

Food and Hospitality

2015 Chief Assessor’s Report

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## Overview

Chief Assessors’ reports give 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, the quality of student performance, and any relevant statistical information.

In 2015, a total of 2124 students representing 181 classes submitted work for the 20‑credit subject in Food and Hospitality. A small number completed the 10-credit subject.

Overall, moderators were pleased to note that teachers had structured tasks to cater for the wide variety of student needs and learning styles. Student evidence was mostly written, with a few schools presenting oral evidence or multimodal evidence. Feedback to students was generally comprehensive and supportive, guiding them to achieve successful outcomes. Teachers are encouraged to reduce the number of specific features of the assessment design criteria within tasks and on their learning and assessment plan (LAP) to provide better opportunities for students to address tasks in greater depth and meet the performance standards at a higher level.

All teachers will need to take into account the minor changes for the Food and Hospitality subject outline for 2016, available on the SACE website. These changes have been made to strengthen and support the learning requirements and the areas of study. In the section on school assessment, minor changes have been made to strengthen understanding in Assessment Type 1, Assessment Type 2, and Assessment Type 3. Teachers will need to adjust the wording in their task sheets to incorporate the changes. The rest of this report is based on the 2015 subject outline.

## School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Practical Activity

Research Task (Investigation and Critical Analysis)

It was pleasing to see an interesting range of contemporary trends presented in task design this year. The research component is an important aspect of the practical activity, as it provides students with an opportunity to investigate a contemporary trend or issue using both primary and secondary resources, and practise a formal style of writing. (Teachers should review their task design, in line with the changes for 2016, to ensure that they meet the requirements of the 2016 subject outline, using selected specific features from the investigation and critical analysis assessment design criterion.)

The research task should be structured to allow for critical analysis of contemporary trends. This is best achieved via a question or statement which allows students to analyse an issue in depth. Some tasks limited opportunities for success due to being too general, or having, in some cases, too many questions. On occasions students were asked to develop an opinion (which is outside the current subject outline guidelines). Some tasks limited students if they were located where opportunities to investigate issues such as multiculturalism or fine dining were not accessible in the local community. There was evidence of excellent investigation and critical analysis tasks suited to local communities. These provided opportunities for students to research in depth and demonstrate a critical analysis of the issue or trend.

Successful tasks for students reflected a clear, contemporary issue linked to the food and hospitality industry, providing students with opportunities to display higher-order thinking skills, as well as unlimited possibilities to investigate their issue in depth. At the higher end, tasks demonstrated perception and strong analysis. It was pleasing to note that teachers in country and remote areas often used local resources to advantage and focused their task on local seasonal foods, while schools located in populated areas responded to local hospitality trends.

Student responses were generally of a high standard when they were provided with a clear focus question. Where research tasks clearly identified an area of study and were scaffolded with a well-defined focus on a contemporary issue related to the food and hospitality industry, students had an opportunity to investigate in depth and show critical analysis. However, some students experienced difficulty responding to the task within the 500-word limit.

Relevant primary and secondary research that was well considered in its presentation (with quotes, graphs, tables, etc.) supported assessment decisions at the higher levels of the performance standards for investigation and critical analysis.

The Internet was heavily relied on for sources of information, often with little relevance to the local setting. Students should be encouraged to make their voice clear in their research and use selected quotes, data, and statistics to ably satisfy specific feature ICA3 of the assessment design criteria. Students are encouraged to use a balance of suitable primary and secondary sources of information.

Overall, improvement was noted in referencing for both primary and secondary sources. Teachers should continue to support students to use appropriate referencing systems and refer to current referencing guidelines on the SACE website.

Action Plan (Problem-solving)

It was pleasing to see action plans of a high standard. Teachers who based their assessment tasks on issues related to the selected area of study enabled students to meet the higher levels of achievement in the area of problem-solving. Well-constructed action plans clearly reflected the link between the area of study and the problem identified. Where this did not occur, students often struggled to identify issues appropriate to the task, and follow with an informed decision leading to a suitable practical activity.

It is important that teachers address the problem-solving assessment design criterion for the action plan, rather than trying to combine it with specific features from the investigation and critical analysis assessment design criterion. Limiting the number of specific features for assessment will often provide students with opportunities to achieve higher outcomes against the performance standards.

When teachers structured tasks to address the area of study and were astute in their selection of specific features of the assessment design criterion for problem-solving, they provided students with a clear structure and an opportunity to achieve higher outcomes against the performance standards. It is essential that teachers design tasks focused on contemporary food and hospitality trends, and make a clear link between the focus in the action plan and the practical application.

