2022 English Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the 2022 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.

Across the Assessment Types for this subject, students can present their responses in oral or multimodal form, where 6 minutes is the equivalent of 1000 words. Students should not speed-up the recording of their videos excessively in an attempt to condense more content into the maximum time limit.

From 2023, if a video is flagged by markers/moderators as impacted by speed, schools will be requested to provide a transcript and markers/moderators will be advised to mark/moderate based on the evidence in the transcript, only considering evidence up to the maximum word limit.

If the speed of the recording makes the speech incomprehensible, it affects the accuracy of transcriptions and it also impacts the ability of markers/moderators to find evidence of student achievement against the performance standards.

School Assessment

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

* ensuring the PSR matches the LAP
* ensuring the task sheets include the criteria for assessment
* ensuring the uploaded tasks are audible/playable if they are multimodal — poor sound quality makes it difficult. Supplying transcripts to support recorded pieces is helpful
* ensuring the LAP and coversheets are uploaded
* completing the VMM as needed.

Assessment Type 1: Responding to Texts (30%)

Within this component of the subject, students produce three responses to texts. Two of the responses must be written, and one must be oral. Either the oral response or one of the written pieces may be replaced by a multimodal response. One of the responses could be a comparison of two or more texts. A maximum of 2000 words for written responses is allocated and the oral response is up to a maximum of 6 minutes. A multimodal response is of equivalent length.

Teachers had the opportunity to remove one AT1 task as part of the COVID adjustments for the subject, as long as they submitted all AT2 tasks.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* providing variety and flexibility in task design to allow students to show their skills rather than rely solely on essay writing which may limit some students in their ability to demonstrate the full scope of their understanding. It was pleasing to see that more teachers were adopting a wider range of ways that a student could respond to the texts. These included multimedia, short answer options and oral reports (pre‑recorded)
* ensuring the school-based component of the course addresses all performance standards. An3 can be addressed in either AT1 or AT2 and is useful in scaffolding and building students' confidence before they complete the AT3 external
* utilising a good range of texts — traditional and modern — and use a range of text types that deviate from solely relying on traditional novels and films
* developing tasks which allow students to meet the performance standards at the highest level.

The more successful responses commonly:

* embedded and integrated short pithy quotes for evidence
* evidence was strong and clearly substantiated interpretations of the text
* clearly organised their ideas and evidence
* demonstrated strong analysis by taking on the role of the creator, such as an interview with the director
* ensured language and stylistic features were analysed rather than identified and discussed
* focused on specific features, rather than making generalisations
* focussed on analysing audience positioning in response to central ideas
* analysed features against the core concepts of audience, purpose and context
* engaged with the ideas/themes of a text (i.e. the stronger responses expressed ideas as a phrase such as 'the impact of racism on individuals' rather than simply writing ‘the author explores racism.’)
* produced speeches for a specific, often unfamiliar audience (e.g. award acceptance speech) to demonstrate more sophisticated and versatile texts
* allowed the innovative use of IT skills
* considered and analysed the context of texts in order to fully address KU1 and An1
* included images/footage and music to create tone in oral presentations by including multiple layers of textual knowledge
* were in response to challenging and engaging texts
* provided an element of independence for the student through options that included text and task choice
* enabled students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of a ‘range of texts’
* included comparative responses that were useful preparation for the external assessment
* developed comparative pieces which contained a balanced discussion and clearly signposted the connections between the texts
* enabled students to express their own unique voice through their written and oral expression
* revealed a depth of analysis using metalanguage appropriate to the text type analysed
* demonstrated consistent and sophisticated use of accurate, clear, and fluent expression
* referred specifically to cinematic techniques when discussing film.

