



Assessment and outcomes

In the previous session we identified outcomes and their relation to content. We are now going to explore the role of outcomes in assessment.

Activity 9: Some basic questions about assessment

The purpose of this activity is to:

- *understand some basic notions about assessment*
- *appreciate what to consider when setting assessment tasks*

Frequently asked questions and answers about HSC assessment

Q. What does a standards-referenced approach mean?

A. The new Higher School Certificate (HSC) will use a standards-referenced approach to assessing and reporting student achievement.

This means that the achievements of students are assessed and reported against specified standards that are established for each course. In a standards-referenced approach, students are recognised for what they know, understand and can do. The mark they receive will reflect the standard which the student has achieved in the course.

The current HSC uses a norm-referenced approach. In this approach, fixed percentages of students are placed into bands of marks according to a pre-determined distribution. This occurs regardless of what students know, understand and can do, and fails to recognise the standard which the student has demonstrated in terms of achievement of course outcomes.

Q. What are the “standards”?

A. In the new Higher School Certificate these standards are:

- the knowledge, skills and understanding expected to be learned by students as a result of studying the course, referred to as the *syllabus* standards
- the levels of achievement of the knowledge, skills and understanding (reported in six bands), referred to as the *performance* standards.

Syllabus standards and performance standards are based on the aims, objectives, outcomes and content of a course. Together, they specify what is to be learned and how well it is to be achieved.



Q. How will the changes to the new HSC affect school policies and procedures?

- A. The Board of Studies ACE Manual remains current for the year 2000. Schools should ensure that they are familiar with the HSC requirements concerning policy and procedures, as set down in this manual.

School policies and procedures will need to reflect the Board's requirements for the HSC internal assessment, as stated in the ACE Manual (check with the Board of Studies).

Aspects of policy and procedure which must be developed and implemented by schools include:

- informing students in writing of the assessment requirements for each course before the commencement of the HSC course
- ensuring that students are given adequate written notice of the nature and timing of assessment tasks
- providing meaningful feedback on students' performance in all assessment tasks
- maintaining records of marks awarded to each student for all assessment tasks
- addressing issues relating to illness, misadventure and malpractice in assessment tasks
- addressing issues relating to the late submission and non-completion of assessment tasks
- advising students in writing if they are not meeting the assessment requirements in a course and indicating what is necessary to enable the students to satisfy the requirements
- informing students about their entitlements to school reviews and appeals to the Board
- conducting school reviews of assessments when requested by students
- ensuring that students are aware that they can collect their Rank Order Advice at the end of the external examinations at their school.

Q. How will changes to the new HSC affect my assessment practices?

- A. Teachers will need to ensure that they understand the new mandatory assessment requirements of different courses by checking the relevant syllabuses. These changes to requirements need to be incorporated into school policy and procedures.

The Board still requires schools to develop an internal assessment program that:

- specifies the various assessment tasks and weightings allocated to each task
- provides a schedule of the tasks designed for the whole course.

The white paper envisaged that changes to assessment practice would occur over several years, commencing in 2001.



Teachers should follow school policies and procedures and syllabus guidelines for assessment and reporting. They need to ensure that course requirements are followed in terms of the balance and weighting of components and types of tasks. What is important is that the strategies used to assess students are appropriate to the outcomes being assessed.

Teachers need to provide a mark for internal assessment tasks. These marks should be derived from the students' achievement against specified criteria.

Appropriate feedback should be given to students to inform them about what they need to learn and do in order to improve their achievement in a subject.

Q. What are good assessment practices?

A. Teachers demonstrate good assessment practices when they:

- design and use assessment strategies which are directly linked to and reflect the course outcomes and the standards expected
- provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate their achievement of outcomes in a variety of types of task
- consider the type of assessment task being used, ensuring that it is appropriate to the outcomes being assessed
- inform the students of the assessment criteria on which the assessment task is to be judged, before the task is undertaken
- design for each task marking schemes which are aligned to the syllabus standards
- provide students with meaningful feedback about what they are able to do and what is needed to improve performance
- determine rankings and relative difference between students by level of achievement of the standards.

