



## 2008 School-assessed Task Report

### Food and Technology GA2

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#### GENERAL COMMENTS

It is important for all Food and Technology teachers to read this report and apply the given information to their teaching because problems identified in 2008 were identical to those mentioned in the 2006 and 2007 School-assessed Task reports. Consequently, this report will repeat information from preceding years.

Teachers must use the current year's 'Administrative advice for School assessment' VCAA *Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET* supplement, available on the VCAA website <[www.vcaa.vic.edu.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au)> to ensure that they are fully conversant with the task. Teachers must also use the *VCE Food and Technology Study Design* (accreditation period 2006–2010), which clearly states the key knowledge and skills required for demonstrating Outcome 3 Unit 3 (Develop a design plan folio that effectively satisfies the requirements of a design brief) and Outcome 1 Unit 4 (Implement the design plan for a set of five to eight food items, and evaluate the outcome of the product against the requirements of the design brief developed in Outcome 3 Unit 3) on which the School-assessed Task is based.

Consistent with the outcomes in the *VCE Food and Technology Study Design*, the School-assessed Task was completed over two semesters, with the planning aspects of the task carried out for Outcome 3 Unit 3 and the production and evaluation aspects for Outcome 1 Unit 4. It was gratifying to see most teachers have implemented the requirements of the School-assessed Task. There are still, however, teachers who are not fully conversant with these requirements.

Professional development should be accessed through the Melbourne Museum (during the Season of Excellence Top Designs Exhibition); subject associations such as Home Economics Victoria, Home Economics Institute of Australia – Victoria (HEIAV) and local networks. These are very worthwhile as teachers can work together both on the development and the assessment of the task. It is particularly important for schools with low enrolments in the study to work with other local schools. While the use of commercial material including textbooks assists in understanding the task it is important teachers continually refer to the appropriate VCAA documents.

All VCE teachers should use the current year's *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook* for information relating to authentication. Teachers are required to monitor and record the development of the School-assessed Task and ensure students acknowledge all resources, including sources of recipes or information related to tools, equipment, ingredients or processes. Bibliographies are a necessary tool for authentication and must be presented by all students in an appropriate format.

For visitation purposes, the samples of the set of preserved food items needed to be clearly identified by student number. Students were required to keep three samples of their work that demonstrated a variety of different secondary processing techniques. They did not need to keep samples of all food items that comprised the product. Also, it is important to recognise that these are **samples** of the food items. Teachers must ensure that both these samples and the students' written work are kept until after the visitation process. Several schools did not use a variety of secondary processing techniques and this impacted on their students'

outcomes. It is important for teachers within a network to ensure they refer to VCAA material to ensure they are on task. In 2008 the work from several schools in the same area showed similar problems and it would appear this was a result of shared information within a network.

The School-assessed Task required students to produce:

For Unit 3:

- A design brief (related to School-assessed Task Assessment Criterion 1)
- and
- Criteria for evaluation (related to Criterion 1)
- and
- A design plan (related to Criterion 2)
- and
- A production plan (related to Criterion 3)

For Unit 4

- Production work accompanied by a pictorial and written record of progress and modifications (related to Criteria 4, 5, 6 and 7)
- and
- An evaluation report (related to Criterion 8 and Criterion 9)

Planning and organisational skills are important for the successful completion of the School-assessed Task. Many students reflected these skills in their written work.

Creativity was apparent in many folios although many students still stayed in their comfort zone, which often did not allow for development of creative ideas. A major concern continues to be teacher directed design briefs. The design brief is written by the student and forms the basis for the development of planning their food product. Students are writing design briefs that are very structured and lack individuality. The brief is assessed so it is important that this is the student's work and not that of the teacher. Teachers should also ensure that they do not give students categories of food items to select from and to include in the design brief. Such lists limit creativity as they restrict student choices. The design brief needs to describe a situation, need or occasion based on a context or scenario and specifications (considerations and constraints). Increasingly teachers are encouraging students to base the task on students' individual interests.

Students took a variety of different approaches in the types of products they produced. Catering for specific functions such as dinner parties, celebratory lunches and fundraising activities for school or community organisations are popular. For this type of task students generally produce sample/tasting menus for their clients. Some students developed their product based on a specific food (for example, potatoes). It is important that teachers allow their students the opportunity to achieve at the highest possible level of performance, by encouraging them to think broadly and take advantage of local resources. Teachers need to help students identify limitations of their choices, for example preparation of a traditional Kosher meal without access to a Kosher kitchen or preparation of a meal based on a specific type of cuisine without access to traditional ingredients such as herbs and spices could be problematic.

