

2024 ASSESSMENT REPORT ENT315124 ENGLISH INQUIRY

General Comments

There were only approximately 45 students enrolled in the first year of English Inquiry Level 3.

Teachers have noted a high level of student engagement with this course. Students who chose this course in 2024 tended to previously have low engagement in English, but wanted the demands of a pre-tertiary subject. Students have commented on the ways in which studying English Inquiry has enabled them to gain confidence and curiosity in this subject.

Most students received SA and CA awards. There were just five EAs awarded this year. High achieving students clearly created multiple drafts of their work, and developed sophisticated multimodal pieces. They were able to articulate how each piece of the folio worked towards their inquiry question and referenced accurately, using MLA 9.

Folios in the SA and CA range still demonstrated some engagement with their question and highlighted the importance of this subject for a diverse range of Tasmanian students. It was clear that for many students, redrafting work was something fairly new for them. This year's timeline for Module 3 meant that the process was more rushed than it should be.

Teachers are encouraged to break up the timeline for Module 3 and adjust their scope and sequence to include a week at the end of Term 1 for choosing a topic. Choosing the minor texts and completing the first draft of the analytical essay in Term 2 would also be helpful in ensuring the thinking and drafting process is underway.

Students need to get comfortable with the idea of redrafting their writing in Modules 1 and 2. They should also spend time in Modules 1 and 2 experimenting with creative and persuasive writing. Reflective writing is also essential to a strong folio, so understanding what effective reflective writing might look like is important.

Multimodal tasks in Modules 1 and 2 will also help prepare students for the demands of the Module 3 folio. Whilst many students this year used Canva, Photoshop, free website construction software, and YouTube, others took on a more tactile and 'analogue' approach when creating multimodal work. Students should not be afraid to use pens, paint, clay and pencils! One particularly outstanding creative response was a musical composition. The student recorded it for their folio and wrote to the word limit explaining how the compositional choices responded to the texts they had analysed in their comparative essay. Not only does this reflect the range of possibilities of multimodality, but it highlights the strengths of this course, as it provides many options for a deep engagement with texts.

The more successful students demonstrated a high degree of academic rigour and attention to detail throughout their folios:

- They integrated their interests and their personal relationship to the topic.

- Stronger folios created distinct yet cohesive responses for each section, with no overlap of material or style in the persuasive and creative responses.
- Strong multimodal responses ensured that the form and content worked effectively together.
- Weaker folios did not address their question, either wholly or in part.
- They integrated their interests and their personal relationship to the topic.
- Stronger folios created distinct yet cohesive responses for each section, with no overlap of material or style in the persuasive and creative responses.
- Strong multimodal responses ensured that the form and content worked effectively together.
- Weaker folios did not address their question, either wholly or in part.

Weaker folios focused discussion on the ideas and issues reflected in texts, rather than analysing language techniques and the ways in which these techniques shape perspectives on the topic. Folios that reached C ratings only tended to lack polish, did not provide effective formatting techniques and tended not to write a strongly comparative analytical essay.

Some teachers noted the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in initial drafts of the folio and ensured that students restarted their work from scratch. Students should stay away from A.I at all stages of the folio (and the year). It does not serve the student to outsource their thinking or their editing. Putting work through sites such as Grammarly or Quilbot is not advised as the work can then be flagged as A.I generated. The purpose of this folio is to allow for student engagement and growth, learning about the practical, persuasive and creative ways in which the discipline of English engages with local and global issues. The folio also allows students to improve their written expression. Students who integrated their values, experiences and perspectives on their chosen topic produced authentic and interesting folios. Students who submit work partly or wholly generated from A.I sites or do not accurately reference use of secondary sources will not achieve satisfactory ratings in this subject.

The study journal is an integral part of Module 3. It ensures academic integrity and can be helpful when writing some parts of the reflective statement. It might be helpful for teachers to consider using some form of a study journal in Modules 1 and 2. The journal can be kept in digital or paper form but must be updated regularly throughout Module 3.

Librarians are an invaluable resource for English Inquiry students. They can offer support with text selection and finding secondary source material. Librarians supported both teachers and students throughout the first year of English Inquiry. They also supported students with their referencing requirements.

Students must reach the minimum word count and need to accurately fill in all aspects of the TASC cover page, including titles for each folio piece. Folios outside of the word limit are penalised on Criterion 1 by one rating. It is helpful for students to include plain text versions of their persuasive and creative responses in an appendix if their formatting could in any way obscure reading the work.

Folio Component

Folio question or statement

A good inquiry question or statement guides the candidate's focus across all four pieces of the folio. Insightful inquiry questions in 2024 were quite succinct and included a focus on the transdisciplinary element language devices, perspectives and points of view.

It can be helpful to include a quote as a stimulus, however this is not essential.

Using the words 'how' and 'why' in the inquiry question allow for evaluation of the multiple meanings available in the chosen texts.

Candidates must remember that this is an English course and therefore questions must incorporate the language of the discipline.

The TASC guidelines encourage students to write themselves into the question. Candidates can do this by considering how they are positioned to respond to these texts' perspectives on the topic, and what other points of view might be available.

Reflective Statement

The reflective statement sets the tone for the rest of the folio and needs to be drafted very carefully.