Q. Will the new HSC examination be different from the current examination?

A. HSC examination questions will be developed from the examination specifications. Teachers will need to check the examination specifications for each course they teach. Most courses have had changes made to their exam specifications as a result of the review process.

The structure of the HSC examination is specified in the Board's *Examination, Assessment and Reporting Supplement* for each subject.

HSC examinations will now assess against standards. They will do this by using a variety of question types to enable students to demonstrate their level of achievement of course outcomes. Questions will be clearly worded and structured to indicate to students what is expected and will reflect a range and balance of course content and outcomes. Marking guidelines will be developed which will align with the performance standards. Examinations will be marked using teachers' professional judgement to determine the standard of students' performance, and the marks awarded will reflect the standard.



Q. What types of assessment tasks should be used?

A. Artmaking

- collection of works
- visual/verbal presentation
- V.A.P.D.

Artmaking and art history/art criticism

- audio tape presentation
- exhibition reports
- computer simulation, multimedia
- co-operative learning tasks
- audio-visual presentation interview

Art history? Art criticism

- essays-critical analysis
- oral presentations
- research reports
- case study reports
- surveys
- interviews
- graphic presentations
- debates, hypotheticals
- community-based field work-of exhibitions related to the local community
- interpretations of scenarios and statistics-in relation to exhibition attendance, etc.

Q. What are performance scales and performance bands?

- A.** Students who successfully complete the HSC Course will have their performance reported against performance bands on a course report.

The course report includes a performance scale which describes five levels (bands) of achievement above a minimum standard expected. Each band on the performance scale (except band 1) includes descriptions that summarise the attainments typically demonstrated on that band.

Students who meet or exceed the minimum standard receive a mark of 50 or more. The mark awarded to a student will reflect the standard achieved in the course.

Performance scales can assist in internal assessment programs as they can be used to determine the wording of marking schemes and feedback to students.

Q. What do I need to understand about performance bands?

- A.** Teachers need to understand that the performance bands are used only to report students' achievement at the end of the course. They provide a summative description of a student's overall performance in a subject, based on internal assessment and the external examination.

Teachers need to recognise that the development of performance bands is an evolving process, in which the bands will continue to be refined to include information from performance in the new HSC courses and the outcomes assessed internally.



Q. At the end of the HSC, what will I need to submit to the Board of Studies?

- A.** As in previous years, schools will provide the Board with a mark only. These marks are the product of the internal assessment program and should indicate the rank order of the students and the relative differences between the students.

This mark will provide a summation of each student's achievement, measured at points throughout the course.

Teachers will make informed judgements about the relative difference between students, based on their differing achievement of standards.

Q. What will happen to the internal assessment mark which I submit to the Board?

- A.** For each school course group, the school assessment marks submitted to the Board of Studies will be moderated on the basis of the group's performance in the HSC examination. The approach to be used will be the same as at present, except that the raw examination marks will be used in the moderation process.

For each course, the moderated assessment and the examination mark will be averaged to provide a composite mark.

Experienced markers will follow a structured procedure, employing their professional judgement to determine what composite marks will correspond to the borderline between each performance band. This step provides a set of "mapping points" that enable students' marks to be aligned with the performance scale.

For each student in a course, the moderated assessment mark and the examination mark are separately aligned with the performance scale.

The average of a student's assessment mark and the examination mark, after alignment to the performance scale, is then reported as the student's HSC mark.

Q. What will students receive in terms of an HSC?

- A.** Students will receive:

- The HSC testamur (if all requirements are met).
- A Record of Achievement which summarises results awarded in each course.
- A course report for each board-developed course. This will show the moderated internal assessment mark, the external examination mark and the averaged HSC mark on a performance scale. This report also includes statements of a typical performance which a student would demonstrate in each band.
- VET credentials.



