

English & Literature Extension subject report

2023 cohort

February 2024





© State of Queensland (QCAA) 2024

Licence: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0> | **Copyright notice:** www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/copyright — lists the full terms and conditions, which specify certain exceptions to the licence. |

Attribution (include the link): © State of Queensland (QCAA) 2024 www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/copyright.

Other copyright material in this publication is listed below.

1. With the exception of any third-party material contained within a student response, student responses in this report are licensed under the CC BY 4.0 licence.

Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority
PO Box 307 Spring Hill QLD 4004 Australia

Phone: (07) 3864 0299

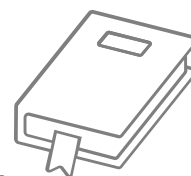
Email: office@qcaa.qld.edu.au

Website: www.qcaa.qld.edu.au

Contents

Introduction	1
Audience and use	1
Report preparation	2
Subject highlights	2
Subject data summary	3
Subject completion	3
Units 3 and 4 internal assessment (IA) results	3
Total marks for IA	3
IA1 marks	4
IA2 marks	5
IA3 marks	6
External assessment (EA) marks	7
Final subject results	7
Final marks for IA and EA	7
Grade boundaries	8
Distribution of standards	8
Internal assessment	9
Endorsement	9
Confirmation	9
Internal assessment 1 (IA1)	10
Extended response — reading and defence (20%)	10
Assessment design	10
Assessment decisions	12
Internal assessment 2 (IA2)	19
Extended response — complex transformation and defence (20%)	19
Assessment design	19
Assessment decisions	21
Internal assessment 3 (IA3)	31
Extended response — academic research paper (35%)	31
Assessment design	31
Assessment decisions	33
External assessment	41
Examination — close theorised reading (25%)	41
Assessment design	41
Assessment decisions	41

Introduction



Throughout 2023, schools and the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) continued to improve outcomes for students in the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) system. These efforts were consolidated by the cumulative experience in teaching, learning and assessment of the current General and General (Extension) senior syllabuses, and school engagement in QCAA endorsement and confirmation processes and external assessment marking. The current evaluation of the QCE system will further enhance understanding of the summative assessment cycle and will inform future QCAA subject reports.

The annual subject reports seek to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement of internal and external assessment processes for all Queensland schools. The 2023 subject report is the culmination of the partnership between schools and the QCAA. It addresses school-based assessment design and judgments, and student responses to external assessment for this subject. In acknowledging effective practices and areas for refinement, it offers schools timely and evidence-based guidance to further develop student learning and assessment experiences for 2024.

The report also includes information about:

- how schools have applied syllabus objectives in the design and marking of internal assessments
- how syllabus objectives have been applied in the marking of external assessments
- patterns of student achievement.

The report promotes continuous improvement by:

- identifying effective practices in the design and marking of valid, accessible and reliable assessments
- recommending where and how to enhance the design and marking of valid, accessible and reliable assessment instruments
- providing examples that demonstrate best practice.

Schools are encouraged to reflect on the effective practices identified for each assessment, consider the recommendations to strengthen assessment design and explore the authentic student work samples provided.

Audience and use

This report should be read by school leaders, subject leaders and teachers to:

- inform teaching and learning and assessment preparation
- assist in assessment design practice
- assist in making assessment decisions
- help prepare students for internal and external assessment.

The report is publicly available to promote transparency and accountability. Students, parents, community members and other education stakeholders can use it to learn about the assessment practices and outcomes for senior subjects.

Report preparation

The report includes analyses of data and other information from endorsement, confirmation and external assessment processes. It also includes advice from the chief confirmer, chief endorser and chief marker, developed in consultation with and support from QCAA subject matter experts.

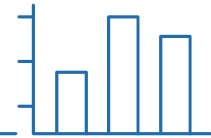
Subject highlights

71

schools offered
English & Literature
Extension

**96.99%**
of students
completed
2 units**99.01%**
of students
received a C
or higher

Subject data summary



Subject completion

The following data includes students who completed the General subject.

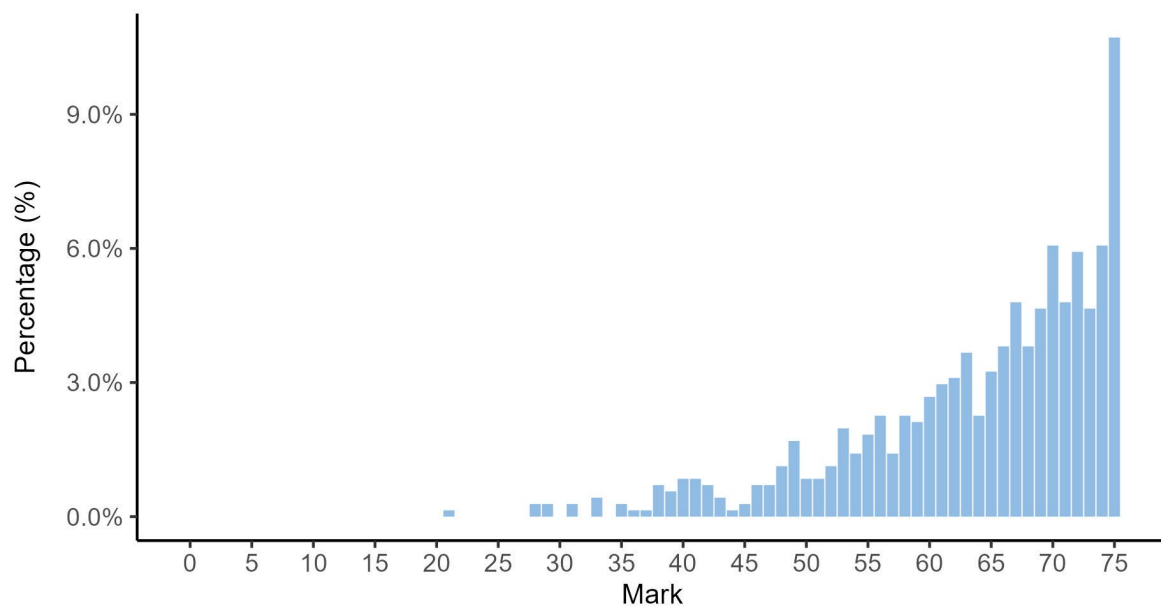
Note: All data is correct as at January 2024. Where percentages are provided, these are rounded to two decimal places and, therefore, may not add up to 100%.