Increasingly students are demonstrating creativity in the presentation of their food items and the record of planning and production. Many students incorporated annotated photographs in their folio to document production activities and the final product. It is pleasing to note that students are using their photographs as evidence of activities rather than decorative purposes.

Collected images are more frequently being annotated to explain why they have been included in the research.

## **SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

### **Design plan folio**

#### **Criterion 1**

##### **Skill in developing a design brief and evaluation criteria**

- Ability to develop a design brief including specifications (considerations and constraints).
- Ability to develop relevant evaluation criteria.

To achieve a 'very high', students were required to complete a thorough design brief that included all relevant information from which the criteria for evaluation could be drawn. The information within the design brief should identify the necessary specifications related to the task. The majority of students identified these specifications separately into constraints or considerations. This approach focuses students on aspects that are fixed (constraints) and those that have some flexibility (considerations). The specifications in some cases appeared to be afterthoughts that were based on the scope of the task published in Supplement 1 to the 2008 February *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET* No. 56 – 'Administrative advice for School assessment'. Students who achieved a very high were able to incorporate the scope of the task within their brief in language that reflected the scenario. Some students continue to directly copy details from the scope of the task into their design brief and then base their evaluation criteria on these details. Many students included solutions in their design briefs, such as the number of required food items, complex processes and names of food items. These approaches indicate a lack of understanding of the design process and function of the design brief.

In order for students to develop a good understanding of their specific food product they are required to write a thorough description of the context or scenario for which the product is required. Students who achieved very high marks provided the context or scenario that could lead to, or was based on research. This assists in the development of more creative ideas.

Criteria for evaluation should be written as questions. Students who achieved a very high were able to formulate criteria that reflected all the information contained in the design brief. Students whose design briefs were well written were able to develop a range of criteria that included questions on the theme and the overall product and not just questions based on the scope of the task. The theme around which the design brief is based should easily provide an opportunity for the development of evaluation criteria. As the theme is the focus of the task then the criterion that it relates to is generally listed first. Many students did not develop a criterion based on their chosen theme which is somewhat surprising given that the theme is integral to the food items produced.

A criterion such as 'Was I able to produce five to eight food items?' is based solely on the scope of the task and shows a lack of ability to develop evaluation criteria specifically related to the student's own design brief. It also reflects lack of understanding of the process and consequently a set of questions similar to this could not score a 'very high'. When developing evaluation criteria students need to cover a range of aspects relevant to the product they develop that would elicit more than a very short response. Students who scored a 'very high' often did not have a large number of criteria but the ones they had developed were relevant to information in the design brief and specifications.

While some teachers are stating that the School-assessed Task is a lot of work, it was evident that teachers asked students to write justifications of their evaluation criteria which is not a requirement of the task.

Helpful hints:

- Ensure the students include information related to who, what, when, where, why and how in the development of their design brief.
- Ensure students are focussing on the main requirements in their design brief when writing evaluation criteria.
- Ensure that design briefs do not contain solutions, such as specific names or number of food items.
- Evaluation criteria must be derived from information in the design brief.
- Ensure that what the student wants to do is achievable.

## **Criterion 2**

### **Skill in developing a design plan in response to the design brief**

- Range of research (from acknowledged sources) relevant to the design brief.
- Development of ideas for possible food items in response to the design brief.
- Selection and justification of the decisions made for the set of food items (the product), including the identification of the two foods and their commercial equivalents for comparison.

Many teachers have expressed concern at the perceived quantity of work involved for students to achieve a 'very high' for this criterion. In many cases students produced an excessive amount of work, some of which was not relevant to the task. Students were required to document research and develop ideas for suitable food items that could be produced to make up the product.

In developing their design plan, students needed to explore a wide range of ideas that could be used to creatively satisfy the requirements of the design brief. Students who scored highly documented their thought processes when evaluating these ideas.

In 2008 this criterion contained the requirement that all research was from acknowledged sources. This referencing is required as many students continue to download images, cut and paste information from the Internet or copy information from textbooks. Section 10.1 of the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook 2008* states '... a student must ensure that all unacknowledged work submitted for assessment is genuinely his/her own'. One of the VCAA rules which a student must observe is that a student must acknowledge all resources used including text, website, and source material. Therefore students should use footnotes or the Harvard method of acknowledgement as well as including a bibliography. Being the first year of the change it was noted that many teachers had not expected their students to use any more acknowledgement than a bibliography.