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not embed evidence but rather used large chunks of text as evidence
* were over-scaffolded with overt similarities across samples including the same evidence used in responses and similar structure or content
* were structurally incoherent
* discussed texts separately when An3 was being addressed, limiting the depth of connections between the texts
* did not explicitly address KU2 and An2 to analyse stylistic features and language techniques (e.g. a personal essay about the student’s values does not allow for in-depth analysis of the author’s craft)
* relied on outside sources or critics in the style of a hybrid Research Project in English
* tended to revert to plot description without any discussion of techniques
* were limited in the use of metalanguage and identification of techniques, particularly in responses to visual texts
* provided an author biography to address context with little or no connection to the purpose or ideas of the text
* sometimes identified language and stylistic features, but recounted their appearance rather than providing analysis
* divorced technique from purpose
* tended to devote the final paragraph of the task to the analysis of stylistic features, but this limited the depth of analysis and students may have benefitted from addressing stylistic features throughout the task(s)
* focused on characterisation as a stylistic feature, but did not identify the techniques employed to create the characterisation
* did not identify or address the audience in their discussion and analysis
* lacked evidence of analysis regarding the way an audience had been positioned to respond to a text(s)
* ignored the author’s role in creating the text and making stylistic choices
* did not consider mise en scène when recording orals (e.g. if filming at home consider the background of the shots and if filming at school make sure classmates are not distractors in the shot)
* did not use the conventions of the chosen form appropriately (e.g. used sub-headings inappropriately in an essay)
* did not include at least one oral presentation or multimodal text
* identified key ideas or themes without expanding on them or analysing how the idea is expressed
* used "sophisticated" language at the expense of clarity
* contained errors in expression or generally lacked fluency.

Assessment Type 2: Creating Texts (40%)

Within this assessment type, students are expected to create three texts, at least one of which is written, to demonstrate variety in text type, purpose and audience. Students are required to create one writer’s statement. A maximum of 3000 words is allocated to the creation of texts and a maximum of 1000 words is allocated to the writer’s statement. An oral or multimodal text or writer’s statement is of equivalent length.

Teachers had the opportunity to remove one AT2 task (but needed to keep the Writer’s Statement) as part of the COVID adjustments for the subject, as long as they submitted all AT1 tasks.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* expanding options for the tasks beyond traditional text types. For example, students who created short films and You Tube clips were working with mediums that were relevant to their age group and were therefore far more accessible for all students in the class. They also tended to be a way for students, of all writing abilities, to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of how to apply the techniques they had learned over their years at school
* considering the importance of task design- the creation of text types that have similar purposes, audiences, stylistic and language features limits students’ ability to achieve against the performance standards.

The more successful responses commonly:

* presented a wide variety of tasks for different audiences, purposes and contexts
* had a clear vision for context, purpose and audience (and this helped facilitate a successful writer’s statement)
* demonstrated high level skills in applying the conventions and features of their chosen text types
* included innovative text creation such as a vlog paired with a feature article on a similar topic, but for a different audience allowing clear comparisons in the writer’s statement
* wrote for authentic contexts such as a feminist article response in Womankind, and double spread real estate advertisement for expensive properties
* included creative texts from fascinating and unusual perspectives such as an obituary for an inanimate, defunct object (e.g. a phone book)
* applied a wide range of textual conventions, language features and stylistic features to achieve the intended effect on the target audience with consideration to the form, language, context and purpose
* demonstrated knowledge of a wide range of text conventions and stylistic features both across the Creating Texts folio and within individual AT2 pieces. For example, a highly successful persuasive article displayed the student's ability to employ a range of persuasive devices, rather than relying upon and repeatedly using a smaller number of devices throughout the composition
* demonstrated sophisticated use of language and stylistic features
* included using a multimodal approach to informing about a topic, particularly with use of a video so students could show their use of film techniques to meet the purpose of the text (e.g. a documentary) and its audience. Blogs and podcasts were often successful choices
* demonstrated appropriate consideration of mise en scene in multimodal pieces, e.g. students who enunciated well throughout the oral, with minimal background sounds, and consideration of what was included in the visuals of a recording (especially if recorded at home)
* carefully addressed the assessment criteria for the writer’s statement
* presented writer’s statements that explained and justified language features, stylistic features and conventions as well as the creative decisions made in the process of writing
* addressed complex ideas, meaning, and/or aspects of cultural context when completing the writer's statement. More successful responses frequently went beyond general comment regarding a text being relatable or engaging, displaying the student's ability to articulate more complex or specific dynamics present in their creative text(s)
* presented writer’s statements that, when comparative, were structured effectively and analysed each created text equally. Moderators also commented favourably upon examples of comparative writer’s statements that analysed created texts that were connected by a common topic or theme
* carefully edited their work.