Number of schools that offered English & Literature Extension: 71.

Completion of units	Units 3 and 4
Number of students completed	709

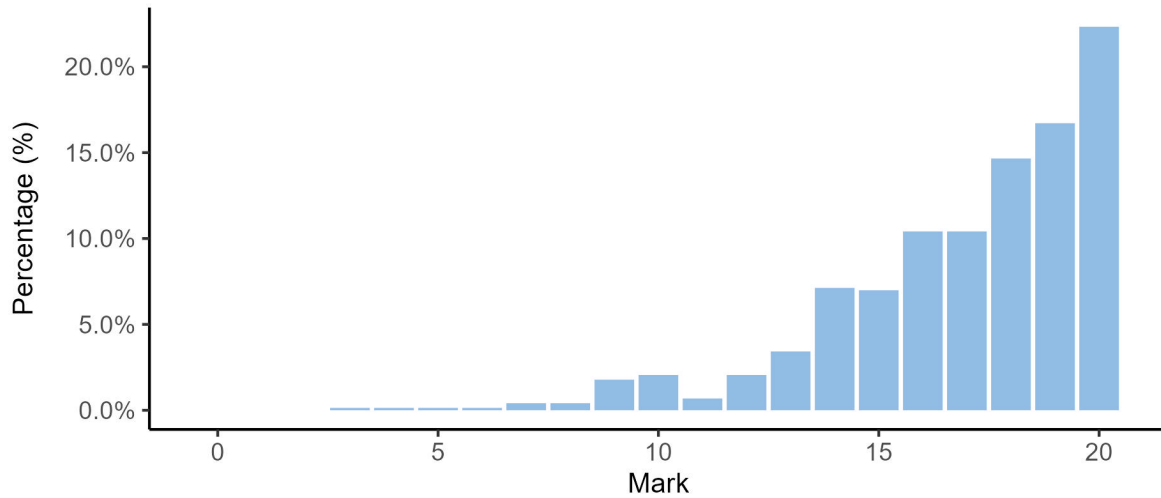
Units 3 and 4 internal assessment (IA) results

Total marks for IA

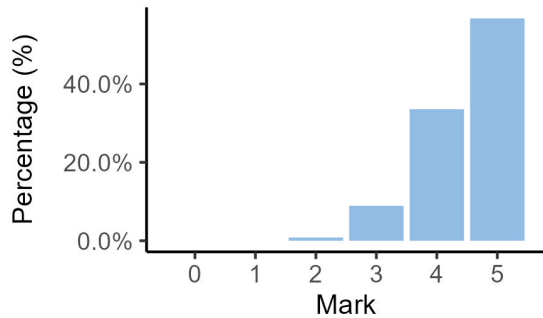


IA1 marks

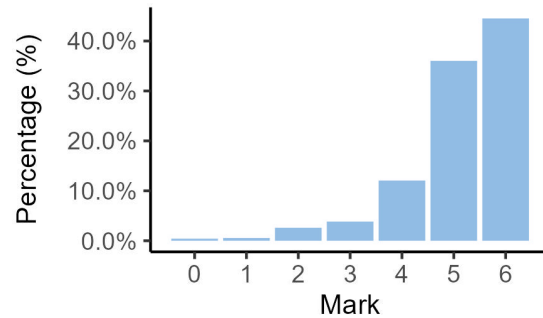
IA1 total



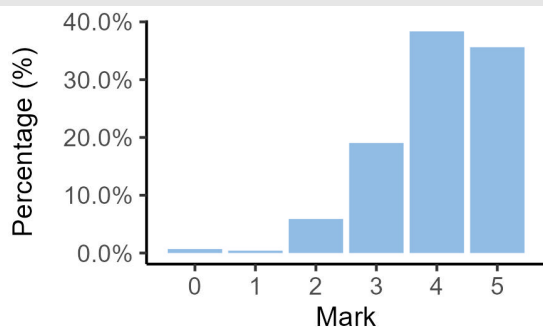
IA1 Criterion: Understanding and analysis of literary texts



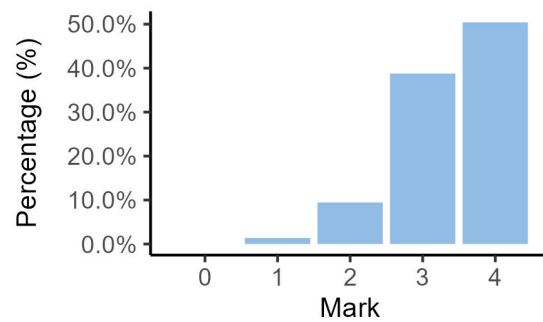
IA1 Criterion: Understanding and application of theories