Most students could identify factors effectively when the task was well constructed, although many generic factors were still evident which did not address the context of Food and Hospitality or the area of study. Higher-achieving students were discerning in their choice of factors, and were able to link them strongly to the area of study, enabling them to have a clear understanding of the context. When this occurred, students were able to make clear, relevant decisions, often linked to regional foods and their local community.

Many students ably identified implementation strategies. Evidence was often presented in dot points, allowing students to address the requirements for their practical and justification in greater depth — resulting in achievement at a higher level. Teachers should assist students to ensure that the implementation strategies relate clearly to the practical and the decisions made.

Practical Application

All components of the task need to be clear and transparent, in order that students understand requirements and can make the best use of their time to achieve success. The practical activity should make clear links with the research (in the research task) or decisions contained in the action plan.

Moderators were impressed with the improved standard in the practical tasks presented this year; however, some practical activities lacked the depth and rigour expected for Stage 2.

Where teachers had included ‘evidence of practical’ in the task design, students were supported to provide evidence of their practical work. It was pleasing to see students submitting comprehensive practical evidence (annotated visual evidence, and written evidence against the assessment design criteria). When this was available, grades awarded for the practical application were able to be confirmed. It is essential that evidence is addressed within the task design.

Teacher mark sheets for the practical application should be used in conjunction with student evidence to confirm grades. All evidence used to assess the practical should directly reference the performance standards.

Students provided a range of evidence to support their practical in areas of technology and application of safe food handling and, to a lesser extent, evidence of techniques and quality control in preparing and serving food. Students who presented thorough and thoughtful evidence of the practical application were then able to articulate the processes and outcomes in the evaluation with ease.

The use of technology in the practical application should link with current technology in food preparation. Other types of technology, such as smart phones, should not form the basis of technology in a practical task. Teachers are encouraged to provide students with performance standards, or shading the specific features of the assessment design criteria being used, which supports students to understand their assessment levels. Practical tasks should be clearly linked to the action plan or research task and be challenging but achievable for students.

It was helpful when moderators could view teacher feedback which supported assessment decisions for the practical. Teachers are strongly encouraged to support students to incorporate sufficient photographic evidence of processes, aligned to the selected assessment design criteria for the practical activity, together with the finished product or outcome, so that grades for the practical performance can be confirmed.

Teachers are advised to align current assessment design criteria for the practical activity to their assessment pro forma.

Individual Evaluation Report

Teachers who limited the number of specific features in their evaluation tasks provided students with a better opportunity to write in depth. In these instances, students were able to focus in a solid paragraph and address the specific features in depth, providing examples of the links to the area of study in the action plan or research task, rather than just mentioning it.

Teachers should ensure that the assessment design criteria selected in the evaluation are appropriate to support links between the area of study, the practical activity, and the research or planning involved. Scaffolding is a technique that can be applied for students with limited writing skills to assist them to complete their evaluation, but sometimes this noticeably restricted student achievement at the higher levels for developing insightfulness in their evaluation. Where teachers expected all four specific features for evaluation to be addressed within one task, students struggled to achieve this within 500 words.

Assessment Type 2: Group Activity

Group Decision-making Task

Tasks should be designed to suit the students. While tasks can be used from the SACE website, they should be adjusted to suit local community needs and reflect local produce or local clientele.

The group activity demonstrated a wide range of practical applications. Some examples were:

* pop-up restaurants and food trucks
* tasting boxes (showcasing a range of skills and products, both sweet and savoury)
* staff morning teas and healthy breakfasts
* traditional formal dinners for specific community groups.

Where classes conducted large-scale catering, they often managed this by dividing the activity into sections for students. For example, one group did the meal preparation, while the other group attended to front-of-house roles. Having two group activities provided opportunities for students to develop a wider range of skills.

Healthy eating practices must be addressed within all group practical activities, and therefore need to be a focus in the group decision-making task. The healthy eating focus should be reflected on in the evaluation through specific feature E3. Some groups addressed dietary issues, healthy eating guidelines, or the nutritional value of their menus, while others focused on healthier cooking methods, local seasonal produce, and even making their own bread to reflect sustainable practices. Without the focus on healthy eating, teachers are unable to make a valid assessment decision against the specific feature C2 in collaboration.

