

# Business and Enterprise

2012 Chief Assessor's Report



Government  
of South Australia

**SACE**  
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# **BUSINESS AND ENTERPRISE**

## **2012 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 weighting of the folio is 40% for a 10-credit subject and 30% for a 20-credit subject. The folio is part of the school assessment component for both a 10-credit subject and a 20-credit subject. For a 10-credit subject, students undertake two or three assessments for the folio. For a 20-credit subject, students undertake four to six assessments for the folio. One assessment must come from the core topic and the remaining assessments may come from the option topic(s). For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

- knowledge and understanding
- analysis and evaluation
- communication
- application.

Please refer to the 2013 Business and Enterprise subject outline for more information on Assessment Type 1: Folio.

It was pleasing to note that most teachers provided the correct sample for moderation in accordance with the subject operational information. The general quality of students' work was good; however, work was generously assessed in areas of knowledge and understanding, analysis and evaluation, and application. It is imperative that marks be allocated where analysis has occurred, rather than for recall of knowledge and understanding. Folios that included a variety of tasks (e.g. extended writing, test, oral presentation, guest speakers, tasks under supervision) allowed students to demonstrate a deeper understanding of the topics, to show their knowledge and understanding at a much higher level, and furthermore to analyse more critically.

There was some concern regarding the number of tests that were set (e.g. three of four folio tasks being tests) and the assessment criteria being assessed within the test (e.g. most mainly assessed knowledge and understanding). Students should have the opportunity to demonstrate a wide variety of skills, knowledge, understanding, and analytical skills across a variety of tasks. Tasks should also cover a variety of topics and not just be predominantly from the business environment topic.

## Assessment Type 2: Practical

The weighting of the practical is 30% for a 10-credit subject and 20% for a 20-credit subject. The practical is part of the school assessment component for both a 10-credit subject and a 20-credit subject. Students undertake one practical for a 10-credit subject and at least one practical for a 20-credit subject. Each practical is derived from an option topic. Students inquire, analyse, plan, and undertake the assessment on a focus of particular interest in their selected option topic(s). For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning primarily in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

- knowledge and understanding
- communication
- application.

Please refer to the 2013 Business and Enterprise subject outline for more information on Assessment Type 2: Practical.

This year saw an increase in the variety of tasks being completed by students. However, there is still some concern over what constitutes a practical. Better practicals allowed students to effectively apply business theory to current practice; for example, in particular in a marketing practical — not just using the four Ps marketing mix but utilising more complex and in-depth theoretical methods.

A number of students undertook their practicals as a group. Teachers should clearly identify which students were responsible for which components and award grades where appropriate to each student.

Where students' work is submitted in electronic form (e.g. PowerPoint), it is recommended that students not only submit the electronic version but also include their speech notes.

## Assessment Type 3: Issues Study

The issues study is weighted at 30% for a 10-credit subject; the weighting for a 20-credit subject is 20%. The issues study is the *external assessment component* for a 10-credit subject. It is part of the *school assessment component* for a 20-credit subject. For both a 10-credit subject and a 20-credit subject, students undertake one issues study in which they identify and investigate a theme, development, or current issue in business and enterprise. The issues study should be a clear, concise, and polished piece of writing of a maximum of 1000 words for a 10-credit subject, and of a maximum of 1500 words for a 20-credit subject. For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning primarily in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

- knowledge and understanding
- analysis and evaluation
- communication.

Please refer to the 2013 Business and Enterprise subject outline for more information on Assessment Type 3: Issues Study.

The issues studies were generally well done by students and better tasks allowed students to incorporate tables, graphs, and so on, and analyse these in relation to impact on the business environment and economy. However, there was some concern over issues chosen which were not relevant to the business community or were not recent enough to be evaluated and analysed in detail. Where students were able to select issues relevant to their local community, they were able to show greater understanding and analysis. They also appropriately accessed primary resources, which is a recommendation in the subject outline.

While many students accessed a variety of resources, referencing of these materials is still a concern. Teachers and students are encouraged to access SACE support materials to ensure they are correctly acknowledging these materials.