IA1 Criterion: Evaluation and synthesis

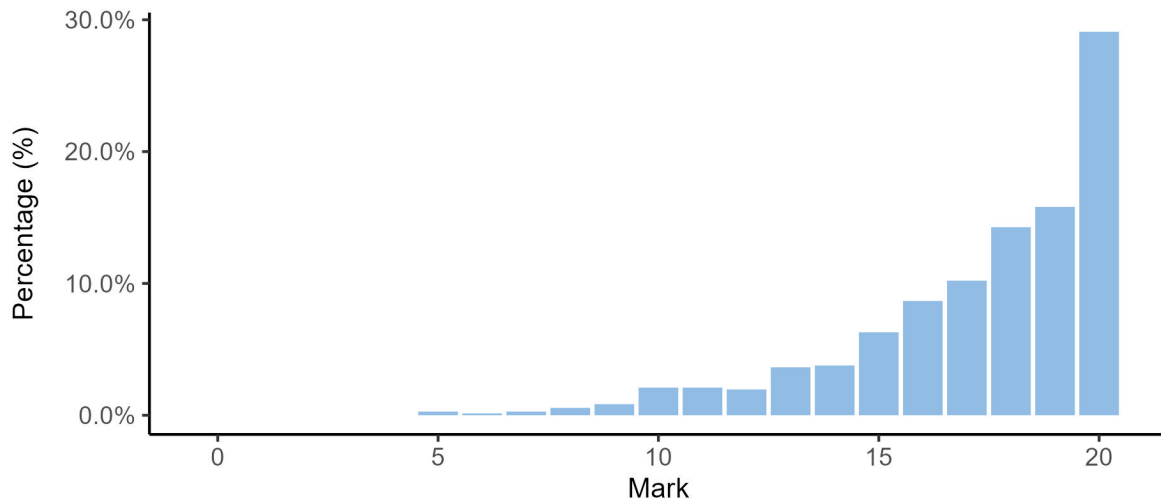


IA1 Criterion: Controlling textual features and conventions

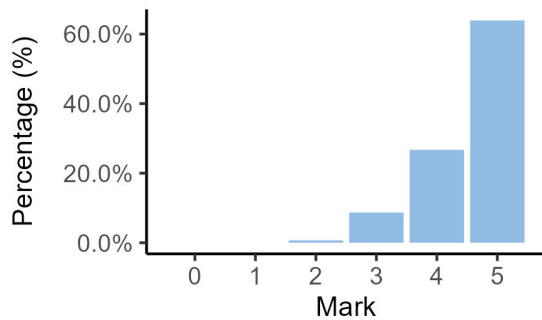


IA2 marks

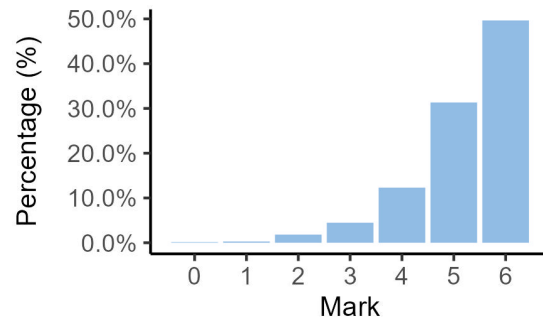
IA2 total



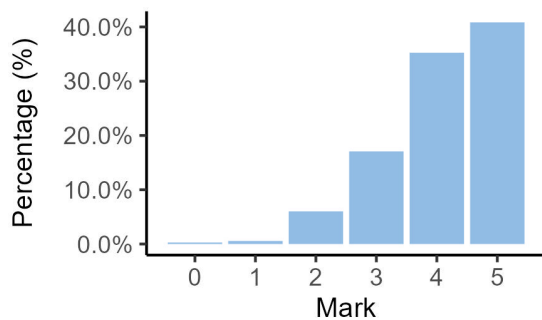
IA2 Criterion: Understanding and analysis of literary texts



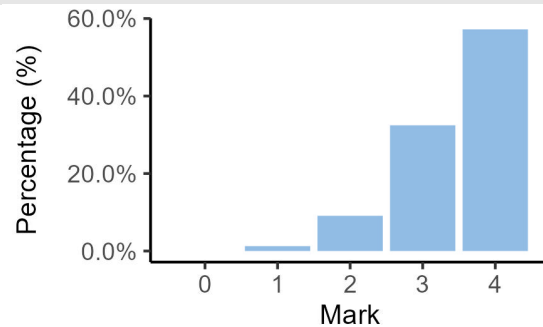
IA2 Criterion: Understanding and application of theories



