VCE Second Language studies (2020–2027)

*Arabic, Chinese Second Language, Chinese Second Language Advanced, French, German, Greek, Indonesian Second Language, Italian, Japanese Second Language, Korean Second Language, Spanish, Vietnamese Second Language*

School-based Assessment report

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

This report provides advice for the implementation of the VCE Second Language study designs (2020–2024). The respective *Advice for teachers* for Second Language studies provides teaching and learning advice for Units 1 to 4 and assessment advice for school-based assessment in Units 3 and 4. Other support materials for these studies can be found on the relevant study webpage on the VCAA website.

This report is based on the findings from the 2020 School-based Assessment Audit for Units 3 and 4 VCE Second Language studies. Schools providing the VCE must deliver the course to the standards established by the VCAA, ensure the integrity of student assessments and ensure compliance with the requirements of the VCAA for the relevant assessment program. For school-based assessment, the standards and requirements are stated in the assessment specifications set out in the relevant VCE study design and the [VCE assessment principles](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/vce/VCE_assessment_principles.docx). The School-based Assessment Audit checks that the standards and requirements set out in study designs are being followed and that assessment is being carried out in line with the VCE assessment principles.

Please note that this is a collated report that presents the findings from the Unit 3 and Unit 4 audits that were conducted for all 12 of the VCE Second Language studies. All of the advice and information in this report applies to all 12 of the VCE Second Language studies.

The audit showed that schools were generally well prepared for the implementation of the reaccredited VCE Second Language study designs. Teachers showed a good understanding of the requirements of the study designs and the information provided in *Advice for teachers* resources. On the whole, teachers created tasks that allowed students to demonstrate their achievement of the key knowledge and key skills. Teachers chose different topics for each area of study and provided students with clear instructions for the completion of the tasks. Overall, the VCE assessment principles were observed.

Most schools that were audited indicated that teachers created their own School-assessed Coursework (SAC) tasks, rather than relying on publicly available materials such as commercial tasks. Schools are to be commended for devising their own unique SAC tasks tailored to their specific cohort of students. This not only provided students with the best possible opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of the key knowledge and key skills but also ensured authentication risks were minimised. Teachers consulted a range of resources to develop tasks. These included the *Advice for teachers* and textbooks, as well as resources developed by teacher networks and relevant subject associations.

In some cases, teachers worked in partnership to create units of work and assessment tasks with colleagues or teachers from other schools. In a few cases where schools collaborated, the schools set the same task but delivered them at different times, compromising the schools’ ability to authenticate student work adequately.

Very few audited schools were using commercially produced SAC tasks. Schools are reminded that when SAC tasks are created using materials available in the public domain, these resources need to be carefully checked against the requirements of the study design, and materials must be modified significantly. Schools must also ensure that SAC tasks used for school-based assessment are significantly different from any publicly available materials to ensure that student work can be authenticated. Any materials available in the public domain are potentially accessible to students, and those who access these materials prior to undertaking their SAC tasks may gain an unfair advantage. Teachers are strongly encouraged to create entirely new SAC tasks or to significantly redesign previously used SAC tasks to suit the changes in the study design rather than relying on commercially produced resources.

A small number of audited schools did not have in place appropriate authentication measures to ensure that the work of each student was genuinely their own. Even when tasks are conducted under test conditions, schools must have policies and processes in place to deal with potential and actual breaches of authentication. For schools that have more than one campus, or that have multiple classes that are not taught concurrently, SAC tasks need to be modified for each class.

The audit found that schools generally had well-developed procedures to moderate student work, ensuring consistency of assessment between teachers and classes. In most cases, appropriate cross-marking within the same school or with another school took place.

It was also noted that in most cases, schools had strategies in place to provide opportunities for students who received ‘Not Satisfactory’ for either Unit 3 or Unit 4 to redeem the result. A small number of respondents were unclear about the process by which a student could redeem an N result, suggesting the need for closer communication between the VCE Coordinator and the teacher at the school level.

