# Government of South Australia LogoSACE Board Logo2024 English 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.

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:

* ensuring the PSR matches the LAP, if a criteria is not being assessed in the assessment type, leave it blank on the relevant PSR
* ensuring the task sheets include the criteria for assessment, and that this matches the LAP
* 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- it is difficult to confirm results for an oral presentation if there is no recording or transcript- teacher notes on presentation are not sufficient
* 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. Please check the 2025 Subject Outline to see changes to the requirements of this assessment type.

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 could be addressed in either AT1 or AT2 if a comparison of texts is a requirement of the assessment task.
* 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. Ensuring text choices are rich in language and stylistic features provided good scope for analysis
* developing tasks which allow students to meet the performance standards at the highest level:
* by providing three distinct text types for students to study across the AT1 pieces. If allowing for student agency and choice, ensure you are not giving them options where they end up doing multiple tasks on film e.g. film study, then a comparison where they can choose to compare a film with a free choice text, and the students choose another film
* by having a clear focus for students’ analysis in the task, rather than a broad “write a response to” or “analyse this text”. Write a well worded task that pushes them to analyse with depth.
* prompting students to explain how and why different devices/techniques were used, and their impact resulting in stronger analysis
* ensuring all relevant performance standards were met if using subject adjustments to remove a task.

The more successful responses commonly:

* embedded and integrated short pithy quotes for evidence
* provided strong evidence and clearly substantiated interpretations of the text
* clearly organised their ideas and evidence; more sophisticated pieces grouped and synthesized analysis so that content was presented thematically with clear topic sentences rather than a list of analysis in the order things happened
* 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
* discussed language features, stylistic features, and conventions throughout the whole piece, rather than only in one body paragraph/section
* analysed features against the core concepts of audience, purpose, and context demonstrating a clear understanding of how these work together to shape texts
* 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'
* allowed the innovative use of ICT skills
* chose texts that clearly focused on a cultural aspect to allow An1 to be addressed specifically
* 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 that allowed for deep analysis
* 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
* presented comparative pieces that 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
* lacked supporting evidence from the text(s)
* were over-scaffolded with overt similarities across samples including the same evidence used in responses and similar structure or content
* were structurally incoherent with poorly sequenced discussion
* presented analysis in a chronological list with no real thesis or focus for paragraphs or the whole piece
* structured analysis by technique rather than idea, limiting complex exploration of how techniques are used in combination to create an effect or explore an idea
* 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, or a creative response to the text, 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
* discussed the genre or form in generalised terms, did not clearly explore the features of the focus text
* were weak in the use of metalanguage and identification of techniques, particularly in responses to visual texts; often exploring the same techniques in each paragraph
* provided 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
* devoted the final paragraph of the task to the analysis of stylistic features, but this tended to limit 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/could not identify the techniques employed to create the characterisation
* did not identify or address the audience in their discussion and analysis; gave little or no analysis of the impact of ideas or techniques on the audience
* lacked evidence of analysis regarding the way an audience has 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)
* used AI generated audio rather than the student speaking
* 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.
* wrote with short paragraphs and simplistic vocabulary and/or sentence structure
* contained errors in expression or generally lacked fluency
* were well over or well under the word limit.

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. Please check the 2025 Subject Outline to see changes to the requirements of this assessment type.

Note: Students have the option of writing about one or multiple creative texts in their writer’s statement. It is not compulsory to compare the texts created by students.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* asking students to do things that are outside of the standard narrative/exposition type tasks. 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. This was a good opportunity for the students who did not write well, 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
* assessing only one writer’s statement in AT2 rather than including “writer’s statement” elements as part of the three creating texts activities (e.g. write a 700 word narrative with a 300 word writer’s statement- this eats into students’ word count on the creative pieces and is not part of their separate writer’s statement assignment).