IA2 Criterion: Evaluation and synthesis

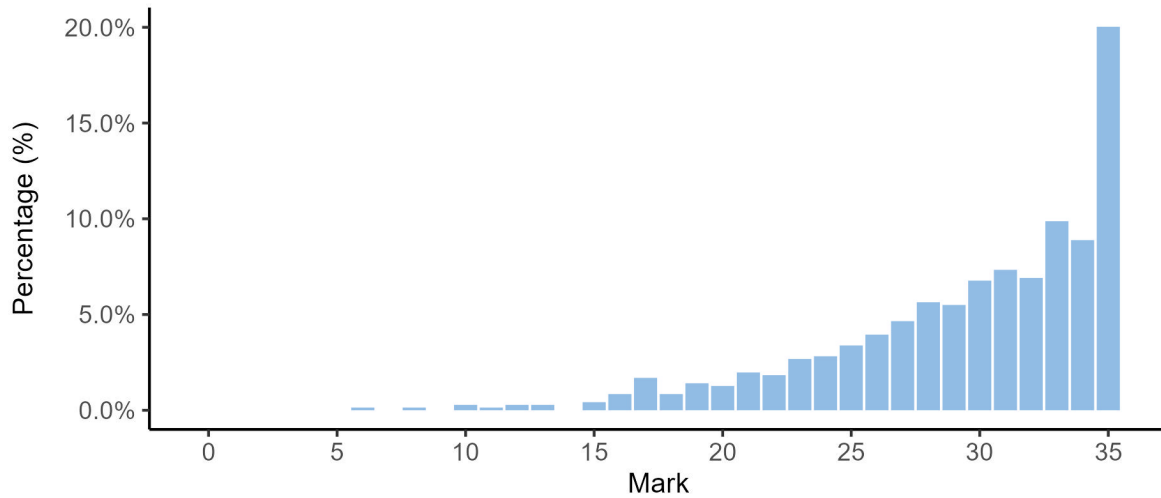


IA2 Criterion: Controlling textual features and conventions

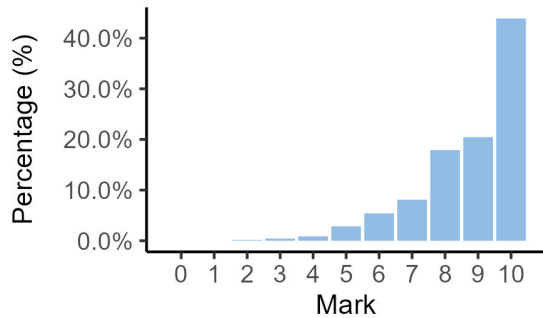


IA3 marks

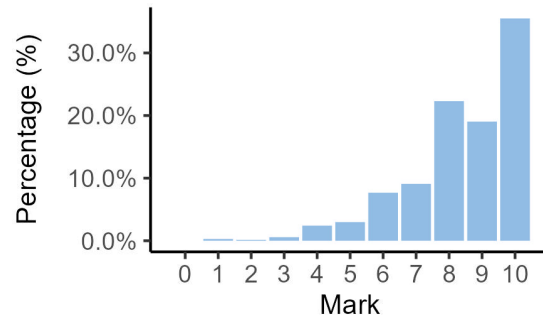
IA3 total



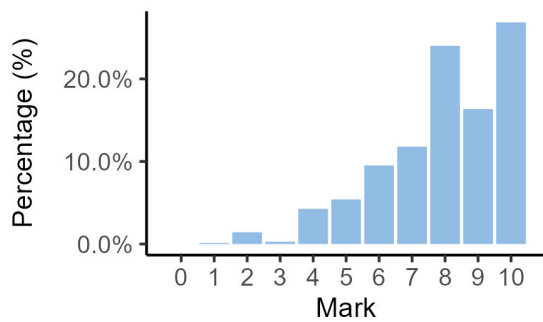
IA3 Criterion: Understanding and analysis of literary texts



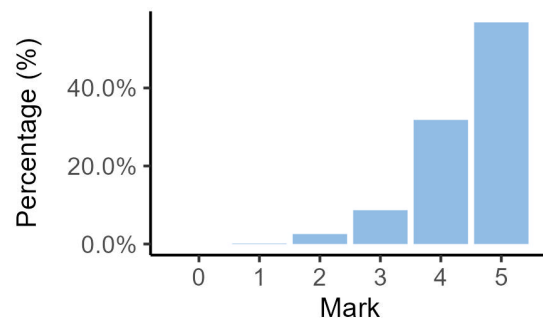
IA3 Criterion: Understanding and application of theories



