

Memo

Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority

23 July 2026

Senior secondary

Number: 034/26

Administering the ancillary phase of the common internal assessment in 2026

Purpose

To inform senior secondary schools about the QCAA's processes and procedures to support schools administer the ancillary phase of the common internal assessment (CIA) for Essential English or Essential Mathematics.

Background

A student's exit result in Essential English or Essential Mathematics is based on their achievement in four internal assessments across Units 3 and 4. Schools develop three of these assessments. The fourth assessment — the CIA — is developed by the QCAA and marked by schools.

For most schools, the CIA is delivered in two phases in Term 2, 2026. Different versions of the CIA are used in each phase. Schools can check their selected CIA phase in the Student Management application (app) in the QCAA Portal.

The ancillary phase is delivered in Term 3, 2026 for flexible learning centres that are registered for the ancillary phase, and schools that have notified the QCAA they require a comparable assessment.

The [QCAA website](#) and the *Common Internal Assessment: Guidelines for Administration* (GFA) provide further contextual information about the CIA.

Information

Assessment materials

The ancillary phase of the CIA runs from **Monday 10 August to Friday 11 September**. Schools should not distribute materials to students before Monday 10 August and only do so in accordance with managing the assessment (see [GFA](#)).

Flexible learning centres that are registered for the ancillary phase, and schools that have notified the QCAA that they require a comparable assessment, will receive the assessment materials on **Tuesday 4 August between 9am and 1pm**. A courier will only deliver these secure materials to a school's administration office/reception area.

On the day the materials arrive, schools must:

- check they have received the required quantity for each subject

- acknowledge receipt of materials (the QCAA will email instructions regarding the process).

If the materials do not arrive at your school on the scheduled delivery date or if more are required, please notify the [Program Management Unit](#) on 1300 239 227 or CIA@qcaa.qld.edu.au.

If your school is unable to accept delivery on the scheduled date and intends to proceed with administering Phase 1 of the CIA, contact the [Program Management Unit](#), at least one week prior to the scheduled date, to determine an alternative delivery method.

Essential English

Schools will receive:

- shrink-wrapped bundles of teacher packs. Packs include copies of the question and response book, stimulus books (includes unseen and seen stimulus) and the marking guide. These are to be used for teacher preparation and remove the need to open any shrink-wrapped materials until the day of assessment. Schools can make additional copies if needed
- bundle/s of seen stimulus to be distributed to students no more than three weeks prior to the day of the assessment
- shrink-wrapped bundle/s of student packs that include/s the question and response book, and stimulus book. These must be kept secure.

The digital marking guide will be available in the **fileShare app > General files**. This digital version is only available for the selected phase. **Note:** From 2027 onwards, the marking guides will no longer be printed and included in the teacher packs.

The CIA Instrument-specific standards (ISS) is in the **fileShare app > General files** or in the **QCAA Portal > Syllabuses > Essential English > Implementation > Additional materials**.

Essential Mathematics

Schools will receive:

- shrink-wrapped bundles of teacher packs. These include copies of the question and response book, formula books and the marking guide. These are to be used for teacher preparation and remove the need to open any shrink-wrapped materials until the day of assessment. Schools can make additional copies if needed
- shrink-wrapped bundle/s of student packs that include/s the question and response book, and formula book. These must be kept secure.

The digital marking guide will be available in the **fileShare app > General files**. This digital version is only available for the selected phase. **Note:** From 2027 onwards, the marking guides will no longer be printed and included in the teacher packs.

The CIA instrument-specific standards (ISS) is in the **fileShare app > General files** or in the **QCAA Portal > Syllabuses > Essential Mathematics > Implementation > Additional materials**.

Alternative formats

- Schools will receive individually named assessment packs for students with an approved AARA requiring an alternative print format.
- For students with approved use of assistive technology, alternative format interactive digital files are provided. These documents will be available in the **fileShare app > General files** on the same day as the scheduled delivery date. **Note:** Further instructions for downloading files is in the fileShare quick step guide available in the app.

- For students with approved printed format on coloured paper, non-interactive digital files are provided to print at the school. These documents will be available in the **fileShare app** > **General files** on the same day as the scheduled delivery date. **Note:** These files are designed to be printed. They are different to interactive files made available to students with approved use of computer/assistive technology.

Schools of Distance Education must notify the Program Management Unit if they require digital format by **Tuesday 28 July** on 1300 239 227 or CIA@qcaa.qld.edu.au. These files will be available to Schools of Distance Education in the fileShare app on **Tuesday 4 August**. Note: These non-interactive digital files are designed to be printed. They are different to interactive files made available to students with approved use of computer/assistive technology.

Administration and security

The **GFA** is the key reference document for schools implementing a CIA. An electronic version of the GFA is available on the Noticeboard app in the **QCAA Portal**. Schools administer the CIA according to syllabus conditions (see the Essential syllabus, Assessment sections) and the GFA, Section 4.

What you need to do

Schools must:

- check that the correct students have been enrolled in Units 3 and 4 of Essential English (2025–2026) and Essential Mathematics (2025–2026) in the **QCAA Portal** > **Student Management app**
- check if they have registered any student to receive a comparable assessment for the CIA for Essential English or Essential Mathematics by recording 'comparable assessment' for IA2 for the subject (using the AARA app in the QCAA Portal)
- ensure applications are submitted for students requiring AARA, including alternative formats
- ensure relevant staff are registered to use, and know how to use, the fileShare app
- store all CIA materials securely, including unused materials (even if unable to complete the assessment)
- contact the **Program Management Unit** on 1300 239 227 or CIA@qcaa.qld.edu.au if materials do not arrive on **Tuesday 4 August**.

A checklist of tasks to help schools is provided in the **GFA**, Section 9.

Finding out more

Enquiries about:	Contact
- changing your school's nominated delivery phase - other quality assurance processes	Quality Assurance Unit qau@qcaa.qld.edu.au
delivery of test materials	Program Management Unit 1300 239 227 CIA@qcaa.qld.edu.au
uploading student results or enrolments	Certification Unit (07) 3864 0425 certification@qcaa.qld.edu.au

Enquiries about:	Contact
uploading student samples for Applied QA meetings	Applied Quality Assurance Unit (07) 3864 0375 AppliedQA@qcaa.qld.edu.au
other Essential English CIA	Essential English learning area (07) 3120 6173 EssentialEnglish@qcaa.qld.edu.au
other Essential Mathematics CIA	Essential Mathematics learning area (07) 3864 0444 EssentialMaths@qcaa.qld.edu.au
access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (AARA)	Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA) Unit 1300 381 575 aara@qcaa.qld.edu.au

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