The less successful responses commonly:

* produced texts in a similar format (e.g. a recount and a narrative, or a feature article and an editorial) limiting opportunities to display versatility in their writing (Ap1)—this was particularly common when students were given a ‘free choice’ option
* presented a singular voice throughout their writing
* were overly scaffolded and lacked originality
* did not demonstrate an awareness of audience and purpose, i.e., did not modify language to suit audience and purpose (e.g. a text which targeted an ‘elderly’ audience interested in gardening, but utilised colloquial terminology commonly understood by teens engaged in social media and meme culture)
* lacked focus, structure, or had no clear purpose for creating the text; this often impacted the quality of the writer’s statement as these students could not explain why they had made stylistic decisions
* lacked sophistication and employed a limited range of stylistic features and conventions for the text type they were creating
* created texts that limited opportunities for textual analysis such as a poster with only a couple of words
* were formatted responses across classes that limited independent thinking and creativity
* demonstrated repetition of the recount form, regardless of the individual purpose of the creating texts task
* addressed a narrow audience range, while the purposes were different, they used a limited range of language features and conventions
* emphasised visual information at the expense of spoken or written language
* did not accurately use the features of the text type
* prioritised the appearance of a creative text (e.g. a newspaper/magazine article) at the expense of the content
* produced writer’s statements which tended to recount the process of creating texts rather than analyse the features to show how they suit the context, audience and purpose
* revealed limited evidence of designated performance standards. For example, where An3 was identified for assessment and yet the writer’s statement either did not contain the analysis of two or more texts or the response revealed analysis of the texts individually
* did not reveal adequate consideration of accurate, clear and fluent expression
* required additional editing

General

* Avoid over scaffolding — pieces where students across the sample all made the same points and used the same evidence showed that there was too much teacher intervention and limited the knowledge they could show.
* Scripts provided with multimodal presentations were valuable for times when the student was difficult to hear in the recording.
* COVID adjustments were there to support staff- not to remove the requirements of the subject outline. The opportunity to remove one task from the school-based pieces (excluding the writer’s statement) was taken by many schools. Most schools applied the adjustments well. However, some schools not only removed a piece, but adjusted their content. While addendums allow for this, changes should remain in line with the subject outline.

External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Investigation

This task requires students to independently compose a 2000 word, written comparative analysis of two texts which evaluates how the language features, stylistic features, and conventions in these texts represent ideas, perspectives, and/or aspects of culture, and influence audiences. In 2022 there were a range of texts explored by students which resulted in some interesting comparisons.

It is important to remember that students are assessed on all assessment design criteria within this section of the course. This needs to be an important consideration when selecting texts and that a student’s question does not need to make reference every aspect of the performance standards. The discussion needs to be relevant, authentic and natural.

