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

Overview

This 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. 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.

Students who are enrolled in another SACE subject and are considering transferring to Community Studies may be better served by enrolling in Community Connections or alternatively Industry Connections (if there is an Industry/Work focus), which replaced Community Studies B in 2022.

Community and Industry Connections provides students with greater opportunities to gain credit for completed assessment tasks in their initial SACE subject. Subject assessment advice for Community Connections has been published separately to this document. If the focus is on a specific industry, may be better served to enrol in Industry Connections.

Students undertaking VET certification through Community Studies must not include VET competencies that are intended to be used to attract SACE credits through recognition.

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.

Continuing into 2025, 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 (e.g. up to 1200 words for AT2).

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.

The Subject Renewal program has introduced changes for many subjects in 2025; these changes 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:

* thoroughly checking that all grades entered in school online are correct
* ensuring the uploaded tasks are legible, all facing up (and all the same way), removing blank pages, and ensuring multimodal folios are submitted in a format accessible during moderation
* ensuring the uploaded responses include section headings such as: Planning and Organisation, Contract, Record of Evidence, Community Activity, Presentation and Feedback from Expert
* ensuring the uploaded responses have pages the same size and in colour so teacher marking, and comments are clear.

Assessment Type 1: Contract of Work

For this assessment type, students develop a contract of work that shows evidence of how they plan and organise their chosen community activity. In addition, students compile a folio of evidence that documents the progress of their activities as well as their learning. This should also include the development of their Literacy and Numeracy skills, and at least one other capability as they undertake all parts of the contract. This year the capabilities ranged from the 7 which had previously been used to including the 5 new SACE capabilities. Students also present their community activity to an appropriate community audience and provide evidence of this at the conclusion of their community activity. This year we saw a range of different contracts, including PowerPoint and oral contracts of work.

Assessment Design Criteria

* Planning and organisation
* Communication and interaction
* Fulfilment of contract of work
* Reflection.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* ensuring the student contract is in the right mode for that student. For example not always written. Allowing the student a choice in their contract to ensure it is clear, challenging, and achievable in the time frame, providing opportunities for growth and assisting the student to adjust their plans as they respond to challenges and opportunities
* scheduling mid-task checkpoints and guided conversations to assist student to reflect on the progress of their developing knowledge, skills, capabilities, goals, and overall learning
* making astute decisions about the balance of assessment criteria applied across the contract of work, ensuring the full range of criteria are matched to appropriate material and covered across the subject activities
* avoiding scaffolding that limits students’ agency demonstrated in student responses that are individually tailored to their activities.

The more successful responses commonly:

* conducted community activities that allowed students to develop relevant skills and knowledge in topics about which they were passionate
* clearly discussed what they planned to do and how they were going to implement this plan, discussing strategies to be used and how this would help to achieve their goals
* broke down the activity into manageable steps, allocating an appropriate amount of time for each, using the checklist to monitor the progress of the community activity
* clearly articulated any changes to their contract where relevant and how these changes improved or assisted their learning
* specified the expected outcome of their Community Studies project in their contract and provided detailed visible evidence of this outcome in the folio
* provided a clear explanation of their choice for focussing on a particular capability, how this related to their learning and development of skills in the community activity
* provided specific elaboration regarding the development of their literacy and numeracy skills including progress evidence in their reflections
* covered literacy effectively by explicitly discussing their understanding of new terminology; discussing how the language in text types such as brochures may vary to appeal to a target audience; or clearly articulating how research sources helped them to develop knowledge, skills, or their capability to complete their community activity
* covered numeracy effectively by including annotated budget sheets; demonstrating the development of spatial awareness in ways such as including planning sheets for setting up an event; or including evidence of planning plays in sport or showing evidence of blocking the stage for a play
* clearly indicated previous knowledge and skills and how this could be used to further develop their interests and relevance to future pathways
* utilising and responding to feedback from sources in addition to their mentor, such as classmates and members of the wider community. These responses provided clear evidence of this in their folio
* had ongoing reflection on decisions made in achieving steps in their contract of work, including the positives and negatives of decisions made and how they learnt at each step to develop knowledge, skills, and their chosen capability
* included copies of their actions and strategies as a checklist for different stages in their folio of evidence. Annotated copies of these allowed students to reflect and report on their progress
* provided clear evidence of their presentation on the outcome of the community activity through planning and reflection on feedback provided. This included drafts of the presentation, photos of evidence, well labelled multimodal formats, feedback forms from the audience and a reflection on the success of the presentation and feedback received
* provided different ways to show the contract instead of the template (for example, recordings of oral presentations, PowerPoints etc)
* made connections between student thoughts, activities, and learning.