Strong, considered reflective statements established a clear understanding for the markers of the direction and purpose of their folio, and how their thinking process had changed throughout the study.

Students should see the reflective statement as the key that helps the markers unlock the other parts of the folio. Students should use this statement to outline how the three subsequent pieces of work link together. They should also examine the transdisciplinary element and why this was selected. The reflective statement is also an opportunity for the student to consider their own views on the topic, and how it might relate to their own experiences and values.

Students should be able to articulate metacognition – thinking about their thinking – as opposed to detailing the procedural steps taken to put together their folio. They should outline their research strategies.

Candidates should look at Criterion 8, Element 1 to ensure they have developed an appropriate reflective statement.

Comparative Essay

A strong comparative essay clearly compares and contrasts the three chosen texts in relation to the question and the topic. There may be more of an emphasis on the major text but it must be compared with the other two minor texts. Not every paragraph needs to be comparative, but a good deal of the analysis needs to compare language techniques, perspectives and points of view in order to adhere to the requirements of this folio piece.

Judicious use of quotes followed by some close textual analysis enables a strong interpretation of the texts. Many students in the C range for this section just included quotes followed by an explanation. To move beyond explanation and description, analysis of techniques (which may be literary, visual, rhetorical and so on) is required. Strong folios also engaged with the conventions used in transdisciplinary texts (for example, in advertising, science writing, philosophy, opinion articles).

Strong essays used transitions to signpost their comparative writing and build an argument. These essays were structured in a way that enabled the student to analyse, compare and evaluate point of view and perspective in the three chosen texts.

Well-drafted essays had topic sentences that focused on key ideas or techniques across all three texts. Weaker essays had single texts driving each paragraph. Some students were able to 'zoom in' and 'zoom out' in their analytical writing, providing detailed analysis as well as an interpretation of the texts' purposes and effects. Evaluation of the texts is required to reach the A range in the essay, particularly for Criterion 3 (Elements 1, 3, 4) and Criterion 8 Element 2.

When redrafting the essay, students should consider paragraph order and how this can help build an argument to a strong conclusion. Conclusions in effective essays tended to provide a synthesis of the essay's arguments, rather than just a summary of previous paragraphs.

Responses in the A and B+ range included an understanding of the transdisciplinary conventions and expectations. However, the chosen discipline (such as Environmental Science, Sociology or Psychology) should not dominate the folio. It is essential that students undertake their English Inquiry folio without overlapping work from other TASC-accredited courses. Students are encouraged to be inspired by their other subjects and courses but must ensure that they primarily adhere to the expectations of the discipline of English.

Persuasive Response

The form and intention of the persuasive response should be clarified and justified in the reflective statement.

Strong responses used the structure and language techniques of persuasive writing and clearly responded to the ideas explored in the comparative essay. These responses had a clear, single voice in their persuasive response. This does not have to be the student's own voice; it can be effective to create a persona to explore a direct point of view and perspective on a topic. However, it is probably easier for students to tap into their own opinions and passions when it comes to developing a persuasive response.

A number of strong persuasive responses used the form of an online opinion article. Not only were effective responses well-written, but they included appropriate and sophisticated multimodal elements that adhered the genre conventions. Students should consider the kind of persuasive argument they are making and then look carefully at the ways in which these kinds of arguments are usually presented.

Astute use of formatting software such as Canva and Photoshop is helpful to ensure that form and content work together. However, it is entirely possible to create work on paper and photograph the persuasive response for the folio. Students who have limited access to digital technology are capable of presenting strong persuasive work in this course.

Creative Response

The form and intention of the creative response should be clarified and justified in the reflective statement.

Engaging creative responses were innovative and harnessed students' strengths. Some examples of excellent creative responses included YouTube videos, short documentaries and drawings to accompany stories and scripts. Some students wrote engaging short stories and included their own sophisticated photography. A particularly strong folio included a 3–4 minute recording of their original musical composition. The student wrote 1200 – 1600 words on the choices made in the composition and their links to the texts explored in their analytical essay.

Students should be mindful of using a first-person Indigenous voice in their work if they do not come from an Indigenous background. In the publishing, art and entertainment world, using this perspective is not appropriate. However, if a student is from an Indigenous community and chooses to write from this perspective, they should note this connection in their reflective statement.

Some students ensured there was an effective interplay between words and other text forms. They were rewarded with strong ratings, particularly in Criterion 8 Element 4 and Criterion 2 Element 2.

It is important that students remember to develop the multimodal element alongside the written part of the work, not just after the writing has been completed. Students do not have to just use digital multimodal techniques. Drawing, sculpture, collage, music and other creative forms can be drawn upon. Graphic novels, video essays short films and film scripts with visuals could make for strong creative responses, time and organisational skills permitting.

Referencing

A number of students clearly ran out of time and did not submit a polished, single Works Cited list and did not use accurate in-text referencing.

Students should submit a single Works Cited list at the end of the folio, using MLA 9 referencing.

Work on referencing throughout the drafting process rather than leaving it to the last minute.

MLA 9 – ensure that all details are thoroughly checked. A number of candidates submitted incorrectly formatted Works Cited lists.

Accurate in-text referencing is needed throughout the folio for strong ratings on Criterion 1. Again, check MLA 9 requirements when referencing different text types.

Titles were often not correctly formatted. These editing details need careful attention in a Level 3 English course.