Q. How can I find out more about assessment and reporting for the new HSC?

A. Support for teachers in developing an understanding of HSC assessment will include:

- State-wide workshops (LIG events) in November, which will specifically focus on assessment in the new HSC.
- New HSC Bulletins. Four HSC Bulletins are being developed to address issues concerning assessment and reporting in the HSC.

The first bulletin is on *Assessment—A Standards-Referenced Approach*. Other issues that will be addressed include: the role of internal assessment; developing assessment tasks; reporting student achievement.

- Board of Studies' support documents, including the *Examination, Assessment and Reporting Supplement* for each course and the *New Higher School Certificate Assessment Support Document*.
- Board of Studies' newsletters, available on the Board's website.



Assessment and outcomes

Below is an assessment task based on outcomes and corresponding criteria derived from a Unit of work on 'Modernism'.

Activity 10: Developing an assessment task

The purpose of this activity is to:

- *identify how assessment criteria have evolved from outcomes and content*
- *develop an assessment task*
- *develop a marking scheme for the task*

Sample assessment task for Preliminary unit of work: 'Modernism'

Assessment task outcomes

A student:

P7 explores the conventions of practice in art criticism and art history

P8 explores the roles and relationships between concepts of artist, artwork, world and audience through critical and historical investigations of art

P9 identifies the frames as the basis of exploring different orientations to critical and historical investigations of art

Topic

Practice: Art history/art criticism

Weighting: 10%

Date: end of term 1

Outcomes: P7, P8, P9

Title: Modernism

Content Focus

The focus of the unit is on practice. In art history/art criticism, students are asked to research philosophies, conventions and representations of Modernist practice. The teacher gives guidelines for student's explorations as individual or group investigations, into the development of geometric abstraction from the turn of the century.

There will be inquiry into the relationship between artists, artworks and audiences and what concepts in the artworld are represented (conceptual framework).

The investigation should focus on 'regional' styles such as French Cubism or Russian Constructivism or Dutch Bauhaus/de Stijl (cultural and structural frames).

Consideration should be given to Modernist practices in Australia which may reflect qualities of European or universal abstraction.

In artmaking, students will develop geometric abstract representations through 'reduction' of subject matter. This may be expressed through a series of, drawings, maquettes and electronic forms.

A sample assessment task is offered for art history/art criticism. Other tasks could be developed for art making.



Notice that only the outcomes are taken directly from the syllabus. Only three outcomes are being targeted for this assessment task. Most schools schedule between three and five assessment tasks for each of the Preliminary and HSC courses. Keeping in mind that ten outcomes should be addressed for each course, three outcomes in this task is appropriate.

This sample assessment task is only a guideline, however, students should be given the information in the first two boxes. The 'Content focus' in the third box is a brief synopsis of the unit of work. This information would be part of the teachers' register and need not be given to students.

Below is the actual task and criteria for the assessment. The task states explicitly what aspects of content are addressed. The task as written here might be what is recorded in the teacher's register. It would need to be simplified or explained to average students. However, students should be given a written version of the task.

Task

Students are presented with references, resources and images which provide information about Modernist practice in Europe and Australia.

As individuals or in a group, students research a) an aspect of Modernist style or regional movement (**cultural frame**) OR b) a form of geometric abstraction across place and time (**structural frame**).

Students are to produce a written and visual assignment. They need to address the issue of artists' practice, identifying the incorporation of, or response to traditional practice. They should refer to the concepts that **artists** explore and how these are represented in image and media in **artworks**. There should be an understanding of the processes in which artists have been involved.

Students need to articulate how the signs and symbols of modernist **artworks** communicate meaning to **audiences** through **structural** devices and appreciate how audiences through time and place have responded to modernist artworks.

Where applicable, students should explore how **cultural** expression has influenced the types of representations in modernist works in regional contexts. This could relate to artistic conventions and social, economic and political influences. These **cultural** features should also be considered when referring to **audience** response.

Students should refer to a variety of artworks and make reference to the resources that they have used. Students need to identify any judgement or emphasis that **art historians** or **art critics** have made and how this has come to bear on their selection of investigations.