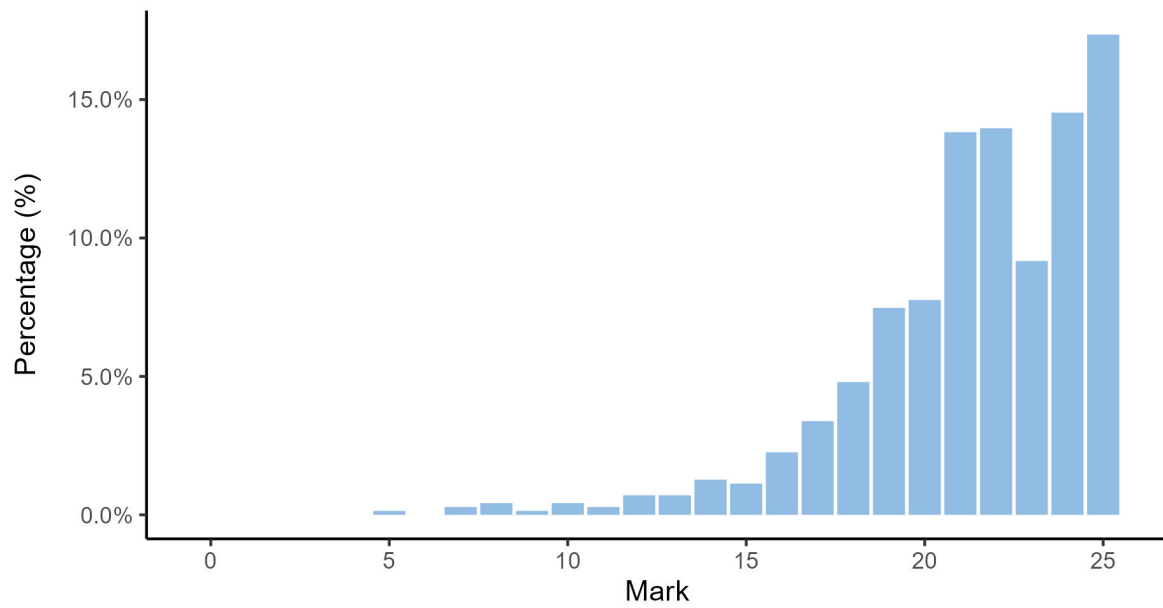
IA3 Criterion: Evaluation and synthesis



IA3 Criterion: Controlling textual features and conventions

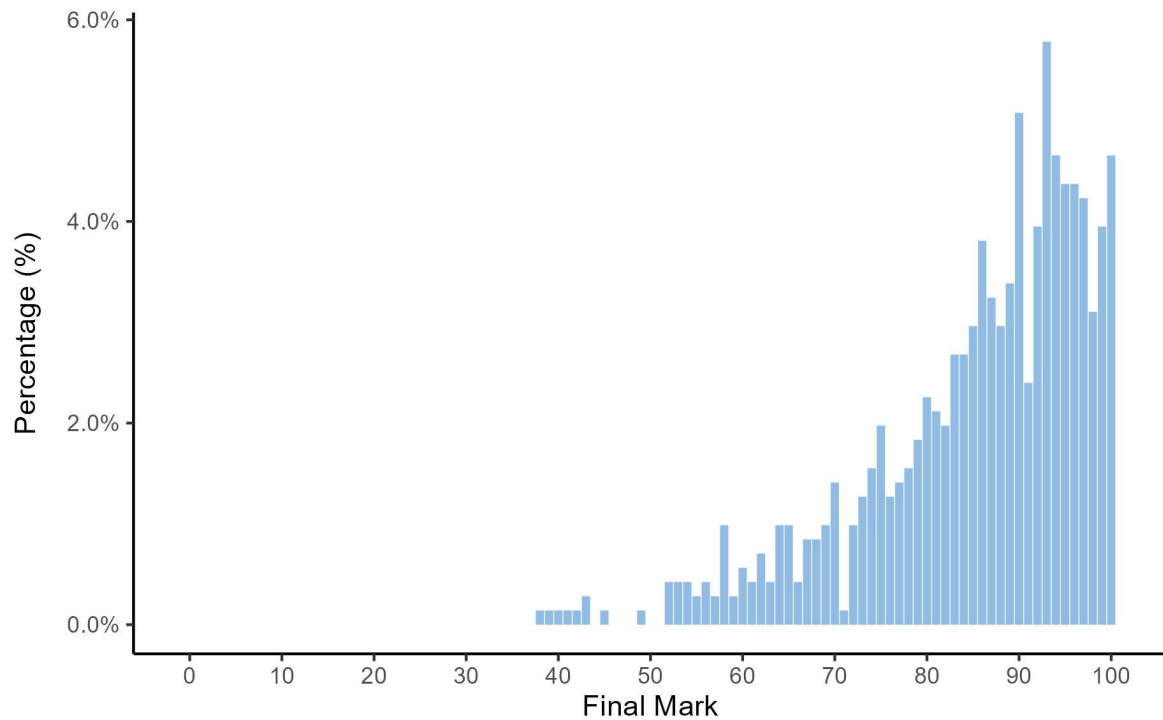


External assessment (EA) marks



Final subject results

Final marks for IA and EA



Grade boundaries

The grade boundaries are determined using a process to compare results on a numeric scale to the reporting standards.

Standard	A	B	C	D	E
Marks achieved	100–85	84–64	63–44	43–17	16–0

Distribution of standards

The number of students who achieved each standard across the state is as follows.

Standard	A	B	C	D	E
Number of students	446	214	42	7	0

Internal assessment



The following information and advice relate to the assessment design and assessment decisions for each IA in Units 3 and 4. These instruments have undergone quality assurance processes informed by the attributes of quality assessment (validity, accessibility and reliability).

Endorsement

Endorsement is the quality assurance process based on the attributes of validity and accessibility. These attributes are categorised further as priorities for assessment, and each priority can be further broken down into assessment practices.

Data presented in the Assessment design section identifies the reasons why IA instruments were not endorsed at Application 1, by the priority for assessments. An IA may have been identified more than once for a priority for assessment, e.g. it may have demonstrated a misalignment to both the subject matter and the assessment objective/s.

Refer to *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v5.0*, Section 9.6.

Percentage of instruments endorsed in Application 1

Number of instruments submitted	IA1	IA2	IA3
Total number of instruments	75	75	75
Percentage endorsed in Application 1	48%	50%	85%

Confirmation

Confirmation is the quality assurance process based on the attribute of reliability. The QCAA uses provisional criterion marks determined by teachers to identify the samples of student responses that schools are required to submit for confirmation.

Confirmation samples are representative of the school's decisions about the quality of student work in relation to the instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG), and are used to make decisions about the cohort's results.

Refer to *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v5.0*, Section 9.7.

The following table includes the percentage agreement between the provisional marks and confirmed marks by assessment instrument. The Assessment decisions section of this report for each assessment instrument identifies the agreement trends between provisional and confirmed marks by criterion.

Number of samples reviewed and percentage agreement

IA	Number of schools	Number of samples requested	Number of additional samples requested	Percentage agreement with provisional marks
1	71	449	0	91.55%
2	71	446	0	90.14%
3	71	433	0	94.37%

Internal assessment 1 (IA1)



Extended response — reading and defence (20%)

The extended response focuses on applying particular aspects of either the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach to a text to produce a reading and an accompanying defence. In a reading, students make meaning of a literary text by applying interpretive strategies associated with a particular theoretical approach. In a defence, students analyse the reading they have produced, applying and evaluating aspects and strategies of the theoretical approach and explaining how the theoretical approach used has allowed them to make meaning of the text in particular ways.

Assessment design

Validity

Validity in assessment design considers the extent to which an assessment item accurately measures what it is intended to measure and that the evidence of student learning collected from an assessment can be legitimately used for the purpose specified in the syllabus.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment

Validity priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions*
Alignment	35
Authentication	0
Authenticity	1
Item construction	3
Scope and scale	0

*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 75.