The audit showed that in most cases, assessment timelines were appropriate to enable students to develop the required key knowledge and key skills for each outcome and to receive timely feedback on their performance. Schools spread SAC tasks out evenly over the unit, ensuring students had adequate time to learn, consolidate and expand their knowledge and skills.

Many schools provided students with a choice of SAC task for a number of the outcomes. Most of the choices offered were comparable in terms of scope and demand, ensuring that no students were advantaged or disadvantaged. In Unit 3, a small number of schools that were audited chose very closely related topics for Outcomes 2 and 3, which meant that closely related materials were used and vocabulary were taught. Schools are encouraged to explore a greater range of topics and subtopics to provide students with adequate opportunities to demonstrate the full range of required key knowledge and key skills.

Most schools indicated that they were using the VCAA performance descriptors to assess student performance for school-based assessment tasks. In some cases, these were modified for ease of assessment.

Teachers are reminded to consult the *Advice for teachers* resource for their study, which contains information on developing a learning and assessment program, teaching and learning activities, sample approaches to developing an assessment task, performance descriptors, information about writing styles and text types, and employability skills.

Where schools were found not to be meeting VCAA assessment standards and requirements, this was due in many cases to the brief responses to the audit questionnaire or a lack of detail, meaning it was not possible for the Audit Panel to ascertain that assessment practices were in line with the requirements of the study design.

When responding to the School-based Assessment Audit, schools should not merely provide the outcome task question as published in the study design. Responses should contain more detailed information. Teachers are also advised to seek the assistance of the VCE Coordinator when completing the audit questionnaire to ensure that information provided aligns with the school’s documented policies.

In other cases, audits did not meet requirements as the VCE assessment principles of validity, equitability and efficiency were not adequately demonstrated. Common issues identified included the following:

* Some of the SAC tasks submitted through the audit assessed only a limited range of key skills and key knowledge in the study design.
* Some of the instructions that were provided to the students about the SAC tasks lacked detail and were not clear. It is important that tasks clearly articulate the topics and the subtopic of the assessment, the task type, the length of the assessment, the assessment criteria and the conditions under which the assessment task is to be conducted.
* Students were being over-assessed on the outcome, the time allocated was not appropriate, or the task may have caused undue stress for students.
* Some schools that provided students with a choice of assessment task gave task options that were not comparable in scope or demand, or that focused on different subtopics.
* Some task types and terminology used were not in line with the requirements of the current study design.
* A small number of schools did not observe the adjustments that were made to study designs in 2020 in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. While these changes were implemented for 2020 only, and in 2021 schools will revert to the original unadjusted study designs, schools are reminded that it is imperative that they monitor VCAA communications to stay up to date with amendments, updates or additional support materials. These include the [*VCAA Bulletin*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/news-and-events/bulletins-and-updates/bulletin/Pages/index.aspx) and the [Notices to Schools](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/schooladministration/notices/Pages/index.aspx).

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Unit 3

Outcome 1

Participate in a spoken exchange in the relevant second language to resolve a personal issue.

Task type option/s

*A three- to four-minute role-play, focusing on negotiating a solution to a personal issue.*

Most audited schools demonstrated that teachers had read the study design closely and that they had generated suitable tasks. Respondents endeavoured to provide students with opportunities to develop skills and knowledge to resolve a personal issue by negotiating a mutually agreeable outcome in a spoken exchange in the relevant second language on a selected subtopic.

This is a practical task that focuses on the students’ personal worldview. This proved to be successful and beneficial for students as it allowed them to cover the skill areas and knowledge from their experience. The subtopics selected and scenarios that were set were engaging and provided enough scope for students to develop vocabulary and grammar suitable for engagement in strategies of negotiation. Examples of tasks that were selected for this outcome included:

* negotiation with parents to allow the student to attend a friend’s party
* convincing parents to allow the student to volunteer for a charity
* alleviating parents’ concern about the student’s social media use
* negotiation with parents about how they could take greater care of the environment
* negotiation with parents about the student participating in a school exchange.

