiences, collaboration, or connections pertinent to the task
* were not proof-read.

# External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Transformative Action

There were many innovative questions and research areas submitted for the *Transformative Action* task in 2024.

Popular focus topics included (but were not limited to) areas linked to homelessness, child poverty, period poverty, eco-spiritual issues, Indigenous spirituality, meditation and mindfulness practices, planetary flourishing versus planetary suffering, food insecurity, domestic violence, religious/ spiritual responses to climate change, human trafficking /modern slavery, gender equity issues, mental health initiatives, refugee crises and support, aid to war-torn countries, particularly the Israel-Palestine conflict and the Gazan and Ukraine wars, racism, Sinophobia and the fast fashion industry.

10-credit subject

For a 10-credit subject, students identify and research a local, national, or global issue related to a big idea of their choice, using primary and secondary sources.

Students are expected to:

* explore one or more spiritual and/or religious perspectives on their chosen issue
* investigate one or more existing initiatives, and reflect on spiritual and/or religious beliefs and values as a motivation for social action and transformation
* evaluate the efficacy of the initiative/s and suggest possible further actions.

Students must provide evidence of Exploration and Analysis (EA1 and EA2), and Action and Reflective Practice (ARP3). It is important to remember that students completing the 10-credit version of SRM do not have to actively devise an initiative.

The more successful responses commonly:

* selected topics of strong personal interest, ensuring their engagement with the task
* developed a clear, focused, and purposeful inquiry question that provided sufficient scope for exploration
* chose initiatives that had obvious spiritual or religious motivations
* linked a *Big Idea* to the inquiry question and the organisation(s) discussed
* utilised a range of reliable, authentic, and valid sources to support their understanding, drawing on various perspectives and relevant community experts to address the question
* acknowledged and integrated a variety of reliable, authentic, and valid primary and secondary sources of information to enhance their knowledge, skills, and understanding of the issue, and gain insight into a variety of perspectives
* efficiently structured responses providing clear context and addressing key aspects of the issue
* demonstrated a thorough understanding of the chosen topic, offering detailed examples of how their understanding of social action and transformation developed
* supported their exploration, investigation, and evaluation using annotated photos, data, and images
* selected appropriate modes of presentation that suited the task and individuals’ strengths including multimodal
* included a succinct conclusion that summarized key points, evaluated the initiative’s effectiveness, and proposed possible future actions
* incorporated personal reflection on learnings and insights - especially when evaluating an action, experience, or text
* explored the spiritual/religious motivations, values, and beliefs underpinning the solution/the organisation working to address the issue
* objectively evaluated the effect of existing initiatives and organisations, rather than referring to corporate strategies and KPIs published on an organisation’s website
* discussed specific strategies which impacted individuals and communities and *‘why’* not just *‘what’* was done or achieved
* incorporated pertinent spiritual quotations, sacred texts, or religious scripture to substantiate the points of discussion
* reflected on initiatives and activities, establishing successes and areas that could be improved, making recommendations for future activities
* developed effective responses that were rooted in vivid, realistic texts or experiences, including film artwork, guest speakers, a Retreat, a pilgrimage, or excursion.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* included unsubstantiated generalisations, stereotypical, factually incorrect, or biased statements
* described issues rather than analysing them
* investigated issues that appeared teacher- rather than student-selected, or presented highly scaffolded reflections
* did not use reliable sources, referencing spiritual or religious sources that lacked authority or expertise
* gathered data through interviews with no explanation of the interviewee’s relevance, expertise, or qualifications
* drew on a limited number of relevant primary and/or secondary sources
* solely focussed on critiquing the work of organisations or charities that implemented initiatives
* investigated an ethical issue rather than an initiative
* described an issue without relating it to a spirituality, faith community, or religion
* limited the extent of transformative action demonstrated
* focussed on exploring a religion's position on an issue, limiting the opportunity to evaluate impact
* presented simplistic solutions or advocacy without evaluating their impact, which hindered their ability to determine the effectiveness of the action.

20-credit subject

For a 20-credit subject, students identify and research a local, national, or global issue related to a big idea of their choice, using a range of primary and secondary sources.

Students are expected to:

* explore one or more spiritual and/or religious perspectives on their chosen issue
* develop and apply an initiative designed to generate transformative social change, or call others to action (advocacy), based on spiritual and/or religious values
* evaluate the impact and/or possible future implications of their initiative on stakeholders and reflect on spiritual and/or religious belief as a motivation for social action and transformation.

Students must provide evidence of Exploration and Analysis (EA1 and EA2), and Action and Reflective Practice (ARP1 and ARP3).

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* selected topics of strong, personal interest, ensuring their engagement with the task
* developed a clear, focused, and purposeful inquiry question that provided sufficient scope for in-depth exploration of a spiritual or religious issue
* developed and applied initiatives aimed at generating transformative social change or advocating for action, grounded in spiritual or religious values
* explored one or more spiritual and/or religious perspective on their chosen issue
* linked a *Big Idea* to the inquiry question and the organisation(s) discussed
* utilised a range of reliable, authentic, and valid sources to support their understanding, drawing on various perspectives and relevant community experts to address the question
* acknowledged and integrated a variety of reliable, authentic, and valid primary and secondary sources of information to enhance their knowledge, skills, and understanding of the issue, and gain insight into a variety of perspectives
* demonstrated a thorough understanding of the chosen topic, explicitly connecting examples of how students’ understanding of social action and transformation evolved
* supported their exploration and evaluation of their initiative using annotated photos, data, tables, and images
* selected modes of presentation that suited the task and individuals’ strengths, including multimodal
* included a succinct conclusion that summarised key points, lines of investigation, and discussion resulting in a well-informed and perceptive evaluation of the impact and implications of their initiative
* reflected on the spiritual or religious motivations behind their actions and suggesting possible future directions
* incorporated pertinent spiritual quotations, sacred texts, or religious scripture to substantiate the points of discussion
* developed and applied an initiative designed to generate transformative social change or advocate for action based on spiritual and/or religious values
* communicated clearly, referencing a spirituality or faith and how shared views shape culture among communities. How community influences the religious and spiritual perspective was also explored.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* included unsubstantiated generalisations, stereotypical, factually incorrect, or biased statements
* described issues rather than analysing them
* investigated issues that appeared teacher selected rather than an issue of appeal for the student, or presented very scaffolded reflections
* did not use reliable sources, referencing spiritual or religious sources that lacked authority or expertise
* gathered data through interviews with no explanation of the interviewee’s relevance, expertise, or qualifications
* drew on a limited number of primary and/or secondary sources
* solely focused on critiquing the work of organisations or charities that implemented initiatives
* investigated an ethical issue rather than an initiative
* described an issue without relating it to a spirituality, faith community, or religion
* limited the extent of transformative action demonstrated
* focussed on exploring a religion's position on an issue, limiting the opportunity to evaluate impact
* presented simplistic solutions or advocacy without evaluating their impact, which hindered the ability to critically evaluate the effectiveness of the action
* researched a topic without taking personal transformative action
* presented information without citing sources or including a reference list.

General

In 2024, an element that added a layer of sophistication to many successful responses across all Assessment Tasks was the incorporation of strong and perceptive student voices, especially in moments of deep vulnerability, profound realisation of individual or shared impacts, demonstrated curiosity or faith formation.

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

* eliciting more successful responses by ensuring students understand the intent of the assessment, for example, transformative actions which focussed purely on an ethical issue had limited opportunities to meet all performance standards
* ensuring all uploaded files are fully operational, audible, and correctly labelled.

Any issues or potential breaches are clearly identified through the appropriate channels.