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- used the language of the syllabus specifications to make clear all parts of the task that provided opportunities for students to demonstrate the assessment objectives, e.g. analyse, in the reading, how the genre, structure and textual features of your selected text support your interpretation
- addressed all aspects of the assessment specifications without any contradictory instructions or misleading statements that might confuse students and work against a clear understanding of what they needed to do to demonstrate all assessment objectives.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- provide scaffolding that offers a chronological way of approaching the preparation of both a reading and a defence and explains how a cognition can be demonstrated in the context of the

task, e.g. analyse how the auteur has used filmic conventions such as music or colour contrast in an identifiable manner

- make clear that the defence must evaluate how the reader-centred or author-centred approach used allowed the student to make meaning in particular ways. This involves evaluation of
 - the aspects of either the reader-centred or author-centred approach that were used to explore the reading of the complex literary text
 - the reading, making explicit the aspects of the reader-centred or author-centred theoretical approach that underpins the reading.

Accessibility

Accessibility in assessment design ensures that no student or group of students is disadvantaged in their capacity to access an assessment.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment

Accessibility priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions*
Bias avoidance	0
Language	5
Layout	0
Transparency	1

*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 75.

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- used layout to make clear the separate components of the task and what was involved in each component, e.g. tasks that used headings, such as 'reading' and 'defence', to indicate that the reading required analysis of the literary text and the defence required evaluation of the reading strategies used in the reading
- used subject-specific terminology accurately in the task design, e.g. auteur, postmodern approach, close reading, reading approach, reading practices
- used language structures that were accurate and unambiguous.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- use clear and transparent language that matches the syllabus description of the task (Syllabus section 2.5.1)
- use language structures that are grammatically accurate to help ensure instructions are clear and easy to follow
- avoid restrictive instructions that inhibit opportunities for students to demonstrate the assessment objectives, such as directing students to write in third person only. Readings taking a reader-centred approach should be written in first person, while readings taking an author-centred approach should be written predominantly in third person. In both author-centred and reader-centred approaches, the defence should be written in first person to allow

for opportunities to refer explicitly to the reading practices they used within their reading, and evaluate how these affected meaning-making.

Additional advice

- Provide explanation of the appropriate genre for a reading to ensure it allows opportunities to demonstrate the assessment objectives, making clear the reading is not, for instance, simply a film review.

Assessment decisions

Reliability

Reliability is a judgment about the measurements of assessment. It refers to the extent to which the results of assessments are consistent, replicable and free from error.

Agreement trends between provisional and confirmed marks

Criterion number	Criterion name	Percentage agreement with provisional	Percentage less than provisional	Percentage greater than provisional	Percentage both less and greater than provisional
1	Understanding and analysis of literary texts	98.59%	0%	1.41%	0%
2	Understanding and application of theories	94.37%	4.23%	1.41%	0%
3	Evaluation and synthesis	94.37%	2.82%	2.82%	0%
4	Controlling textual features and conventions	97.18%	0%	2.82%	0%

Effective practices

Accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG for this IA was most effective when:

- for the Understanding and analysis of literary texts criterion, judgments for the discerning performance levels were matched to readings that drew conclusions about the selected complex literary text's meaning, generated from author-centred or reader-centred exploration. Many readings used a thesis statement to synthesise an overall interpretation that was defensible and demonstrated an astute understanding of the text. This thesis was then developed through examination of specific genre, structure and textual features in the text, using varied and pertinent evidence
- for the Understanding and application of theories criterion, judgments for
 - the discerning performance level (6 marks) was matched to the following characteristics in student responses
 - reader-centred readings that featured personal connections between the text, the individual student (as the reader) and their context. Using first-person discussion, these readings made specific links between the reader's knowledge, experiences, habits,

expectations, beliefs and/or values and the text, with recognition of how they shaped interpretations

- author-centred readings that featured specific connections between interpretations of the text, the author and their context. These readings examined how interpretations of the text were constructed with recognition of the author's signature, biography, sociocultural and historical contexts, and intentions (if available)
- defences that articulated how meaning had been negotiated within the reading, by quoting key moments and exploring the theoretical underpinnings of the interpretive strategies enacted. Using this metacognition and meta-knowledge of reading practices, defences were able to examine how the interpretation of the complex literary text was generated, e.g.
 - in the reader-centred approach, a reading may have established and analysed the link between the text and the individual student's sociocultural context to generate an interpretation. In the defence, this could be examined with concepts related to interpretive communities
 - in the author-centred approach, a reading may have established and analysed the link between the text and the author's biography to generate an interpretation. In the defence, this could be examined with concepts related to implied author, authorial intentionality and the intentional fallacy
- performance levels 5 and 6 were matched to evidence of, and considered the extent to which there was evidence of, distinct readings and defences that did not duplicate analysis of the text, i.e.
 - a reading produced an interpretation of the literary text by enacting reading practices that were associated with the theoretical approach. The reading was theorised through its demonstration of interpretive strategies common to the author-centred or reader-centred theoretical approaches. The reading itself did not discuss theoretical concepts or terminology. Instead, it focused on generating an interpretation of the text through the lens of the reader or author. Connections between reader–text or author–text should be evident within the reading and used to generate interpretations and draw conclusions about the literary text's meaning
 - a defence produced a theorised examination of the way the reading generated meaning using interpretive strategies associated with the theoretical approach. A defence should not analyse the literary text again or seek to make new connections between reader–text or author–text. Its purpose is to systematically explore how the theoretical underpinnings of the reading practices are demonstrated in the reading. Evidence of this metacognitive exploration should be written in first person. Defences should align selected citations (rather than re-explanations) from the reading with theoretical concepts and quotations in order to demonstrate understanding of the theoretical approach
- for the Controlling textual features and conventions criterion, judgments for
 - the discerning performance level (6 marks) were matched to readings and defences that used consistent patterns and conventions of academic genres. Typically, responses used analytical essay structures for both reading and defence. In defences, accurate and specific academic terminology was used, through discussion of theoretical concepts that were relevant to the reading practices enacted in the reading
 - performance levels 3 and 4 were matched to evidence of