The strongest responses to the audit included clear instructions for students about the SAC task. The information was given to students well in advance, informing them of the nature of the task, the conditions under which the task would be completed, the key knowledge and the key skills students were expected to demonstrate, and the assessment criteria. The context, the roles of the speakers, and the purpose and length of the conversations were clearly set out, and where a choice of task was offered, the options were comparable and based on the same selected subtopic.

A positive finding from the audit was that schools devised their own unique SAC tasks that were tailored to their specific cohort of students. Schools also indicated that the role-play would be conducted by the teacher with each student individually. This ensures authentication of the task as students would not be able to rote-learn a scripted response.

The key knowledge and the key skills in the study design should be addressed throughout the preparation for this outcome. For example, students should not only develop skills to exchange information and link ideas in a logical and persuasive way, but also to use negotiation strategies including acknowledging and linking to other speakers and offering compromises.

However, a small number of poorly prepared tasks were also submitted. In these audits, concerns were noted for the following reasons:

* Some tasks that were submitted did not include or describe any specific personal issues for students to resolve; role-plays focused more on simply exchanging relevant information. Care must be taken when designing the task to ensure that the focus of the task is not too narrow, requiring highly specialised vocabulary. Students need an opportunity to demonstrate a breadth and depth of grammatical structures and vocabulary.
* Weaker responses offered very brief instructions to students about the task. The intended outcomes of the conversations, the roles of the interlocutors and the contexts of the conversations were not explicitly communicated to the students.
* Some audit responses indicated that schools gave students a choice of task but the options covered different topics and subtopics. Schools are reminded that when students are offered a choice of tasks, they should fall under the one theme, topic and subtopic, and they must be comparable in scope and demand. SAC tasks should reflect students’ learning in the unit of work taught, and the topic chosen for the SAC task is required to match the Themes/Topics table listed in the study design. This is to ensure that the assessment tasks are not excessive in their scope and that due consideration is given to student workload.

Assessment

The majority of schools indicated that they scheduled their Outcome 1 assessment within Weeks 4–6 of Term 1 or early Term 2.

Most schools indicated that they used the VCAA performance descriptors or modified the descriptors in order to allocate marks to the task. The weightings that were applied were appropriate, informing students of the depth, complexity and detail required.

Outcome 2

Interpret information from texts and write responses in the relevant second language.

Task type option/s

*Responses to specific questions or instructions using information extracted from written, spoken and viewed texts on the selected subtopic.*

Outcome 2 requires students to extract and synthesise information from written, spoken and viewed texts. Teachers are reminded that the stimulus texts should be on the same selected subtopic so that students are able to connect and compare ideas and identify different points of view or perspectives in the texts. Teachers need to ensure that there is scope for students to recast key information in a written form when responding to questions in the relevant second language.

The audit found that the key knowledge and key skills were generally covered in a thorough manner. There was a high level of understanding about how to design this assessment task. Choice of topic is crucial to ensure that students can achieve at their highest possible level. If the topic is very sophisticated, requiring technical vocabulary and expressions, it may not be accessible to students who have a lower ability. The task needs to enable students of all levels to demonstrate their skill.

The audit showed that teachers selected suitable written, spoken and viewed texts. Teachers selected written stimulus texts that included articles, reports, reviews and blogs in varying lengths. The length of spoken texts was mostly around two minutes. The viewed texts included posters, photos, graphs, charts, images with captions, and videos. Teachers are reminded that viewed texts may also include photographs, drawings, maps, films or posters. It is not a requirement that the viewed text be a film or film clip.

