

SSABSA-VET

2009 ASSESSMENT REPORT

Flexible Learning Programs Learning Area



Government
of South Australia

SACE
Board of SA

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GENERAL COMMENTS

There was a strong participation in SSABSA–VET subjects this year. In particular, there was a significant increase in the number of students enrolled in Community Services and Health, Electrotechnology, General Construction, Information Technology, and Manufacturing and Engineering. Sport and Recreation continued to attract many students.

There was a small increase in the number of students taking Option B which gives the advantage of a dual opportunity of gaining SACE completion together with the subject contributing towards their TER, thus complementing the other HESS subjects undertaken by the students. Moderators commented that some students appear to have struggled with the Work Project component of Option B and may have been better served by a conversion to Option A during the year to facilitate SACE completion. In the event of a student making this conversion, any work that has been completed towards the Work Project component may be included in the student's Evidence Folio.

It must be recognised that while this is a SACE subject that enables students to engage in significant workplace learning, there are specific criteria upon which their SACE assessment is based. For the Evidence Folio, Workplace Reflection, and Work Project (for Option B students), this assessment must be distinct from their assessment of competency for the VET units included in the assessment plan. Work submitted by students should be more than just the wholly or partially completed workbooks used during the training program(s).

For every assessment task, the moderators should be provided with clear evidence of the student work as well as assessment which is based on the criteria specified in the curriculum statement. Where teachers use the mark sheet exemplar from the support materials on the SACE Board website, it would be helpful if teachers were to adapt the sheet to suit the task. The information added to the sheet could include pointers from the task to provide guidance to the student as well as notes on the student's performance to give a clear indication of the basis upon which the mark was allocated. For example, if the criterion being assessed is *knowledge*, the note about the task might indicate to the student that this knowledge is 'demonstrated by performance in the SANA written umpires exam'. The note about the student performance might indicate that 'the student achieved a score of 84% in this exam' and hence show on the mark sheet a SACE score of 25 out of 30 against this criterion.

It is important that assessment tasks are designed to allow students to demonstrate the depth of knowledge and understanding or the capacity to analyse and evaluate at Stage 2 level. In many cases, teachers would benefit from submitting work for support moderation at the beginning of Term 3, as outlined in the Flexible Learning Programs manual, to receive advice on task design and marking standards.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENT 1: EVIDENCE FOLIO

It is pleasing to note that there was an increased use of a range of formats to provide evidence of achievement. Examples of this included:

- a recorded demonstration of skill acquisition in which the student also gave an explanation of what is being undertaken and equipment being used (this technique can provide evidence of knowledge, understanding and communication)
- photographs annotated by the student (these can give evidence of understanding, organisation and communication)
- an interview of the student by the teacher (or another expert), during which the interviewer made notes about the student's responses (this can allow a student to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and communication).

This component is often best assessed by tasks that have a practical basis, but evidence of any practical work and the teacher's assessment of it must be provided for moderation. Using methods such as those listed above is recommended.

Where electronic means of presenting evidence is used, careful selection of an easily accessible program such as Windows Media Player will enable moderators to review the evidence provided by the student and thus confirm results. Work provided in this way should be clearly labelled on the USB, CD or DVD itself. The files contained should specify the student and the task. Teachers are also asked to ensure that any audio included in the file is audible. Moderators commended the teachers who took the precaution to also include a hard copy of at least some aspects of the student's work in case the electronic version could not be accessed.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENT 2: STUDENT ACADEMIC RECORD

It is pleasing to note that the majority of students achieved competency in all of the units identified in their assessment plan, thereby receiving 10% for this component.

A constant problem for moderators is the lack of evidence to confirm that students have attained competency in the VET units that were included in the assessment plan. This may be due to the fact that schools have not received printouts of the required information from their registered training organisation (RTO) in time to be packaged with moderation materials. Early communication with the RTO, indicating the date of collection of moderation materials, may resolve this matter. Where official printouts are not available by the collection date, schools should provide the moderators with a copy of the data sent to the RTO and have it signed by the principal.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENT 3: WORKPLACE REFLECTION

This component requires students to reflect critically on their experiences and learning in the workplace. The higher achieving students show depth of thought when evaluating the culture in the particular workplace/industry, recognising the ways that they are able to apply the knowledge and skills they have gained through their competency development in the workplace.

Moderators noted that a significant number of reflections were more of a recount of activities undertaken during the period of work placement rather than a thoughtful exposition in which they related their experiences to the VET units of competency

they had undertaken, discussed workplace issues with depth and relevance, applied knowledge and skills to workplace practices, or communicated well-considered personal opinions. A task with more structure provided by the teacher may have led students to reveal more of their insights and perceptions about their learning in the workplace.

It is crucial that moderators have clear evidence of each student's workplace reflection, although this does not need to be in written form. Many students are able to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of their experiences by participating in a discussion or interview than if they are required to put their thoughts into writing.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENT 4: WORK PROJECT (OPTION B)

An interesting variety of work projects was undertaken by students enrolled in Option B. Most projects showed a direct link to the VET units of competency being undertaken by the students and provided a stimulating challenge for them.

The selection of a practical task rather than an investigation in this component suits the needs of the majority of students. However, in a significant number of cases where a practical task was chosen, there was no report to accompany the evidence of the practical task. The curriculum statement clearly indicates that students need to complete a report on their practical task and, in it, they document the process of planning, making, delivering and evaluating. Moderators noted that in many instances there was a lack of critical exploration and analysis that is referred to in learning outcomes 5 and 6, and a lack of evaluation which is one of the criteria for judging performance.

The work project may be undertaken in a group or team with different students responsible for different aspects of the outcome, but each student prepares a separate report. If photographs or videos of groups are used to provide evidence of *enterprise, social interaction, application* or *communication*, the identity of each student must be clear to the moderators, as should the contribution of each student.

Chief Assessor
SSABSA-VET