- the use of accurate and technical academic vocabulary in the defence. Theoretical terminology was selected for its relevance to the interpretive strategies that were enacted in the reading and the selected approach
- adherence to a particular academic referencing system through the use of correct citation and referencing conventions
- two distinct, separate extended analytical responses (reading and defence) that used cohesive devices (e.g. thesis statements) and patterns (e.g. essay arguments) to emphasise and connect ideas
- systematic arrangements of clauses and sentences to convey ideas with clarity and precision.

Samples of effective practices

The following excerpts have been included to demonstrate a high-level response for the Understanding and analysis of literary texts and Understanding and application of theories criteria. The second paragraph of the reading demonstrates discerning analysis of the literary text by developing specific interpretations drawn from analysis of textual features. This section of the reading demonstrates discerning application of theory by enacting interpretive strategies relevant to a reader-centred approach. Specific links between the text and individual reader are made to draw conclusions about the meaning of the text.

For the Understanding and application of theories and Evaluation and synthesis criteria, the defence demonstrates discerning alignment of quotations from the reading with theoretical concepts. This argument develops a precise theorised examination of the interpretive strategies used in the reading, and makes appraisals about the effects and limitations of these reading practices in generating meaning.

Note: The characteristic/s identified may not be the only time the characteristic/s has occurred throughout a response.

Excerpt 1

Our Prejudiced Society and the Oppression of Victims ✓

A reader-centred approach to Margo Lanagan's "Singing my Sister Down" ✓

READING:

I realised that I approached reading *Singing My Sister Down* by Australian author Margo Lanagan with a closed mind. Its place in the short story genre meant that I had expected the environment to lack clarity and the development of characters to feel shallow due to the brevity of the text. The ambiguity of the story's indeterminant temporal context and my detachment from the characters appeared to justify these beliefs. The text's conclusion felt more like a moment in time than a resolution and undermined the effect of the lengthy rising tension period. I was left deeply dissatisfied as I was led to anticipate a shocking resolution which did not eventuate. I realised that the reason for this dissatisfaction was that I had unknowingly become invested in Ikky's character and the deep-rooted prejudice driving her ill-fated demise. }
obj 5- genre analysis

The unfamiliar context which had initially bothered me became inconsequential as I was able to view the story as an allegory, criticising the blatant prejudice inherent in my own society and justice system. The "chief and the husband's family," (Lanagan, 2004, p. 8) embodied privileged, majority groups; up "on the banks," (Lanagan, 2004, p. 3) able to look down onto the "stink[ing]" tar (Lanagan, 2004, p. 1) as it erases the 'worst' of their people. As a 21st century female reader the depiction of women oppressed is common in my life as well as the literature I have been exposed to, so the implications of domestic violence throughout the text led me to immediately sympathise with Ikky. The subtle structural choice to gradually reveal vital points of backfill encouraged me to develop my sympathy and understanding over the course of the text, instead of insisting outright that Ikky was a victim which I must feel sorry for. Thus, rather than condemn her as "that girl who was our shame," (Lanagan, 2004, p. 1) I despaired that Ikky had been driven to feel that she couldn't have "let that [axe] handle lie," (Lanagan, 2004, p. 3). Day-to-day, the media I consume is permeated by double standards forced upon women, particularly related to the cultural expectations around marital status. Therefore, I could see Ikky's struggle clearly; if she had not been married, she would have brought shame to her family but when she did, she had been "too angry, once the wedding-glitter rubbed off [her] skin," resulting in the death of her partner and her own cruel execution (Lanagan, 2004, p. 3). }
meaning unclear

Excerpt 2

To understand how my specific “historical moment” (QCAA, 2017, p. 10) influenced how Lanagan’s “text [was] received” (QCAA, 2017, p. 10) I ^{applied/considered} used Hans Robert Jaus’s “Horizon of Expectations” theory (Jaus, 1978, p. 22). This theory aligns most closely to Beach’s proposed ‘social’ theories, which suggest that reader responses are shaped and defined by a reader’s community and social environment (Beach, 1993, p. 8). This theory can be seen in my identification of this text as an allegory for, and critique of, the “blatant prejudice” inherent in my society’s political systems. I identified that, as I have been entrenched in a society which is intimately acquainted with “depiction[s] of women oppressed” and permeated by “double standards,” seeing such themes within this text required little “altering of horizons” (Jaus, 1978, p. 23). Regardless, my “horizon of expectations,” (Jaus, 1978, p. 22) was decidedly slim, resulting in my initial “closed mind[ed]” attitude, before I recognised deeper meaning when prompted by Rosenblatt’s “efferent reading” approach, (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 16). Interestingly, this reading approach is reframed by Jaus as his “horizon-of-experience,” (Jaus, 1978, p. 24) which I found explained my sudden realisation that I “had unknowingly become invested” as soon as I began to consider what I wanted to take from the text; essentially, adopting an “active” rather than “passive” role when reading (Jaus, 1978, p. 24). Jaus argues in order for a reader to move from “passive to active reception” to eventually “critical understanding,” the “horizon-of-experience” is essential (Jaus, 1978, p. 19). I found this concept more effective than Rosenblatt’s as my interpretations can be explained as coming from my place in society rather than from my small-scale, limited reading approach at a point in time. However, the weakness of Jaus is that readers will often be subjected to the “social roles and attitudes,” which they are exposed to from birth (Beach, 1993, p. 118). Therefore, ^{more specific eval.} critics may posit that texts cannot be expected to cause a change in mindset for an individual reader beyond their existing paradigm. Ultimately, this limits the “uniqueness of the individual’s engagement with the text” (QCAA, 2017, p. 11) and meant that in reality I could not experience the “change of horizons,” Jaus proposes (Jaus, 1978, p. 25). Through Beach’s dispute I was forced to realise that my interpretation was always limited to my understanding as a “21st century, female reader”.