Where group tasks were clearly presented, they provided opportunities for all students to achieve success and to contribute to problem-solving. Students generally showed evidence of being able to identify and discuss issues as a group. Teachers generally chose to assess specific features P1 and P2 in problem-solving, in line with the task description. Teachers must ensure that each member of the group includes a copy of the group decision-making task in their package, and that group roles are clearly identified for all members of the group. There was evidence of improved understanding of the requirement of group roles, and the word-limit was generally adhered to.

Where students had used a pro forma for the group task on an A3 sheet, this was an easy way for them to identify the menu and group roles, but limited their ability to document discussions about the issues and planning for the group task in depth.

Teachers were often challenged when assessing students who had been absent for the group practical task, particularly when only one group task was set. When students were able to participate in two group activities, they had a better opportunity for successful achievement against the performance standards. Teachers are reminded that documentation of the task allocated to each student within the group must be attached to every individual student’s task, together with evidence of the practical application. It is important for teachers to allocate the same grade for all students in the group for the group decision-making task.

In order to support the highest grade level (A+) in the group activity, teachers are reminded to clearly demonstrate that all areas of assessment support an A grade through the evidence provided. The individual evaluation report must be in the A grade band, as well as the practical application and the collaboration.

Group Practical Application

Many teachers designed appropriate group activities related to a specific area of study, which often had a catering focus. While there were many examples of excellent student evidence in the practical application, teachers should continue to support students to submit clear evidence of this task. Some students did this effectively with photographic evidence together with annotations to explain processes against the performance standards. Where teachers complemented this evidence by providing shaded performance standards to show achievement, grades could be confirmed at moderation.

Some teachers planned tasks to support local events and conducted large catering exercises. Teachers must be mindful of the weighting of the task and the time allocated in order to provide sufficient time to address all tasks identified on the LAP.

Individual Evaluation Report

Students were able to reflect on their individual processes and outcomes, but many struggled with evaluating the effectiveness of the group performance. It was clear in many reports that some of the group members were absent or did not fulfil their roles adequately within the team. Specific features E1 and E3 were often addressed more effectively than specific features E2 and E4.

## External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Investigation

It was pleasing to see a wide and interesting variety of investigations presented in 2015. The Stage 2 Food and Hospitality course has a focus on the contemporary and changing nature of the food and hospitality industry, hence student research should address an issue that relates to both food and hospitality, with an industry focus.

It was clear once again that students who achieved at a high level in the investigation had closely followed guidelines from the subject outline relating to Assessment Type 3: Investigation. In the more successful investigations, it was clear that students understood the intent, nature, and requirements of the task and that they had benefited from teacher advice on planning, research, drafting, and appropriate presentation. Teachers should offer advice to students on the following areas:

* developing a clearly stated research question or hypothesis
* defining the intended scope of the investigation
* considering the method to be used and the primary and secondary sources needed
* undertaking the investigation and acknowledging sources appropriately.

Most investigations followed a common format, with an introduction outlining the issue stated as a research question or hypothesis, an outline of the scope and methodology of the investigation, a discussion of findings under focusing questions, and finally a conclusion where students were able to add to and draw together their analysis. This structure was effective in assisting students to present evidence against the specific features.

The following section discusses, in turn, each of the specific features of the assessment design criteria used in assessing the investigation.

ICA1: Investigation and critical analysis of contemporary trends and/or issues related to food and hospitality

It was pleasing to see that many classes had covered a wide range of issues, as this reflected originality and student engagement. Once again it was clear that time spent in the planning phase, with appropriate guidance from the teacher to select an appropriate issue, appeared to be a critical factor for students having the best opportunity to achieve success. Students are encouraged to develop original and innovative ideas for their investigation. Brainstorming potential issues may be a useful strategy to spark interest or as a starting point for students to refine their ideas, followed by stating their contemporary issue as a research question or hypothesis. Students should make clear links with a selected area of study, documenting this in the intended scope of the investigation, thus providing a focus and direction for research.

The link to hospitality is crucial for students to have the best opportunity to achieve success against the assessment design criteria. This means that issues such as dieting are not appropriate, nor are those related to the domestic food area. Teachers should advise students that, as two of the specific features (ICA1 and E4) specifically refer to ‘issues related to food and hospitality’, they have limited opportunity to achieve success against these criteria if their issue is outside the scope of the subject.