Many students used concept maps to develop their ideas, but did not present a discussion about their choices. The discussion should start with the original, generic product ideas and be refined through to the final, specific choices. Students were required to develop a range of ideas before making their final selection. It appeared that many students had predetermined their final food items without completing this necessary step in the design process. In developing a range of suitable ideas, it is important that each is a feasible item for the production. That is, it reflects the requirements of the design brief. It would appear that some students have a list of suitable items given to them by their teacher from which they chose food items as possible ideas. This approach indicates a lack of understanding of the design process by the student.

When developing ideas students should be encouraged to be creative. Creativity is reflected in what is made as well as how it is made. This can be reflected in the use of different types of containers, incorporating alternative ingredients, producing the food items in a form to suit

the theme. Students showed creativity at this stage of the design plan through discussions, scanning recipes and annotating them with relevant changes. Creativity was also shown through using magazine photographs and annotating them in relation to how they could use the ideas in their work. Using such methods enabled students to score highly on this criterion as they were able to demonstrate their thought processes. These students were also able to describe what they intended to produce and identify the food items that would be used in their commercial comparisons. When identifying the commercial products it is important to note the name and manufacturer of the product. Research needed to be relevant to the development of ideas and appropriately noted and acknowledged. Students who researched their theme/scenario were better able to make relevant decisions about food items that were appropriate for the event/function etc.

Students who scored well in the development of their design plan included a general discussion of what they would make and noted specific decisions about each particular food item. Students needed to **discuss** the food preparation and food processing activities that they would carry out. Lists do not reflect an adequate depth of knowledge. Within this discussion, students needed to refer back to information contained in the design brief. Students' choices about their food items had to reflect information in the design brief.

While acknowledging this criterion contains a large amount of work, it is suggested that teachers break the criterion down using the dot points for assessment.

Helpful hints:

- Always ask students whether their collected information is relevant to the task; if the answer is no then it should not be included.
- Relevance is a key word in this criterion.

### **Criterion 3**

#### **Skill in planning for implementation**

- Skill in developing an overall timeline and individual food item production plans (or individual production sessions) to produce each food item (the product).
- Knowledge and selection of the main ingredients, tools, equipment and processes required for the set of food items.
- Appropriate knowledge of hygiene and safety.

The production plan should contain three main elements: how the student plans to use their time; documentation of the intended ingredients, tools, equipment and processes; and safety and hygiene to ensure satisfactory completion of their food items.

The planning of production work involves an overall time plan, with students determining when they will make each food item. The production plan should include all information relevant to the task. Many students used a calendar format and included the due dates for food orders, submission of production plans and completion of the School-assessed Task. The overall time plan should commence from the beginning of the School-assessed Task, when students first receive information about the task, to its completion.

It was noted that schools who started the task either early in the school year or as a task at the end of the previous year (roll over program) should identify this as the beginning of the task. The start of the overall time plan is at the point students are given School-assessed Task information.

The production plan should outline how the student intends to use their production time to develop each food item. A well written plan should be detailed and clear enough for another person to follow, and include preparation and cleaning up. Copies of recipes are not production plans.

The second and third elements of this criterion relates to students' knowledge and selection of the main ingredients, tools and equipment and processes; as well as hygiene and safety factors they intend to use to complete the task. To achieve a 'very high', this information needed to be detailed and explain why that item was chosen and what particular hygiene and safety methods would be used in that particular production activity. Some students write a generic list of hygiene and safety for all food items. The better responses indicated specific procedures for each food item.

When researching an ingredient, students need to understand the properties and function of the ingredient as it relates to the food item that they are producing. Relevant research on flour that will be used in fettuccine should concentrate on the type of flour to be used (strong flour) and why it is the preferred flour for pasta – based on its functional properties. Similarly, when using eggs students should document the properties of the egg that make it suitable for that particular food item. It is also important that students who use the internet as a resource for recipes convert measurements into Australian equivalents as well as referring to ingredients by their Australian names. This conversion reflects that the student understands the ingredients being used. When referring to tools and equipment the reviewers are looking for any specific equipment not kept at a typical bench in a food technology room. Some schools still require their students to provide lists of alternate equipment that could be used for a process, which has never been a requirement of this study. Students need to understand why they use a specific piece of equipment in the preparation of a food item. For example, using a potato ricer when making gnocchi ensures that the potato mixture is lump free.