The audit showed that generally, the task questions were designed appropriately. Successful tasks required students to identify and interpret key ideas and detail. Tasks also required students to connect and compare ideas and identify different points of view. Schools are reminded that there should be questions with a range of difficulty to allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the texts and to analyse ideas presented. Many tasks included a variety of questions, including some that required a paragraph response. While it was common for tasks to focus on lower order questions, such as ‘who’, ‘what’ and ‘why’, many tasks also included higher order command terms such as ‘explain’, ‘discuss’ and so on. This provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their highest level of performance.

However, a small number of poorly prepared tasks were also submitted. In these audits, concerns were noted for the following reasons:

* Some schools split the SAC task into three smaller tasks: Listening and Responding; Reading and Responding; and Viewing and Responding. This approach is not in line with the requirements of the study design.
* In some tasks that were submitted, either no viewed text or no spoken text was included as a stimulus, which resulted in students being given incomplete stimulus materials. Therefore, a significant portion of the key knowledge and key skills were not addressed. Please note that for Unit 3 Outcome 2, teachers are required to provide three or more texts that must include a combination of written, spoken and viewed texts.
* There were a small number of submissions that designed the Outcome 2 SAC tasks to focus on more than one topic rather than requiring students to focus on one topic. To reduce student workload in preparation for the task, students should not be required to prepare for multiple topics.
* A small number of audited schools submitted tasks that required responses in both English and the relevant second language. Teachers are reminded to refer to the study design. Assessment is not valid if students respond in English. Students are required to respond to all SAC tasks in the relevant second language at Units 3 and 4 level.
* In a small number of cases, the Audit Panel recommended that the indicated timeframe be reviewed. The task should be designed to ensure that students are able to complete it within the allocated timeframe. As a guide, teachers may refer to the *Advice for teachers* resource for their study, which suggests that 80 minutes may be appropriate for this task.
* A small number of audited schools indicated that they used stimulus texts sourced from commercially produced resources. It is recommended that schools modify the commercially produced materials significantly in order to prevent authentication issues. Teachers are reminded that advice about Authentication is provided in the [*VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*.](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx)

Assessment

Most of the audited schools chose to set this SAC task around Week 4 of Term 2. Most schools indicated that they used the VCAA performance descriptors or modified the descriptors in order to allocate marks to the task. The weightings that were applied were appropriate in reflecting the depth, complexity and detail required. It is a requirement that the performance descriptors/modified marking scheme be explained to the students prior to the assessment being undertaken.

Outcome 3

Express ideas in a personal, informative or imaginative piece of writing in the relevant second language.

Task type option/s

*An approximately 250-word personal, informative or imaginative piece of writing.*

The audit responses indicated that schools addressed most of the key knowledge and key skills in their teaching and learning programs, and that the tasks generally provided students with scope to demonstrate achievement of the outcome. While most schools indicated that they were aware of the requirements of the reaccredited study design, some schools re-used assessment tasks that were based on the previous study design.

Tasks that were submitted covered subtopics such as future career goals, a reflection on school life, or a reflection on participating in an overseas school exchange. Most teachers selected subtopics that suited the development of skills in writing for reflection, informing or storytelling, and the text types suitable to these styles of writing.

The strength of successfully designed tasks was evident when there was enough scope in the subtopic for students of all abilities to perform at their highest level. Most of the set tasks that were submitted provided adequate direction to students in defining a context, purpose and audience for each writing task prompt. The task should also clearly indicate the text type and the style of the writing required for the response. Teachers should also indicate the expected word length of the response. In most cases, the questions were given both in the relevant second language and in English to support student responses.

In many cases, teachers provided a number of options for the writing task. There were different approaches to setting this task. Some schools required students to prepare for only one of these three styles of writing, whereas in other schools there were task options set for all three writing styles.