Local issues or those recently in the media often led to successful and interesting investigations. Examples of such investigations were based on issues from newspapers or from hospitality industry journals. It was pleasing to see new issues coming through. These included, but were not limited to, whether celebrity chefs endorse healthy eating and whether restaurants should be catering for more solo diners. There were also a variety of issues related to the influence of sustainability on hospitality and the impact of various types of social media on the industry.

A well-crafted research question or hypothesis was the basis for enabling the development of critical analysis. For example, ‘To what extent are Adelaide food and hospitality businesses changing policies to decrease food wastage?’ was shown to be a better starting point for the investigation than ‘Food wastage by hospitality businesses in Adelaide’. The first version leads to a comparison and debate of the issue, while the latter leads to a project-style presentation of information. Additionally, when the answer to a research question is too obvious, it is difficult for students to achieve well-considered depth in their response.

Students should structure their investigation around three or four focusing questions linked to the hypothesis or research question. The choice of open focusing questions fostered depth and analysis.

In the stronger investigations, students were able to show critical analysis by comparing and contrasting their research, and showing an ability to synthesise their findings. One way in which this was done was by drawing on a range of sources of information from various perspectives under each focus question, rather than presenting limited data. Evidence could then be presented to demonstrate use of expert primary sources together with sound, up-to-date secondary sources as a basis for analysis and discussion. The higher-achieving investigations showed depth, with students thinking critically and thoroughly teasing out data and information. In these investigations, students tended to compare and contrast information and offer reasons for certain data or results related to their selected issue. It was clear that a debate from a range of viewpoints, or from the perspective of all key stakeholders, enabled students to develop an argument and foster analysis. Where students also gave examples in support of discussion or statements, their points were more relevant and focused.

ICA2: Analysis of information for relevance and appropriateness, with appropriate acknowledgment of sources

The majority of students demonstrated competent research skills. In the stronger investigations, students used a variety of appropriate sources of data from a combination of both primary and secondary sources. Students who planned their research path well had a range of data from which they could draw on to analyse — adding depth to their investigation. Students should be wary of relying purely on Internet sources, as this can limit their ability to examine the issue thoroughly. Where Internet sources are used, students should be discerning and take care not to assume that data from international settings can be extrapolated to food and hospitality in Australian settings. Higher-level investigations often used very relevant information that directly related to a local context.

The most successful investigations sourced sound, up-to-date secondary sources such as newspaper or journal articles as the basis for discussion and analysis. Many students were enterprising and successful in their approach to access suitable primary data and used a range of strategies including using blogs, online menu information, and hospitality review sites. In the more successful investigations, students synthesised, compared, and analysed primary and secondary data under the selected focusing questions, rather than presenting descriptions of survey results question by question.

While a customer survey may be an appropriate research strategy for some issues, students should consider the most appropriate target group. For example, in some instances primary research was limited to presentation of the results of a simple survey of peers, which often resulted in a lack of informed opinion and a limited level of analysis.

Research findings should be used to support the development of an argument under a relevant focus question. In some investigations it seemed that information from primary sources was underused, as sources were mentioned in the scope but there was little evidence of data. Other students presented their data but did not discuss or evaluate findings, which limited their ability to demonstrate analysis. All relevant data should be analysed and included within the main body of the investigation. Appendices and copies of surveys are not to be submitted.

Most students demonstrated the ability to appropriately reference their sources. Some students tended to link large sections of quoted material with very little discussion or interpretation. The most successful investigations gave pertinent evidence in the form of quotes, with relevant and well-explained examples that explicitly made clear the points raised to support the argument or discussion. The use of succinct and highly relevant quotations within sentences, or with appropriate explanation, ensured students could demonstrate their own knowledge, understanding, and analysis without losing their ‘student voice’.

Students are required to include primary sources in the reference list, and are advised to access the referencing guidelines on the SACE website. Students are encouraged to provide a reference list acknowledging all sources they have used, rather than a bibliography.

ICA3: Application of literacy and numeracy skills, and use of appropriate terminology

The vast majority of students were successful against specific feature ICA3 and demonstrated strong literacy skills. The stronger investigations were those that appeared to have been carefully drafted and edited to minimise spelling and grammatical errors, and to ensure a logical flow of ideas. Many students used subject-specific terminology effectively, and presented well-structured investigations. Successful students depersonalised their work by writing in the third person and this helped achieve an objective tone.

In the most successful investigations, data was well-labelled, explained, and evaluated, rather than just inserted. This is essential, as the evidence of learning produced by the student should be explicit and not require the marker to make inferences from the material provided. Students should continue to be discerning in their use of visual data, ensuring that it is used to enhance discussion.