*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)
* chose interesting and/or unique writing topics
* 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, and this looked different across the pieces (rather than repeating the same techniques across the assessment type)
* 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 inform the audience 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 e.g. if AN3 was being assessed it was covered in the statement
* presented writer’s statements that explained and justified language features, stylistic features, and conventions by looking at how these suited the purpose and audience, as well as exploring 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 well structured 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
* used clear evidence to support their analysis in the writer’s statement
* demonstrated sound engagement on the part of the student due to the choice associated with the task
* carefully edited their work to ensure highly accurate 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
* produced texts that had a very similar purpose which limited the range of literary devices employed (e.g. a persuasive TED talk, an advertising campaign, an opinion piece which all used persuasive devices even if the form and audience varied)
* possessed a singular voice throughout their writing
* created all pieces for a similar audience
* 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 intention/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 the stylistic decisions they did
* lacked sophistication and employed a limited range of stylistic features and conventions for the text type they were creating (there was a lot of feedback on narratives which contained a limited number of techniques, limiting their sophistication, originality, and overall result)
* created texts that limited opportunities such as a poster with only a couple of words, or a video clip for someone else’s song or a piece of music with no words, as this does not allow students to show enough understanding of language
* were formatted responses across classes that did not allow for independent thinking or 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 (e.g. the incorrect format for dialogue in a narrative, providing a text only version of an article rather than formatting for the magazine, blog, newspaper it was intended to be)
* produced recordings with distracting mise en scenes; interrupted by yawning, forgetting lines, speaking without any script or structure, casual ensemble, lack of awareness of where it is being filmed and protective practices (e.g. bedrooms)
* relied heavily on notes in oral presentations and did not engage the audience or show an understanding of the textual conventions (e.g. reading notes word for work in a TED Talk style presentation)
* clearly spent a great deal of time on 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. A number of students wrote their writer’s statement as a journal entry, which tended to exacerbate the issue of recounting what they did, rather than analysis and justification
* spoke too generally about their choices in the writer’s statement without providing examples or awareness of intended audience
* struggled with the analysis of their own texts and they were not written with a clear purpose, audience, or context in mind
* revealed little or no 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
* were poorly drafted, containing errors in sentence structure (such as run on sentences, comma splice errors, fragments, adjective order, or verb conjugation), spelling, and vocabulary errors
* were well over the word limit.

# External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Investigation

Within this assessment type, students are required to complete a written comparative analysis of two texts and evaluate how the language features, stylistic features and conventions in these texts are used to represent ideas, perspectives, and/or aspects of culture, and to influence audiences.

The comparative analysis should be a maximum of 2000 words.

All specific features of the assessment design criteria for this subject are assessed in this assessment type.

General

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* ensuring that students adhere to the word count. Students who write well under the word count struggle to provide enough depth and insight to meet all the specific features of the assessment design criteria. Students who write over the word limit disadvantage themselves by having the markers not read all the work
* assisting students to choose appropriate texts that have well aligned themes, are rich in language and stylistic features, but offer significant differences in these features to enable detailed comparative discussion
* assisting students to develop an essay question that includes a comparative element, a sense of the role of the author, and an element of tension to enable in depth exploration of the texts.

The more successful responses commonly:

* included well-structured introductions that foregrounded the central thesis and argument of the essay
* included well considered paragraphs that started with clear topic sentences and were structured cohesively with logical transition
* applied TEEL (Topic sentence, Evidence, Explanation, Link) format to ensure for fluent and cohesive discussion
* involved final paragraphs that avoided repetition and instead took a ‘big picture’ approach to the question, finalised the argument and drew convincing conclusions that supported the overall thesis of the essay
* explored the features of the text types being analysed and drew attention to the contrast between stylistic features when the text types differed
* provided evidence that was fluently embedded into the line of reasoning so that quotations, for example, were naturally incorporated into sentences
* moved fluidly and seamlessly between texts when making comparisons and demonstrated a clear focus on both similarities and differences between the texts
* were polished responses in which students had:
  + checked spelling, particularly of key words such as authors’ names and terms central to the metalanguage being used
  + appropriately used punctuation, particularly of problematic elements such as apostrophes, colons and semi colons and the delineation of titles
  + applied the correct techniques of quoting from texts
  + carefully checked the accuracy of vocabulary choices, particularly in ensuring the correct use of verbs
  + been careful in the use of synonyms, realising that words have particular nuances and choosing an uncommon or unfamiliar word might inadvertently result in using it out of context.
* compared different text types such as film with a novel, or poetry with a film, enabling richer comparative discussion pertaining to the distinct technical and stylistic choices employed to develop thematic concepts
* integrated contextual information rather than providing a separate context paragraph.

The less successful responses commonly:

* commonly had a question that was either too general or which limited the scope of their responses or did not have a comparative stem
* tended to provide generalised statements about themes or characters providing little to no depth in engagement with the texts
* did not have a structured argument and were, instead a collection of observation about texts that lacked a holistic line of reasoning
* were a recount of events, or descriptions of characters, rather than an analysis of thematic concerns and stylistic features
* listed or labelled stylistic features without analysis of the way in which these features were used to reinforce /present ideas or provisions of examples that were not clearly connected to the device, or explanations about the effect of the feature that were illogical
* were unbalanced, preferencing one text over the other
* included texts that were too similar in style and limited the scope for insightful comparative analysis
* struggled with comparative analysis. Students often used words like “similarly” or “unlike” without clearly articulating what was being compared between the two texts, resulting in superficial or underdeveloped responses
* confused the terms’ “themes” and “ideas”
* relied on simple observations of film techniques. Students stated “close up shots show emotions” without examining how this technique was used to communicate deeper meaning or engage the audience
* disguised the lack of insightful analysis through well executed written expression.