### **Production work and documentation**

The criteria below relate to the production sessions. Teachers were provided with information to assist in documenting the skills related to these criteria in Supplement 1 to the 2008 February *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET* No. 56 – 'Administrative advice for School assessment' (pages 55–56).

Although Supplement 1 to the 2008 February *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET* No. 56 – 'Administrative advice for School assessment' advised teachers to complete the Additional Teacher Comment sheet to document students' skills and competencies, this sheet was often not used effectively. Teachers need to relate their written comments to the specific criteria and how the student performed. It is not appropriate for teachers to comment on students' emotional or financial situations. Also the comments should be objective and not reflect the teachers' opinion of the student. Where appropriate, the samples of food items provided for visitation should reflect the written comments of the teacher.

The following four criteria reflect the production work and documentation including the record of decisions made during production, reasons for changes and evidence of production work in the form of photographs or text material. Comments student keep about their production work also assist in completing the work assessed using Criteria 8 and 9.

It is important to note that Criteria 4 to 9 relate to Unit 4 Outcome 1. Some schools are starting the School-assessed task production work part way through Unit 3. This starting date could disadvantage many students as they may not have the necessary skills and knowledge at this point for the School-assessed Task. In many folios it was evident that students carried out their research of ingredients, processes, tools and equipment after they had completed production work. Some students commented that their lack of planning contributed to their poor production work.

#### **Criterion 4**

##### **Skill in the application of food preparation and food processing techniques**

- Safe and hygienic application of a range of food preparation and food processing techniques.
- Links theoretical understanding with practical application.

The knowledge demonstrated in Criterion 3 should be reflected in the food items. As students use the ingredients listed in a recipe, they should be able to use appropriate tools, equipment and processes, and apply appropriate safety and hygiene practices that enable them to achieve the best possible outcome. Students who were able to use their knowledge in the production sessions usually achieved a ‘very high’ for this criterion.

Through the production of a set of food items, students were able to demonstrate skill in the safe and hygienic application of a wide range of food preparation and processing techniques. Students who achieved a ‘very high’ for this criterion were able to demonstrate a very high skill level in at least four complex processes as well as three food preservation techniques. They also demonstrated safe and hygienic practices throughout their production work which reflected the comments in their production plans.

The term ‘complex process’ still appears to be misunderstood by both students and teachers. A complex process is one that involves making critical decisions during the food production and processing activities that will directly affect the outcome. It is part of the ‘hands on’ process. Further advice about complex processes can be found on the VCE Food and Technology page of the VCAA website: [www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/studies/foodtech/foodtechindex.html](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/studies/foodtech/foodtechindex.html)

Helpful hints:

- Students also need to understand the meaning of complex processes for the examination. Therefore develop a class lesson on what is meant by the term and get students to evaluate a range of processes to decide if they are complex and why they are complex.
- Maintain good records of each student’s production sessions using the questions printed in Supplement 1 to the 2008 February *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET* No. 56 – ‘Administrative advice for School assessment’. These can be tabulated and copied in order to keep a record of each student’s production work and will be a useful reference for completing the Additional Teacher Comment sheet.

#### **Criterion 5**

##### **Skill in the use of tools and equipment**

- Appropriate choice of tools and equipment.
- Application of a range of tools and equipment.
- Links theoretical understanding with practical application.

Through the production of a set of food items, students were able to demonstrate their skill in the use of a range of tools and equipment. These skills were reflected in the quality and presentation of the completed product. The range of tools and equipment used by the students for this task should extend beyond the standard ‘bench equipment’. Frequently, students were restricted by not having access to a wide range of tools and equipment.

Helpful hints:

- Have students discuss available tools and equipment. Some students may be able to bring pieces that the school does not have, for example, a student making pastry may wish to use a silicon rolling pin instead of the traditional wooden type.
- It may be useful to have an equipment booking system so students can pre-book what they require during production sessions.

- Ask staff if they have any piece of specialised equipment that a student may require, for example, the school may only have one pasta maker and three students have decided to make pasta on the same day. A teacher may be willing to provide an extra machine.

## **Criterion 6**

### **Skill in implementing the plan**

- Extent to which the product reflects the plan.
- Reasons provided for alterations to the plan.
- Demonstrated organisation in the completion of five to eight food items.