## **EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT**

### **Assessment Type 4: Report**

The report is for the 20-credit subject only, for which it forms the external assessment component. It is weighted at 30% and should be a maximum of 2000 words. Students are required to write one report (specifically a 'formal business report' from 2013) that may be either a *situation analysis* or an *enterprise report*. For this assessment type, students provide evidence of their learning in relation to the following assessment design criteria:

- knowledge and understanding
- analysis and evaluation
- communication
- application.

Please refer to the 2013 Business and Enterprise Subject Outline for more information on Assessment Type 4: Report.

#### **Situation Analysis**

The situation analysis this year had a wide range of businesses studied at varying degrees of success. Poorer reports contained a general description of the business's processes, while showing limited analysis and evaluation, as well as insufficiently detailed knowledge and understanding. Better reports demonstrated that students were able to analyse and evaluate their chosen business and apply their knowledge and understanding gleaned through coursework at a higher level.

In general, students were able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding in a number of areas. Of significant note, better reports were able to incorporate a variety of business theories to the chosen business throughout the report, while poorer reports were able to address basic theory (e.g. the four Ps of marketing) and how the business might use this. Better reports were able to effectively address a variety of business structures in their reports, including ownership structure, management structure, and employee roles, while poorer responses often made comparison with the business's ownership structure and another unrelated ownership structure.

Reports were usually limited in the amount of analysis and evaluation addressed. Better reports were able to clearly integrate current issues facing Australian businesses, how the issues affected the chosen business, and subsequently how the business addressed them. Better responses were able to give recommendations

concerning these issues relevant to the business. Issues that students covered included the current economic climate following the global financial crisis, the downturn in the retail sector, the value of the Australian dollar and its impact on importers and import-competing businesses, and, in some instances, the mining boom or even the projected slowdown in this sector. Better responses were able to make these connections quite clearly.

Students were generally able to communicate effectively using business terminology and in an appropriate format. Referencing and footnoting was noted to be an improvement on previous years. Better reports were able to effectively integrate tables, graphs, and diagrams into their report, consistent with the SACE word-count policy, which is available on the SACE website.

Students mostly used a limited range of resources, with many students choosing to interview only the owner of the business and to access several websites. Better responses used a wide range of sources of information to supplement their report including surveys, competitors, books, newspaper articles, and reports. Most students did refer to websites; however, this was largely confined to when students were addressing legal issues with the business. Better reports were able to integrate a variety of sources of information consistently throughout the report.

### **Enterprise Report**

Enterprise reports were generally of a lower standard than the situation analysis, with very few reports achieving high grades. Most reports identified the enterprise that students were engaged in; however, the reports were largely limited to description of the business's processes, with little attention given to analysis and evaluation, and higher-order knowledge and understanding. Often, the very micro nature of the businesses limited the students' ability to achieve at these higher levels.

Many enterprise reports did not contain the required elements stated in the subject outline, particularly in relation to the required financial documents. Most enterprise reports focused on the employment and marketing aspects of the business. Teachers are reminded to direct the attention of students to these critical areas of the enterprise report, as detailed in the subject outline.

### **OPERATIONAL ADVICE**

Packaging and presentation of materials was generally good; however, teachers are encouraged to arrange tasks according to each student and to separate into assessment types in each student package. Those teachers who used a colour-coding system (e.g. the task sheet with assessment decisions on the performance standard was in an appropriate colour — such as folio in blue, practical in pink, issues study in yellow — and was stapled to the front of each student's pieces of work) helped the moderation process.

It was pleasing to see most teachers submit a teacher folder which included all task sheets and the learning and assessment plan (LAP). It is essential that any changes made to the approved LAP be recorded and signed off by the school Principal on the addendum page. Any variations in student work (e.g. if a student's work was chosen for moderation, but it has been misplaced) should be recorded on the Variations — Moderation Materials form, which can be found on the SACE website.

## **GENERAL**

The length of student work was a concern in all assessment types — folio, practical, issues study, situation analysis, enterprise report, regarding the use of tables, figures, and so on. Teachers and students are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the SACE word-count policy, as many pieces of work excessively breached these guidelines.

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