Text selection

* Text selection is pivotal to this task and the success of student’s response. Markers identified that many students accessed ‘classic’ texts like The Great Gatsby, Animal Farm, and *The* Shawshank Redemption. The stronger responses to the classic texts reflected a different focus about ideas and perspectives rather than the expected responses. Pairings with a traditional and a contemporary text were more successful because there was more scope for independent thought.
* There were many responses to ‘teen angst’ texts such as One of Us is Lying, The Fault in Our Stars, Five Feet Apart and The Breakfast Club. Some of these responses lacked the depth and development with regard to analysis. At times, there was superficial analysis or personal connections which limited the success of these responses.
* Several students based their choices on dystopic texts and appeared to be familiar with this genre. This is a genuine area of interest for students and overall, a successful choice for students.
* Where students developed fresh, individual pairings with diverse contemporary texts, often a more authentic level of response was generated. Unique and ‘new’ pairings were more authentic due to the lack of existing resources and secondary sources.
* Exploring novels was a challenge for many students in terms of generating complex and perceptive analysis of ideas, perspectives, and stylistic features.
* Shorter texts such as speeches, articles, vignettes, episodes of television shows rather than a series, short plays, opinion pieces, a chapter of a novel, an excerpt of a text, a newspaper article, a documentary, or Anime were more successful as students demonstrated superior knowledge and understanding about the texts. Furthermore, the shorter texts allowed students to demonstrated in-depth understanding of the texts, their features, ideas, and perspectives.
* Limited text choices impacted the level of analysis and the depth of the comparison. The stronger responses reflected texts with an appropriate level of complexity.
* There were some good text options which veered away from overdone pairings. For example, Albert Camus’ The Outsider compared to the song by Talking Heads Once in a Lifetime, as well as the film Bombshell and Julia Gillard's The Misogyny Speech.
* Analysis of non-fiction texts such as autobiography and documentaries were generally well written.
* Short film parings worked well for students and allowed students to incorporate more details about the stylistic decisions made by the director.
* There were many successful pairings with two films but equally some that were too similar (same story line, same kind of protagonist) this did not allow for the depth required at an A Band level.
* Less successful responses chose texts that were either too similar or did not offer significant 'depth.' The more common issue was the similarity (e.g. the comparison of a film/book where the film is an adaption of the book). A number of less successful responses also chose entire TV series' without clearly defining an episode or point of comparison within the series.

The more successful responses commonly:

* unpacked and interpreted deeper ideas than simple 'face value' ideas
* chose texts which provided opportunities for comprehensive depth of analysis and evaluation of complex ideas, perspectives
* seamlessly embedded a wide range of evidence from the texts to support analysis, discussion and comparisons. The evidence was incorporated fluidly into their response rather than forced
* showed a clear understanding of a wide variety of stylistic features and the impact these features had on the text and the audience
* addressed their selected question/focus immediately and clearly within their introduction. Question design that focused on too many ideas limited the depth of discussion and were not as successful. Teacher support in the framing of the task question enabled responses to have clarity in content and analysis
* provided balanced discussion between the two texts. The more successful responses seamlessly integrated and layered the comparisons rather than working in blocks that focused on one text and then the other text in a separate paragraph. The comparison explored a deeper interpretation or understanding between the two texts
* selected texts that contained a logical connection which allowed for insightful and perceptive analysis
* demonstrated an ability to identify a broad range of language features, stylistics features and conventions within their response. A range of metalanguage to support the analytical discussion strengthened the response. Strong responses used metalanguage to deconstruct how texts were created, considered the use of the unique stylistic features of the text type and how this impacted the purpose and meaning for the audience
* demonstrated independent thought, were not formulaic or reliant on other sources for their analysis
* demonstrated consistent and comprehensive knowledge and understanding of ideas, and/or perspectives in both their chosen texts. They were able to comment on a range of stylistic features and techniques to make meaning, relating to audience and purpose was mentioned explicitly
* presented complex, mature and profound analysis of ideas, aspects of culture, and/or perspectives in both texts. In addition, these responses referenced clear evidence from each text and through a variety of techniques and stylistic features. These examples were incorporated seamlessly into the student's writing
* showcased a student's understanding of various film techniques, especially regarding setting, sound, cinematography, lighting, and focus. Several students based their choices on dystopic texts and appeared to be familiar with such a genre
* followed a paragraph structure accurately allowed for fluent and cohesive responses. Further, those responses that utilized sophisticated, precise, and concise written expression allowed for strong comparisons and arguments to be formed. Responses tended to labour a given point and included an overabundance of adjectives, adjectival clauses, and synonyms that sometimes detracted from clarity
* regarding application and the structure of their response, the most successful students mastered their chosen form in presenting their comparison. Most of these were formal essays; however, some students were successful in producing a report, interview, or podcast script
* balanced their analysis of ideas and features, linking the two texts deliberately with clear structure and cohesion in the development of their ideas
* used an appropriate form such as structured essays, reports, articles, and interviews that were analytical in nature. In some cases, the use of headings or clear topic sentences based on specific performance standards reduced the repetition of ideas and evidence by focusing the analysis on specific aspects of the texts
* selected a clear theme and texts which could be clearly discussed in terms of how the creator presented the theme
* analysed texts from different eras or very specific eras to demonstrate thorough knowledge of context
* successful students used authors’ names frequently in their paragraphs. This helped students to orient their discussion towards analysing how and why authors use language features, stylistic features and conventions in their texts
* clearly analysed the texts rather than recounting the plot
* made subtle and accurate use of diverse, eloquent, sophisticated vocabulary, including appropriate metalanguage, with a clear sense of engaging the implied reader of the investigation which clearly showed evidence of careful proofreading and editing to produce a fluent polished final comparative analysis
* more successful responses also ensured names and terminology were spelled and used correctly (e.g. accurate identification of metaphors, similes, film techniques etc. as well as accurate spelling/punctuation of titles/names etc.)
* some very successful responses focused in detail on small proportions of a larger text (e.g. key scenes or an episode vs the exploration of an entire feature film/series), allowing students to present detail in their analysis
* used linking sentences to create continuity across points. This allowed for balanced and cohesive comparison. This also supported evidence to be purposefully included within the response
* contained a clear line of argument, providing a broad range of examples to support this reflected a more insightful response. When providing those examples, central strategies each author used were the main focus, with analysis of discrete techniques a supporting element rather than the driving force