However, a small number of poorly prepared tasks were also submitted. In these audits, concerns were noted for the following reasons:

* Some of the tasks did not lend themselves well to a response in a personal, informative or imaginative style of writing. Some of the tasks that were submitted may have elicited a response that was persuasive in nature. Tasks need to be less prescriptive and more open in terms of scope.
* Some tasks offered students choices of options that were not equitable in scope and demand. The set audiences and text types also need to match the given context and writing style when designing writing tasks. It is recommended that teachers utilise the support materials *Main characteristics of text types* and *Main characteristics of writing styles,* available on the *Advice for teachers* webpage for their study, to assist in the development of the required skills for writing. Teachers should also note that it is not a requirement to offer students a choice of task. Some schools provided one task for all students.
* Some of the audit submissions indicated that schools re-used assessment tasks that had been created for the previous study design. Schools must be referring to the latest version of the study design when designing SAC tasks.
* Some schools also required students to prepare for several subtopics for this outcome. Where students have been offered a choice of tasks for Outcome 3, they should all focus on the one subtopic to avoid over-assessment and to ensure that assessment is comparable in terms of scope and demand. Schools should consider issues of student workload in preparing for SAC tasks. Assessment should not generate undue stress for students that may unduly diminish their performance.
* Some submissions indicated that schools are running multiple classes that complete the same SAC task at different times. Please note that where there is a time lapse between classes undertaking a SAC task, it is imperative that each class completes a different, comparable task. Schools must ensure that robust processes are in place to ensure tasks are delivered equitably and that student work can be authenticated adequately.

Assessment

Most schools scheduled this SAC task at the end of Term 2, providing students with opportunities to practise the different styles of writing in the different text types and to deepen their understanding of the concepts and ideas embedded in the subtopic.

Most schools indicated that they used the VCAA performance descriptors or modified the descriptors in order to allocate marks to the task. The weightings that were applied were appropriate in reflecting the depth, complexity and detail required.

Unit 4

Outcome 1

Share information, ideas and opinions in a spoken exchange in the relevant second language.

Task type option/s

*A three- to four-minute interview providing information and responding to questions about a cultural product or practice.*

Many schools chose a subtopic from ‘The language-speaking communities’ or ‘The world around us’ as the focus for this outcome. A variety of subtopics were indicated, such as environmental issues, migration, healthy living, film, sports, cuisine, places of interest, superstitions and stereotypes.

According to the study design, the selected subtopic for the assessment may be the same as the subtopic for Outcome 2. Some of the schools that were audited took this option, while others chose to focus on a different subtopic.

Many of the audited schools’ assessment tasks were developed in line with the requirements of the study design, covering the key knowledge and key skills. Set tasks involved an interview with the teacher about the specific subtopic studied. A variety of question types were used in the development of the exchange to ensure that students of all ability levels were able to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills.

Strong responses informed the students that the task is an interview on a particular subtopic, the length of the interview in minutes, the date of the assessment, the allocated mark/weighting that would contribute to the unit result, and the roles of the student and the teacher. The students were also instructed that the interview would be done in class with the teacher and that it would be recorded, ensuring students were well placed to demonstrate their highest possible level of performance.

However, a small number of poorly prepared tasks were also submitted. In these audits, concerns were noted for the following reasons:

* Some of the prompts included in submitted tasks were not specific enough to allow students to exchange or justify their opinions and ideas in their interview. The prompts were relatively generic, and students had to anticipate possible prompts or exchanges individually for their interviews without adequate support.
* Some tasks lacked instructions to students and did not provide appropriate information about the task type, the length of the task and the conditions of the assessment.
* Some responses did not clearly indicate the cultural product or practice that was the focus of the outcome. Cultural products or practices can be drawn from a diverse range of texts, activities and creations. In addition to providing information, the topic selected should enable the student to offer justification of their opinions and effectively distinguish factual information and personal perspectives.
* Some tasks that were submitted were set as an oral presentation. The task prescribed in the study design for this outcome is an interview, and it is therefore not appropriate to set an oral presentation as particular key knowledge and key skills would be neglected. Teachers are reminded that the outcome statement for Unit 4 Outcome 1 is ‘Share information, ideas and opinions in a spoken exchange’ in the relevant second language’. The task for this outcome is ‘a three- to four-minute interview providing information and responding to questions about a cultural product or practice’. Students are expected to develop skills to select relevant information for the spoken exchange and in response to questions; exchange and justify opinions and ideas, and recognise and respond to questions and cues for turn-taking.
* Some tasks required students to bring an image into the assessment task. Teachers are reminded to refer to the key knowledge and key skills published in the study design. Although the interview focuses on the cultural product or practice, there is no requirement for a visual or physical representation of that product or practice to be brought into the assessment. However, teachers may allow students to bring support materials such as a visual stimulus to support their interview, bearing in mind that students are to be assessed only on the key knowledge and key skills as prescribed in the study design.
* Some submissions indicated that schools are running multiple classes that complete the same SAC task at different times. Please note that where there is a time lapse between classes undertaking a SAC task, each class must sit a different, comparable task. Schools must ensure that robust processes are in place to ensure tasks are delivered equitably and that student work can be authenticated adequately.

Assessment

While most schools that were audited scheduled the assessment in the first four weeks of Term 3, some schools scheduled it at the end of Term 3.

Most schools indicated that they used the VCAA performance descriptors or modified the descriptors in order to allocate marks to the task. The weightings that were applied were appropriate in reflecting the depth, complexity and detail required.

In some cases, schools indicated that they developed and used their own performance descriptors. In this case, the marking scheme used to assess a student’s level of performance should accurately reflect the key knowledge and key skills as prescribed in the study design for the outcome. They should also be very clear and be explained to students before they commence the task.

Outcome 2

Analyse information from written, spoken and viewed texts for use in a written response in the relevant second language.

Task type option/s

*An approximately 250-word / 650 cha (Korean) / 250 character (Chinese SL) / 300 character (Chinese SLA) / 450 ji (Japanese SL) written response for a specific audience and purpose, incorporating information from three or more texts.*

Most schools chose a topic and a subtopic from the theme ‘The language-speaking communities’ or ‘The world around us’ as the focus for this outcome. The study design provides the option for Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 to cover the same subtopic. While many schools chose this option, some of the schools that were audited chose to focus on different subtopics for Outcome 2.

In general, audit responses demonstrated that teachers had read the study design carefully. Most of the tasks that were submitted were in line with the requirements of the study design. In most cases, the instructions to the students were very clear about the task type, the length of the assessment and the conditions under which it was to be completed.

Teachers selected a range of appropriate written, spoken and viewed texts. The selected written stimulus texts included articles, survey reports and diary entries. The selected viewed texts included photographs, graphs, posters, videos and charts.

The task questions that were provided were generally appropriate and offered adequate opportunity for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills for the outcome. Tasks were designed to give students the opportunity to produce extended responses that drew upon information presented across all the stimulus texts. They required students to identify relationships and make comparisons between the key ideas and perspectives expressed or observed in the texts. Tasks required students to produce an extended written response.

However, a small number of poorly prepared tasks were also submitted. In these audits, concerns were noted for the following reasons:

* Some schools split the SAC task into three smaller tasks: Listening and Responding; Reading and Responding; and Viewing and Responding. This approach is not in line with the requirements of the study design.
* Some schools designed the task to cover more than one topic. The stimulus texts that are selected should focus on the same subtopic so that students are able to identify relationships and make comparisons between the key ideas and perspectives expressed or observed in the texts.
* In a small number of audit responses, the tasks required students to respond in the incorrect language.
* In a small number of tasks, either no viewed text or no spoken text was included as a stimulus, which resulted in students being given incomplete stimulus materials. Therefore, a significant portion of the key knowledge and key skills were not addressed. Please note that for Unit 4 Outcome 2, the outcome statement is ‘Analyse information from written, spoken and viewed texts for use in a written response’ in the relevant second language. The task for this outcome clearly states that the response must incorporate ‘information from three or more texts’. Teachers are required to provide three or more stimulus texts that must include a combination of written, spoken and viewed texts.
* In a small number of audit submissions, the information and concepts provided in the stimulus texts did not relate closely enough to the task. There should be sufficient depth of content in the stimulus texts to enable students to produce an extended written response. A clear task with a specified audience and purpose is needed.
* In some instances, students were expected to respond to a large volume of stimulus materials in a very short timeframe. Teachers are reminded that student workload must be taken into consideration and that over-assessment of the outcome should be avoided. Teachers may refer to the suggested time in the *Advice for teachers* resource for their study, which suggests an 80-minute timeframe for this task.
* In some cases, the instructions provided to the students lacked detail, such as how much time would be provided to complete the task, whether support materials could be brought into the task, and what kind of response students were expected to produce.
* Some submissions indicated that schools are running multiple classes that complete the same SAC task at different times. Please note that where there is a time lapse between classes undertaking a SAC task, each class must sit a different, comparable task. Schools must ensure that robust processes are in place to ensure tasks are delivered equitably and that student work can be authenticated adequately.

Assessment

Schools indicated that they scheduled this assessment around the middle of Term 3. Most schools indicated that they used the VCAA performance descriptors or modified the descriptors in order to allocate marks to the task. The weightings that were applied were appropriate in reflecting the depth, complexity and detail required.

Outcome 3

Present information, concepts and ideas in evaluative or persuasive writing on an issue in the relevant second language.

Task type option/s

*An approximately 300-word / 700 cha (Korean SL) / 300 character (Chinese SL) / 350 character (Chinese SLA) / 500 ji (Japanese SL) evaluative or persuasive piece of writing.*

Many schools chose to focus on a topic and subtopic from the theme ‘The world around us’ for this outcome.

Most schools chose to upload an Outcome 3 task for feedback from the audit panel. The submitted materials showed that the key knowledge and key skills were covered well and that schools provided students with relevant information on the assessment well in advance, ensuring that students had time to develop their skills in persuasive and evaluative writing. The strongest audit responses uploaded tasks that clearly indicated the style of writing and the text type required, the context and purpose of the writing task, and the target audience. Strong tasks also clearly indicated the conditions of the assessment, the length of the response and the time allocated.

When developing the task for this outcome, teachers are reminded that they can select one of the styles of writing to focus on, or they may choose to have students prepare for both styles. The wording of the task provided to students should include the specified audience, the specified text type and the purpose of the task. The text type chosen should also enable students to produce persuasive or evaluative writing. It is also suggested that attention be given to the wording of the task to avoid misleading students to inadvertently produce personal writing or informative writing. Techniques in persuading others or evaluating arguments should be developed and practised. Many schools gave students choices to allow them to demonstrate different levels of achievement. However, it is not a requirement to offer students a choice of task. Some schools provided one task for all students.

A small number of poorly prepared tasks were also submitted. In these audits, concerns were noted for the following reasons:

* Some of the weaker audit responses that were submitted provided task options to students from different topics and subtopics. Some offered choices from different themes. Schools are reminded that when offering students a choice of tasks, they should fall under the one theme, topic and subtopic, and they must be comparable in scope and demand. The SAC task should reflect students’ learning in the unit of work taught, and the topic chosen for the SAC task is required to match the Themes/Topics table listed in the study design. This is to ensure that tasks reflect the [VCE assessment principle](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/vce/VCE%20assessment%20principles.docx)s of efficiency and equity and that they do not cause undue stress for students.
* Some submissions indicated that schools are running multiple classes that complete the same SAC task at different times. Please note that where there is a time lapse between classes undertaking a SAC task, each class must sit a different, comparable task. Schools must ensure that robust processes are in place to ensure tasks are delivered equitably and that student work can be authenticated adequately.

Assessment

All schools that were audited opted to use the VCAA descriptors in order to allocate marks for this task. The weightings that were applied were appropriate in reflecting the depth, complexity and detail required.