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Media Studies

2016 Chief Assessor’s Report

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# 2016 Chief Assessor’s Report

## 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.

## School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Folio

The majority of folios this year consisted of two media explorations (maximum of 1500 words combined, if written) and one media interaction study (800 words maximum, if written). Generally students explored three topics, allowing them to fully explore the four key media concepts through knowledge and understanding, research and analysis, and communication, as articulated in the subject outline.

**The more successful responses**

* showed evidence of specific understandings relating to key media concepts, specific conventions, and consideration of the important role the audience plays in the media process
* explicitly addressed the assessment design criteria and provided evidence of *learning* at the highest possible level of achievement
* displayed ownership by the students, allowing them to explore concepts and ideas within the topic
* utilised the media interaction study as an immersive, personal interaction with a media product, form, or concept, which was very different from the media exploration, as it clearly consisted of first-person language and a sense of exploring a personal relationship within the wide range of interactions of the media.

**The less successful responses**

* did not demonstrate learning at the higher levels of achievement because of poor task design or through misinterpretation of the task
* treated the media interaction study as another media exploration or as a review
* presented assessment tasks based on a single, specific media product, such as all students exploring the same documentary, which limited the scope for students to explore the topic.

Assessment Type 2: Product

The majority of products this year focused on the creation of individual works, but there was also good support for collaborative, meaningful products. The format of two products, each accompanied by a producer’s statement, was usually adhered to.

**The more successful responses**

* showed a clear understanding of the conventions of the product; e.g. producers of television advertisements considered length, conventional content, product placement, font, and so on
* displayed highly proficient use of production techniques and technologies appropriate to the context of the school and community
* used the producer’s statement to reflect on the elements of the production, which allowed them to elaborate on their role if part of a group production, and to include visual references and screen shots iterating their development
* created products that allowed them to apply knowledge of forms, contents, and contexts, which was particularly evident where students used, or challenged, the codes and conventions
* reflected on the importance of failure and trial and error in the producer’s statement, rather than just the successes.

**The less successful responses**

* lacked a consideration of planning and production techniques, which was particularly evident in video productions that lacked a consideration of sound, framing, or narrative
* did not address, use, or challenge the codes and conventions of the media type being focused on
* failed to clearly discuss their role in a group production within the producer’s statement
* did not submit a separate producer’s statement for both products.

**General information**

It is recommended that any group productions are clearly defined in the moderation materials.

USB drives are more accessible for viewing video and data-heavy productions than CDs or DVDs which are also too open to damage in transport. It is also recommended for teachers to submit two copies of any digital files to assist the moderation process.

## External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Investigation

Consistent with 2015, approximately 93% of students who submitted their media investigation received a result in the C band and higher. In particular, almost 20% achieved in the A band and this represents an increase compared with last year.

Popular media issues investigated for 2016 included Donald Trump’s representation in the media or his use of the media, ISIS’s use of social media, the 2016 Australian federal election, same-sex marriage as reported in the media, activism on social media (e.g. #blacklivesmatter), and the representation of gender and cultural diversity in media.

**The more successful responses**

* researched current and controversial issues and, as a result, the sources they used were both varied (i.e. including both primary and secondary sources) and contemporary
* were driven by one major guiding question, rather than a series of minor questions
* clearly established the currency of the issue of the investigation by referencing this in their introductory paragraphs
* incorporated a variety of visual elements, such as graphs, tables, charts, or images, into their text that related directly to their research.
* were aware of the performance standards and provided evidence of ‘comprehensive and sustained knowledge and understanding of media structures, issues, concepts, and interactions’ (specific feature KU1), as well as ‘comprehensive research into and analysis of the ways in which groups and individuals are represented in media’ (specific feature RA1)
* used an appendix to provide evidence of correspondence, questionnaires, and information from other sources
* analysed and synthesised information from a variety of sources and represented the information visually.

**The less successful responses**

* selected a topic in which the issues and focus questions did not lend themselves to a media investigation
* had little evidence that showed an understanding of the key media concepts
* omitted discussion about how the audience influences the media, the ways groups and individuals are represented in the media, or the ‘different points of view, bias, values, or intent across a range of media texts’
* focused their response on their own personal views
* were heavily scaffolded, often as a class
* recounted events, rather than analysing how the media affected or represented these events, or how the audience responded to them
* spent significant amounts of time explaining the background of the topic or mistook the topic for a sociology/political/psychological research topic
* included graphs that were not clearly labelled or visually appropriate.

**General information**

Investigations need to be de-identified, including removal of the school name or number which may inadvertently be left in a header.

For written investigations, the text should be printed single-sided and stapled in the top left corner, and not printed on both sides or bound.

Students benefit from advice in formulating the topic for investigation and from ongoing monitoring by their teacher. Students should also be made aware of the assessment design criteria and the performance standards. These will guide them in ensuring that their work is directed towards meeting the standards at the highest levels of achievement, and serve as useful feedback in the draft stage.

## 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.

The approved learning and assessment plan (LAP) and a complete set of task sheets for the school assessment tasks should be included in the moderation package. The use of the LAP addendum, if applicable, is important, as it enables moderators to easily locate changes to the assessment design and the corresponding student material.

Where samples are presented in electronic format, such as a DVD or, preferably, a USB drive, two clearly labelled copies should be included wherever possible.

Teachers should refer to the subject operational information, and regularly visit the SACE website.

All forms, including the current cover sheet for the investigation, can be located on the Media Studies minisite.

## General Comments

This year again, there was an increasing number of teachers new to this subject and it was encouraging to have many of them not only attending clarifying forums and workshops, but also volunteering to be markers or moderators.

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Chief Assessor