The less successful responses commonly:

* submitted unrelated tasks from a previous subject conversion with no connection to community studies contract goals and purpose
* were unable to clearly articulate student’s own individual contribution equating to 60 hours of work for a 10-credit subject and 120 hours for a 20-credit subject
* relied on over-scaffolded tasks or activities, limiting students’ independent voice in relation to their progress
* did not provide authentic visible evidence of the outcome presentation, submitting only the contract
* allocated large amounts of time for the community activity without breaking it down into smaller more manageable parts (e.g. 100 hours to build a product)
* provided no ongoing record of time spent or development of skills
* provided evidence that did not relate to community activity or skills developed
* submitted a brief folio of evidence, or none at all, therefore not documenting the ongoing progress or completion of their community activity
* recounted their experience with limited reflection and superficial references to capabilities
* provided limited evidence of their presentation
* omitted ongoing feedback or was limited to a feedback form at the end of the activity
* provided limited evidence of community contact
* presented research without references making it difficult to tell how the student had used it. For example, including recipes from the internet without annotations of own development or provided limited evidence of individual contributions when students worked collaboratively in groups

# External Assessment

Assessment Type 2: Reflection

1. For this assessment type, students review and evaluate the development of their knowledge and skills and reflect on the value of the community activity to themselves and others.
2. For the external component, only the reflection needs to be uploaded. The community activity evidence itself is not required. The Reflection is uploaded and submitted online. The Reflection is done in two parts, part 1 is the summary which summarises the community activity, and the other is the reflection on the completion of the contract of work and the community activity.

Assessment Design Criteria

* Reflection R2 and R3

The more successful responses commonly:

* used the 200-word summary for the description of the activity and then directly referenced the criteria utilising the remaining 1000 words to address R2 and R3
* demonstrated evidence that students were taking practical action in their local community, seeking feedback from experts in their community, and reflecting on the development of their new knowledge and skills
* considered their previous knowledge skills and understanding and used this to reflect on how they had further developed each of these aspects
* linked challenges and opportunities to R2 and R3
* reflected on the value of their activity to both themselves and the community and explored how new knowledge and understanding may be of use in the future
* specifically discussed the development of their Literacy, Numeracy, and their chosen capability, with examples
* clearly identified the connection of the project to others in the community
* had a clear project that had authentic value for themselves and others
* used multimodal evidence through the inclusion of videos and images
* discussed the capability directly and gave solid, clear substantiated evidence to prove progress
* clearly articulated their learning and links to future pathways and how they developed their skills
* showed insight into their learning and made judgments about the quality of that learning. Showed insight into their own development
* made clear references to community activity value:
  + to the student and others.
  + indicated capabilities and student improvement.
* showed in-depth understanding of the chosen topic
* engaged in community research and activity
* provided detailed analysis of information and research results

The less successful responses commonly:

* recounted their activity rather than reflecting
* limited student voice due to over scaffolding in multimodal reflections in the discussion with teacher. Such responses were often formulaic or resulted in recount
* submitted a limited multimodal folio containing only a very short discussion with a teacher, therefore limiting ongoing reflection and the ability to provide evidence of ongoing skill/capability development or community interaction
* repeated the information from the 200-word summary in their 1000-word reflection. This limited the student’s opportunity in demonstrating a range of aspects in their reflection
* addressed R1 unnecessarily, which is not addressed in AT2: Reflection
* relied on responding to a series of questions that limited their responses and demonstration of R2 and R3
* made reference to Literacy, Numeracy and one other capability but did not explore the development of these capabilities in carrying out their community activity. This was also evident when they referred to knowledge and skills but not the development of new knowledge and skills
* did not make their contribution to the community activity clear when undertaking a group activity
* indicated that the student was not accessing an expert from the community which limited their capacity to reflect upon their actions regarding inviting and responding to feedback
* referred to an existing school program which limited a student’s ability to reflect on how the student negotiated, planned, and made decisions about an individual community activity
* reflected on the completion of a VET program or work placement rather than the development of a community activity
* did not include any evidence of observations of development of Literacy and Numeracy, and many with scant reference to at least one other capability
* had weak connections to other people and only focussed on how the community activity related to the student only
* had converted from a subject and would have fit better with a Community Connections instead

General

1. During 2024, there were no COVID subject adjustments to the assessment task types or number of assessments in Community Studies. Advice was issued instead about using the flexibilities already existing in this subject to adjust the nature, scope, and depth of the community contract activity and to interpret ‘community contacts’ and ‘community audience’ in the broadest possible form.
2. The general standard of work in SACE Community Studies has been impressive, with many students achieving higher quality outcomes than in previous years, particularly in the B and A grade ranges. Encouraging students to integrate part-time work experiences and focus on learning outcomes rather than task completion can enhance their educational journey. Ensuring correct subject categorisation and appropriate formatting, such as using a 10-point font size or larger, is also recommended. Overall, the shift towards diverse assessment methods, including non-written formats, has been a positive development.