When students had produced a well thought out production plan this was usually reflected in their products. However, many students continued to provide copies of recipes as production plans, which did not allow them to indicate their choices in regard to tools and equipment. It also did not reflect whether the student had used their time efficiently, especially if they had produced two items during a production session. These students were unlikely to achieve a very high as they could not demonstrate organisation. If a change in the production plan is required for any reason, the change needs to be recorded and justified. Students who had kept notes on their individual production plans had the information readily available. This criterion also reflects the students' ability to be organised over the production period. To achieve a 'very high' for this criterion students were able to submit food orders by due dates as well as having completed and used their production plans. They were also able to use the production time effectively and complete tasks as indicated in the production plan. Teachers need to keep notes in order to make a judgement on this criterion. Typically, teachers could record answers to questions such as: Was the student on time in regard to their individual plans? Did they bring anything extra they said they would?

## **Criterion 7**

### **Skill in presenting a completed, quality food product**

- Extent to which the product reflects a creative solution.
- Degree of difficulty in the food preparation and food processing techniques used.
- Maximisation of the qualities of food in processing and production.
- Accuracy of planning and informed decision making that reflects the design and production plan.

Students who scored a 'very high' on this criterion used either photographs or text-based evidence of their overall product. Photographs were annotated to provide additional information about their work. Students had another opportunity to demonstrate creativity and innovation in response to their design brief.

Presentation as well as the quality of food item itself is an important aspect of this criterion. Students should experience the challenge of developing their skills in the more difficult food preparation and processing techniques. It is important for students to recognise that this criterion relates to how they present their individual food items, and this should be reflected in the quality of the item – jars used for preserved items should be clean and label free; plates should be wiped free of spills.

Helpful hints:

- On their work plans students should include how they are going to present each food item; this includes type of plate, accessories, background. This will eliminate problems on the production day.
- If students chose not to photograph their product ensure that they write a description of the product.
- The teacher can take a photo of the final product as a reference for assessment.

## **Evaluation Report**

### **Criterion 8**

#### **Skill in evaluating the product and in making commercial comparisons**

- Skill in evaluating the product using previously developed criteria.
- Skill in evaluating and comparing two of the produced food items with similar commercial products.

Students must use their previously established criteria to evaluate the product. Students who achieved a ‘very high’ were able to respond to each of their evaluation criteria thoroughly, with reference to individual food items where appropriate. Relevant information is used to respond to each criterion. Students were **not** required to evaluate each individual food item. If the evaluation criteria are poor then the student struggles to develop detailed responses at this stage of the task.

The second part of this criterion assesses how well students are able to compare two of their individual food items with similar commercial products. Students scored highly when they tabulated information to show similarities and differences in sensory, physical and chemical properties. It is important that teachers ensure that students use the language of the study. Many students used nutrient information when discussing the chemical properties, which is not necessarily correct. Students should note additives and their impact on the food items being compared. Many students used a tasting panel to gather their data whereas the majority of students used individual assessment. It is assumed that students use the same evaluation tool/s for both comparisons. To achieve a ‘very high’ students need to use this data and draw a conclusion about which of the food items they prefer (student produced or commercial product) and why. Students need to identify their commercial comparisons with the name and manufacturer of each product.

### **Criterion 9**

#### **Evaluation of the effectiveness of the planning and production activities**

- Effectiveness of planning.
- Efficiency of production activities undertaken.
- Safety and hygiene practices.
- Suitability of tools, equipment and processes.

Students who achieved a ‘very high’ were able to review their work with respect to their ability to plan. For a ‘very high’, students needed to include comments on the ingredients, processes, tools and equipment; and safety and hygiene practices they had used during their production. Students should also have commented on how well their product matched the design plan. This aspect of the task really helps students draw a conclusion about their work and whether they achieved the requirements of the design brief.

Students who achieved a ‘very high’ tended to use the dot points of the criterion to structure their evaluation responses. Very often students did not complete this part of the task. It is an important aspect of the evaluation, as it gives students the opportunity to reflect on their ability to meet the demands of the task. Here, students are able to comment on whether a food item was not as successful as they thought it would be and give reasons. It is another area where they can demonstrate their understanding of the tools, equipment, ingredients and processes they used. Students who had kept notes about each production activity were able to complete this part of the evaluation more thoroughly. Many students used the dot points in Supplement 1 to the 2008 February *VCAA Bulletin VCE, VCAL and VET* No. 56 – ‘Administrative advice for School assessment’ to guide their responses.