The less successful responses commonly:

* tended to labour a given point and included an overabundance of adjectives, adjectival clauses, and synonyms that sometimes detracted from clarity
* did not actively compare the two texts or made superficial connections between the text texts
* only compared language features at a basic level rather than analysing the thematic connections between the two texts
* selected texts that did not allow for sufficient analysis or discussion
* contained basic mistakes throughout such as getting the author's last name incorrect (Attwood instead of Atwood, or referring to directors or authors by their first name not their family name), incorrect spelling of the title of the text, etc
* were formulaic and read like the teacher had provided too much scaffolding
* contained examples of poor diction: words that might sound ‘fancy’ but do not convey the meaning intended
* were too broad and were not specific
* demonstrated a basic or minimal understanding of the ideas, issues and perspectives conveyed by authors
* demonstrated a limited ability to name stylistic features, language features, and conventions in a given text type
* contained limited understanding about how some of the stylistic decisions employed by the creator impacted the audience and assisted in the delivery of purpose and context. At times, language and stylistic features were listed rather than analysed, deconstructed and embedded within the response
* obligated the whole class either to analyse the same text(s) or to base their text choice on the same theme or to discuss the same text features
* chose to focus on aspects of the texts that were too similar, for example, comparing overly similar and or repetitive ideas and or language features, especially in comparisons involving, entire series of tv shows, two versions of the same text, or texts with ambiguous plotlines and philosophical complexity. This often led to plot driven explanations rather than thematic understanding and analysis of specific textual features that involve both similarities and differences (An3)
* chose texts which did not provide enough detail and content to analyse. Texts with thematically rich ideas helped students to write perceptive and insightful comparisons
* wrote with an unclear structure which led to ambiguity in terms of the intended text type students were using to show evidence of their learning, often lacking topic sentences that were explicit in detailing the focus of their paragraphs
* demonstrated a lack of understanding or misunderstanding of techniques
* separated the discussion of the texts into paragraphs rather than fluently integrating discussion
* did not include enough specific evidence which resulted in vague and unsubstantiated responses that were general in nature
* included images and pictures as evidence of scenes or techniques
* focused on evaluating the success of an author's work (i.e. "Rosalie Ham wrote an exceptional novel", as well as an emphasis on judging which text was better than the other in their analysis)
* recounted plot without analysis of ideas, perspectives, conventions, appeal to audience
* listed and provided definitions of stylistic conventions and language techniques rather than providing evidence, analysing or comparing them with the other text
* when analysing TV shows, tried to address a whole series rather than a more manageable episode — this often led to excessive contextual information and plot recount rather than analysis.