2020 Cross Disciplinary 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 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.

Students who achieved in the higher grades clearly demonstrated an understanding of the learning interest, incorporating specific discipline knowledge. Teachers should highlight the specific disciplines being assessed on each task sheet which will assist student’s understanding.

If the capabilities are being assessed (KU3) these should be clearly identified on the task sheet. It is important to highlight the capabilities that are going to be addressed in the Learning and Assessment Plan as not all are required to be assessed. This will make it easier for students to achieve higher grades instead of reflecting on all the capabilities.

School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Commentary

A commentary should illustrate and evaluate the ways in which the selected disciplines (or aspects of a discipline), contribute to the solution of one or more contemporary problems or issues.

A commentary should be a maximum of 1000 words if written or a maximum of 6 minutes for an oral presentation, or the equivalent in multimodal form. Where more than one commentary is undertaken for a 20-credit subject, students may focus on different aspects of a problem or issue, or different problems or issues.

The more successful responses commonly:

* provided students with well-designed assessment tasks that supported students to clearly address the assessment design criteria
* provided a small number of open-ended questions that allowed students to provide extended responses to demonstrate in-depth analysis and problem-solving skills
* gave clear direction and guidance on how to meet the performance standards
* clearly stated the capabilities to be assessed (if assessing KU3) which enabled students to directly link those capabilities to their learning interest
* encouraged the use of a range of evidence including images, photos, and diagrams, to support evaluation and conclusions.

The less successful responses commonly:

* limited the selection of disciplines available to students
* were overly scaffolded (or under scaffolded) responses which restricted students’ opportunities for detailed and in-depth analysis and evaluation, and instead led students to provide simplistic or one-dimensional answers
* task design did not ask for specific evidence, or specifically allocate time within the task, to develop capabilities
* did not make full use of the word-limit / time-limit to demonstrate the extent of their learning
* provided extensive information, including charts, graphs and other data without analysis and evaluation.

Assessment Type 2: Group Project

This assessment type is designed to assess each student’s ability to work collaboratively to plan, organise and implement a group project that focuses on a learning aspect of the content. Students must be given the opportunity to collaborate in the decision making process and to share responsibilities as they respond to the project.

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated collaboration skills in a range of situations and reflected detailed and in-depth learning in relation to the learning interest
* clearly identified the roles and responsibilities of each student
* applied their knowledge and understanding to solve problems and to develop further questions in relation to the relevant disciplines
* clearly identified the group outcome and presented the applied knowledge including the application of analysis and evaluation.

The less successful responses commonly:

* provided a recount of the activities the group undertook
* lacked identification of the capabilities that were to be assessed in the reflection
* did not have the opportunity to reflect on their contributions of the task
* lacked sufficient depth of analysis, reflection and evaluation in their reflection.

Student samples submitted for moderation should include all pieces of work for all tasks in an assessment type.

Assessment Type 3: Presentation and Discussion

The presentation and discussion combined should be a maximum of 15 minutes. The presentation should be a maximum of 7 minutes.

The more successful responses commonly:

* presented their learning through an oral and multimodal presentation
* involved teacher designing discussion questions which provided students with opportunities to demonstrate a range of evidence of learning, against each of the criteria
* included an accurate transcript of the presentation and discussion
* provided the students with time to reflect rather than asking students questions spontaneously straight after the presentation.

The less successful responses commonly:

* gave only a recount of information gathered
* were well below the maximum of 7 minutes for the presentation, and well below the maximum of 15 minutes total for both parts. This did not allow adequate time to explore and demonstrate analysis and evaluation in depth and detail.

External Assessment

Assessment Type 4: Analysis

This assessment type requires analysis tasks to be completed in 60 minutes under supervision.

The more successful responses commonly:

* had open ended questions which encouraged students to provide detailed and in-depth analysis of the complexity of the issue and/or information
* had a clear understanding of the learning interest and how key features of the chosen disciplines can be applied to provide solutions
* demonstrated a clear understanding of the learning interest, applied creative thinking and provided reasoned conclusions or solutions to a problem
* referenced and analysed data to support their argument and developed solutions to answer an extended response
* provided opportunities for students to include reflection and evaluation of their own learning in relation to the learning interest
* addressed the performance standards thoroughly through the application of specific discipline knowledge to the learning interest
* provided consistent application of knowledge that enabled students to analyse content and make reasoned recommendations (problem solving).

The less successful responses commonly:

* had closed questions which limited the response and did not allow students to explore the concept in depth and breadth
* did not have questions that allowed students to address all the specific features
* were too scaffolded and did not allow for students to form their own conjectures
* a recall of information that didn’t extend the knowledge and understanding required in the task
* provided an application of discipline knowledge that was inconsistent, or the student failed to make recommendation that elaborated on (problem solving) the learning interest.