# Government of South Australia LogoSACE Board Logo2024 Women’s Studies Subject Assessment Advice

Overview

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. 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.

The Subject Renewal program has introduced changes for many subjects in 2025, and these 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 consistency and clear labelling between LAP, task sheets and student evidence
* ensuring the uploaded responses have font size minimum ten, at least 1.15 spacing and word count included.

Assessment Type 1: Text Analysis

For this assessment type, students undertake one or two text analysis tasks, focusing on gender bias and the representation of gender in one or more texts, including cultural texts.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* ensuring the text/s chosen will allow the student to explore the diversity of women’s experience
* allowing students to choose their own text/s, as well as providing shared text/s
* only assessing three or four criteria.

The more successful responses commonly:

* engaged with a diverse range of texts, or a single text with substantial depth, to facilitate a nuanced analysis of both the varied and shared experiences of women, covering the diversity required, including intersectionality
* critically examined specific sections of the text/s, identifying, and analysing instances of bias, stereotypes, or inequitable treatment of women
* demonstrated a sophisticated command of gender analysis terminology, seamlessly integrating both primary and secondary textual evidence into a cohesive and insightful critique.

The less successful responses commonly:

* provided a limited exploration of the diversity inherent in women’s experiences, lacking depth or breadth
* focused on recounting the content of the texts rather than engaging in critical analysis through a gendered perspective
* provided an overly simplistic analysis, relying heavily on summaries, and overlooking women outside the standard white, middle-class trope
* relied on colloquial language, varied formality in expression, or used generalised terms to discuss ideas.

General Advice: The choice of text/s chosen influenced the ability for the student to meet the assessment criteria.

Assessment Type 2: Essay

For this assessment type students undertake one persuasive essay exploring a chosen issue.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* ensuring the question allows for students to communicate analytically and persuasively.

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* designed questions that invited students to respond persuasively, encouraging critical engagement with themes central to women’s studies, such as power dynamics, intersectionality, and gender relations
* drew upon a diverse range of sources, including those that showed women's voices and perspectives, all of which were appropriately cited and reflected a feminist analytical framework
* structured their essay with clarity and purpose, ensuring each paragraph maintained a strong focus on key women’s studies concepts, fostering a cohesive and insightful, persuasive exploration of the topic.

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* demonstrated minimal engagement with sources, with limited acknowledgment or integration into the discussion
* presented the response in a narrative format rather than adopting a persuasive essay style, lacking a critical, perspective
* relied heavily on the experience of an individual woman to analyse, often including lengthy explanations or recounts of their experience
* addressed questions that lacked a clear gender focus, resulting in an analysis that did not align with the assessment criteria of Women's Studies.

Assessment Type 3: Folio

For this assessment type students undertake three gender analysis assessments.

Teachers can elicit more successful responses by:

* covering three different issues and presenting work in different formats/ mediums.

The more successful responses commonly:

* explored a wide range of issues covering various time periods, contexts, and cultures, effectively addressing three different areas of focus
* used various mediums to present their knowledge, including multimedia presentations, blogs, interviews, and articles, showcasing a dynamic and creative approach to exploring, analysing, and communicating women’s issues
* skilfully incorporated images or video into the analysis, enriching the examination of gender construction and the representation of women by providing visual evidence and critique
* used a diverse array of sources to support a thorough and in-depth investigation, demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

The less successful responses commonly:

* focused on description rather than critical analysis when addressing the diversity of women’s experiences or issues
* repeated similar issues across the three tasks, limiting the breadth and depth of exploration
* included tasks that required students to address criteria outside the scope of Women’s Studies. For example, the creation of artistic pieces, offering a broader perspective but deviating from the primary analytical focus of Women’s Studies.

# External Assessment

Assessment Type 4: Issues Analysis

Students undertake one issues analysis. The following specific features of the assessment design criteria for the subject are assessed in the issues analysis task:

* Knowledge and understanding — KU1
* Gender analysis — GA1 and GA2
* Investigation and evaluation — IE1
* Communication — C1, C2, and C3.

Generally, most students demonstrated a sound understanding of gender and its impact on individuals and on specific groups.

Teachers can elicit more successful student responses by:

* encouraging student use of their own voice and ensuring quotes and references effectively support gender analysis. While some demonstrated A level investigation, gender analysis was often in the C range. Students should balance these elements more effectively.

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated an understanding of gender and intersectionality in a personal sense and as an attribute that shapes a sense of identity, and in a political sense, as a pervasive social construction that can facilitate or hinder social relationships and access to institutions
* had a question that promoted discussions on the construction of gender and its connection to gender bias. For example, students effectively explored how the issue contributed to the disempowerment of women, contrasting this with its impact on men or examining the role men played
* had a clear, specific, and focused inquiry question, such as *“What barriers do women face in leadership within the Australian military?”* or *“How does the Japanese host industry exploit women, and what cultural factors contribute to this?”* A narrower topic allowed students to focus on key issues and answer the question more effectively
* explored how the issue affected or disempowered multiple groups of women across different times, cultures, and societies, enabling deeper, more nuanced analysis. These responses demonstrated comprehensive investigation and effectively connected societal structures to the perpetuation of gender inequalities across diverse contexts, supported by well-referenced evidence
* demonstrated extensive research and reading, thoroughly exploring a range of underlying causes and outcomes of gender inequality. These responses showed a sophisticated understanding of the construction of gender and acknowledged multiple perspectives on the issue, often engaging in thoughtful discussion beyond surface-level analysis.

The less successful responses commonly:

* discussed women’s issues without effectively analysing how these issues connect to broader gender relations or underlying gender biases. In some cases, their responses resembled health investigations rather than being framed through a critical gender lens. Consequently, their analysis lacked depth in exploring how power dynamics and societal expectations shape the experiences of women in relation to men. When selecting a health-related issue, students must ensure the discussion does not disproportionately focus on health or medical aspects at the expense of addressing gender biases and their broader implications
* had topics that were too broad and lacked specificity, with vague questions or themes such as "women in sport" or "the gender pay gap." These catch-all topics can make it difficult to focus the analysis and delve into the nuances of gender-related issues
* extensively addressed methods of effecting change and strategies for empowerment, even though these topics are not assessed in this assessment type.

Overall, a wide range of issues were explored. Most investigations were well-referenced, and the more successful ones were highly persuasive, demonstrating a strong command of gender analysis language.

General

In all assessment types, some students focused on narrating and describing the gender-related issues associated with their chosen topics, rather than providing a thorough analysis.

As observed in previous years, students faced challenges in evaluating strategies for empowerment, often not assessing the effectiveness of these strategies.

There was a tendency to discuss issues predominantly from a US perspective, particularly in relation to Women of Colour (WOC). There was limited mention of Indigenous Australian women or other women of colour within the Australian context.

It is important to note that students can achieve an A band grade without necessarily meeting the maximum word limit.

Some schools enacted subject adjustments with mixed results. More successful in the text analysis than the folio.

When an assessment type includes multiple tasks, the evidence is considered holistically across all tasks and graded accordingly, rather than assigning a percentage to each individual task.

Overall, the standard of work across the assessment types was high, with a broad range of issues explored.