Memo

Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority

22 October 2026 **Senior secondary** Number: 053/26

Essential English and Essential Mathematics: Common internal assessment (CIA) in 2027

Purpose

- To notify schools of the dates for the two CIA phases of delivery for 2027.
- To remind schools to ensure they have selected an Essential English and/or Essential Mathematics CIA phase of delivery for 2027 in the Student Management application (app) in the QCAA Portal.
- To notify schools about the Essential English CIA topics for 2027.

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.

The CIA is delivered in two phases in Term 2, 2027. Different versions of the CIA are used in each phase. Teacher judgments about student responses to assessment in Essential English and Essential Mathematics will be reviewed at annual quality assurance meetings in Term 3.

The QCAA website and the *Common internal assessment: Guidelines for administration* (GFA) provide further information about the CIA.

Information

Phase of delivery

Principal's delegates are responsible for ensuring their school has selected a phase of delivery in the Student Management app in the QCAA Portal at the time they establish subject offerings.

The 2027 CIA papers will be made available to schools at the beginning of their nominated phase. Schools can administer the assessment at an appropriate time, within the five-week phase. They should ensure they provide sufficient teaching, learning and preparation time within the phase. For Essential English, the seen stimulus is to be distributed to students no more than three weeks prior to the day of the assessment. See the following schedule.

Two CIA phases of delivery 2027

Phase 1 (Term 2 Weeks 1–5)		Phase 2 (Term 2 Weeks 6–10)	
CIA available	**CIA completed by**	**CIA available**	**CIA completed by**
Monday 12 April	Friday 14 May	Monday 17 May	Friday 18 June
Ancillary CIA (flexible/alternative learning centres only): Monday 9 August to Monday 13 September			

Essential English

Description

Short response to seen stimulus

Students will respond to representations of a community, local and/or global issue in a seen media text by writing a response that identifies, considers and explains how the elements or components that make up the text shape meaning. Students should have the opportunity to engage with the seen stimulus for three weeks prior to the examination.

Short response to unseen stimulus

Students will respond to representations of an identity or identities, place, event or concept in an unseen media text by writing a response that identifies, considers and explains how the elements or components that make up the text communicate ideas and information.

Topics

The topics for 2027 are representations of:

- fame
- competition.

Schools will receive a 2027 CIA paper on one of these topics — either fame or competition — depending on their selected phase.

Fame refers to the state of being widely known, recognised or celebrated by many people.

Competition refers to a contest focused on striving to achieve.

CIA materials

The QCAA provides the following materials:

- seen stimulus book — given to students no more than three weeks prior to the day of the assessment so as to enable deconstruction of only the seen stimulus in class. Teachers must ensure students do not have access to an annotated copy of the seen stimulus during the administration of the assessment
- question and response book — given to students at the start of the CIA session/s
- stimulus book — given to students at the start of the CIA session/s — includes the seen and unseen stimulus
- marking guide — used by teachers to mark student responses and guide moderation processes.

Essential Mathematics

Description

The Essential Mathematics CIA will representatively sample subject matter from all topics in Unit 3 only.

The CIA has two parts:

- simple (Part A)
- complex (Part B).

CIA materials

The QCAA provides the following materials:

- question and response book — given to students at the start of the CIA session
- QCAA formula sheet — unannotated copy given to students at the start of the CIA session
- marking guide — used by teachers to mark student responses and guide moderation processes. **Note:** This is **not to be given to students**.

What you need to do

- Ensure your school has selected an Essential English and/or Essential Mathematics CIA phase of delivery for 2027 in the Student Management app in the QCAA Portal.
- Inform Essential English teachers, students and curriculum leaders in your school about the 2027 topics for the Essential English CIA.
- If your school wants to select a different phase to the one originally chosen, please email qau@qcaa.qld.edu.au.

Finding out more

For information about selecting your school's phase in the Student Management app, please email the Certification Unit at certification@qcaa.qld.edu.au.

For information about the Essential English CIA, please email EssentialEnglish@qcaa.qld.edu.au or phone (07) 3120 6173.

For information about the Essential Mathematics CIA, please email EssentialMaths@qcaa.qld.edu.au or phone (07) 3864 0444.

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