Criteria

You will be assessed on:

- P7 or C7 the understanding that you have of procedure in artists' practice and how artists represent ideas in their artworks through modernist conventions.
- P8 or C8 your understanding of how the world, audience, artist and artwork are related in modernist practice by referring to key examples and concepts
- P9 or C9 your ability to talk about and explain how the cultural and/or subjective frames can give different insights into the understanding of modernist art



Notice that each criterion is generated from each of the three outcomes. These criteria are specific to the topic 'Modernism' and should be given to students.

Marking scheme

Performance	Mark
<p>Through written and visual illustration, the student has demonstrated a sophisticated level of understanding of artists' practice.</p> <p>The student has indicated a highly developed understanding of how the agencies of the artworld are related in regard to the investigation of modernist art and how the frames relate to the interpretation of this style/movement.</p>	21–30
<p>Through written and visual illustration, the student has demonstrated a developed understanding of artists' practice.</p> <p>The student has indicated a reasonably coherent understanding of how the agencies of the artworld are related in regard to the investigation of modernist art and how the frames relate to the interpretation of this style/movement.</p>	11–20
<p>Through written and visual illustration, the student has demonstrated a basic understanding of artists' practice.</p> <p>The student has indicated a limited understanding of how the agencies of the artworld are related in regard to the investigation of modernist art and how the frames relate to the interpretation of this style/movement.</p>	1–10

Notice that there are three levels of performance in the marking scheme reflecting, outstanding, moderate and basic achievements of skill and understandings. The statements in each level correlate to the criteria addressed.

Teachers should record marking schemes in their own registers. School policy should direct teachers as to whether marking schemes be given to students in advance.



The HSC examination

We are now going to look at the exam and establish how this external assessment tool relates to the course content and outcomes.

Activity 11: Examination question requirements

The purpose of the activity is to:

- *understand the new HSC examination specifications*
- *identify the relationship between the examination questions and course content*

Section I

We will start by looking at the compulsory type questions in section I in your **EARS document (page 3)**

Which of the components of content are examined in section I, and which of the eleven key elements are examined?

Answer:

- | | | |
|-------|--------------------------------|------------|
| Q.1a) | Conceptual framework: artworks | (5 marks) |
| Q.1b) | Frames: postmodern frame | (8 marks) |
| Q.1c) | Practice: art history | (12 marks) |

Notice that the questions allocated sequentially more marks. This is because the questions are organised with increasing difficulty and complexity of task.

Look at different instructions of each:

- | | |
|-------|---|
| Q.1a) | ‘Describe...’ |
| Q.2b) | ‘Explain...relationships...’ |
| Q.3c) | ‘Discuss...offer different points of view.’ |

Given the marks allocation for each question and about 45 minutes to answer Section 1, students should allocate their time proportionately; say approximately 10, 15 and 20 minutes respectively for parts a), b) and c).



It is important for students to remember that they are answering specific questions where the images and accompanying citations should be considered as resources that assist them to answer the questions. In Question 1a) the information in the citations provide many clues in regard to the 'physical' attributes of artworks. In answering the questions, all plates/images should be referred to.

Begin to practice these procedures with students in the Preliminary course:
e.g. 10 minutes to describe the 3-dimensional quality of four artworks.
Start to build these types of activities into your programming and assessment.

Section II

Now lets look at the Section II questions of the exam on pages 6 to 12 in the second half of the EARS document.

Notice how are the questions organised? There are three questions, each organised under the three components of content.

Practice–Conceptual Framework Frames

Q.2	Q.5	Q.8
Q.3	Q.6	Q.9
Q.4	Q.7	Q.10

Even though each question is organised under only one component of content, students should, in their answers, relate to other components of content. In these essay questions students should be demonstrating their knowledge and understandings of content in an integrated way.

The best preparation for students in answering Section II questions lies in their case studies and written assessment tasks. At least one, preferably two case studies should be given as assessment tasks in the HSC course.