Many students demonstrated numeracy skills through their analysis of survey data. Generally this data was used well to inform results; however, students are reminded that graphs are not needed when there are only very limited variables.

E4: Evaluation of contemporary trends and/or issues related to food and hospitality in different settings

Markers noted that achievement against specific feature E4 seemed to show the greatest difference in format and quality. Students who demonstrated a high level of achievement against E4 tended to evaluate evidence throughout their investigation, supplementing this with a conclusion which analysed findings. Students who only had a short conclusion at the end of their paper tended to summarise and recount, and were often not able to demonstrate the depth necessary to achieve at a higher level. In these papers, students tended to recount findings rather than evaluate.

Students are reminded of the following:

* The conclusion should be related to the research issue only and should not reflect on the success or limitations of the research process.
* It is important to adhere to the specified word-limit, to ensure markers are not restricted in reading and marking the conclusion.

Summary

In summary, the most successful investigations featured:

* a contemporary issue related to the food and hospitality industry, enabling students to critically analyse
* a local context, either being Adelaide or Australia, as appropriate
* a clear hypothesis or research question
* structured analysis and discussion around focus questions
* synthesis of primary and secondary data
* evidence of a range of perspectives
* use of appropriate visual and numerical data including graphs
* clear communication with a focus on careful drafting and editing
* a conclusion drawing together key aspects of evaluation
* consistent referencing and a reference list
* adherence to the word-limit.

Students should be careful to de-identify their work by avoiding use of student, teacher, and school names. Students should use the cover sheet provided by the SACE Board and note that the correct terminology for the external assessment task in Food and Hospitality is ‘Investigation’.

Teachers should be careful to avoid any evidence of their marking process on individual investigations. Teachers should carefully follow the guidelines for conducting the investigation and not only check the Stage 2 Food and Hospitality minisite for information, but direct students to the minisite when completing this task. Teachers must verify processes and progress of the investigation and complete a written verification for each student, using the pro forma on the SACE website.

Teachers and students should note the changes to the subject outline for 2016 that relate to the investigation. In particular, the link to the hospitality industry in the areas of study has been strengthened and changes have been made to the wording of ICA1 and E4. Changes have been made to the relevant performance standards to reflect the editorial changes.

## Operational Advice

School assessment tasks are set and marked by teachers. Teachers’ assessment decisions are reviewed by moderators. Teacher grades/marks should be evident on all student school assessment work. Teachers must retain all student work throughout the year.

Teachers should familiarise themselves with the requirements for the subject throughout the year from the SACE website. School-assessed work should be packaged in separate packages for both the practical activity and the group activity, as they are moderated separately. Materials should be selected for the students identified according to the SACE Board selection process for the collection of materials.

Teachers should make all course changes on the LAP addendum and check that changes not only satisfy requirements, but are reflected in task design. Teachers should note that weightings are not required for individual tasks, as these are clearly mandated on the LAP pro forma for all assessment types.

All teachers are urged to familiarise themselves with relevant sections of the procedures in the Stage 2 Food and Hospitality subject operational information.

The requirement for a 20-credit subject is a minimum of seven tasks including the investigation (see ‘Evidence of Learning’ in the subject outline). Teachers must include an approved LAP (with an endorsed addendum, if appropriate), as well as a set of assessment tasks with their package. Teachers should strongly encourage students to remove food orders, recipes, drafts, and other material which is not required in the assessment process. Individual student tasks should be stapled, together with a detailed task sheet and performance standards appropriately shaded to reflect grades awarded. Plastic sleeves are not required for individual student tasks. Teachers are encouraged to provide an overall matrix to show determination of final grades awarded for each student in the class.

Teachers are reminded that they need to award an I grade (‘insufficient evidence’) for non-submission of work rather than an E grade. Teachers used the Variations — Moderation Materials form effectively this year where work was not completed or was missing. However, some teachers did not adjust student grades for work not submitted. Changes to tasks from the original LAP need to be verified by an endorsed addendum attached to the LAP.

**General Comments**

Teachers are encouraged to attend clarifying forums, where subject experts provide advice to promote discussion between teachers. Clarifying forums for Food and Hospitality for 2016 will focus on assessment types, marking standards, and potential issues around delivery of the course. Teachers are reminded that they can register interest in a marking or moderation panel, via the online link on the SACE website.

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