Reference List

- Beach, R. (1993). *A Teacher's Introduction to Reader-Response Theories*. Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Fish, S. (1980). *Is There a Text in This Class?* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Iser, W. (1972). *The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Jaus, H. R. (1978). *Toward and Aesthetic of Reception*. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press.
- Lanagan, M. (2004). *Singing My Sister Down*. Allen & Unwin.
- Mambrol, N. (2016, October 28). *Transactional Reader Response Theory*. Retrieved from Literariness: <https://literariness.org/2016/10/28/transactional-reader-response-theory/>
- QCAA. (2017). Reader-centred approaches. *QCAA Approachs to Reading Practices*, 10-13.
- Rosenblatt, L. (1988). *Writing and Reading: The Transactional Theory*. Urbana: Bolt, Beranek, and Newman, inc.
- Whitfield, K. (1995). *Stanley Fish: Interpretation and interpretive communities*. Perth: Murdoch University.

Practices to strengthen

To further ensure accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG for this IA, it is recommended that:

- when making judgments about the Evaluation and synthesis criterion at performance levels 4 and 5, there should be evidence of
 - defences making appraisals of the strengths, implications and/or limitations of the reading practices used within the chosen theoretical approach, by acknowledging the impact they had on interpretation. Responses should move beyond broad or generalised judgments about the usefulness of theoretical concepts. Instead, evaluation of interpretive strategies and their theoretical underpinnings should be generated based on how they affected the student's ability to draw meaning from the text in the reading
 - defences specifically aligning theoretical concepts or quotations with quotations from their reading, with judgments made about their merit and usefulness in generating meaning, e.g. defences might examine how
 - the author-centred approach prompted the student to narrow exploration of the text towards a singular author. This focus may accentuate particular aspects of the text that link to a director's biography, while neglecting other interpretations that stem from recognition of the collaborative nature of film authorship, e.g. the screenwriter
 - the reader-centred approach enabled the student to generate interpretations from the text that built upon intertextual connections and previous experiences with the text's genre. This can call into question the extent to which the individual reader is in control of interpretation, or if their understanding of the text is based on internalised cultural preconceptions.

Additional advice

- Teachers
 - should ensure students understand that the reading
 - is an extended analytical response separate from the defence
 - if taking a reader-centred approach, should be written in first person and generated from the individual student's perspective (not an abstract or hypothetical reader). Students should be encouraged to choose a text through which they can generate specific interpretations. They should avoid texts that disengage them or to which they struggle to relate (see [Approaches to reading practices: A resource for English & Literature Extension](#) on the QCAA website for more information)
 - if taking an author-centred approach, should be written predominantly in third person. Interpretations should draw upon connections between the author and the text. The collaborative nature and/or sociohistorical context of authorship may also be considered if relevant to the text and interpretation.
 - should ensure students understand that the defence
 - is an extended analytical response separate from the reading
 - should be written in first person
 - should not analyse the literary text again or re-explain interpretations
 - should not make additional connections between author–text or reader–text. These should be covered in the reading, then cited in the defence in order to examine and evaluate the interpretive strategies and their theoretical underpinnings.

- should support students to
 - practise the metacognitive analysis and evaluation of interpreting texts, through journalling and reflecting activities. Journalling tasks can guide students through the process of generating interpretations of smaller texts by enacting the strategies of author- or reader-centred approaches to reading. Following this, students can analyse and evaluate how their interpretations were generated. Reflection tasks can align key moments of a reading journal with theoretical concepts, identifying the way these practices affected meaning-making. This can help students to discover the strengths, implications or limitations of their interpretations, the theoretical approach and its reading practices
 - understand the syllabus glossary definitions for *interpret*, *evaluate*, *readings* and *defence*, and how they are contextually relevant to the IA1. In this context, it is important to note that defence does not imply the need to ‘defend’ or ‘justify’ aspects of the reading, but instead means to critically analyse and evaluate the reading and how a theoretical approach has been used to make meaning of the text in particular ways
 - communicate which theoretical approach is being used clearly and explicitly in both the reading and the defence.
- Schools
 - should apply school-based assessment policies and procedures for managing response length clearly and consistently when making judgments about student responses to assessment. Assessment responses that exceed syllabus length conditions should be accompanied by clear annotations to indicate how the school’s assessment policy has been applied and which evidence was used to make a judgment. Further information about managing assessment response length is in the *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v5.0*, Section 8.2.6.
 - should use a best-fit approach to determine a result if evidence in an assessment response matches descriptors at different performance levels in a criterion (Syllabus section 1.3). For further information and guidance, see
 - *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v5.0* (Section 9.7.1)
 - *Module 3 — Making reliable judgments* in the Assessment Literacy application (app)
 - *Making judgments* webinar in the Syllabuses app.
 - are responsible for ensuring that student results are accurately recorded in Student Management (*QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v5.0*, Sections 11.1.2 and 9.7.2). When confirmation samples are uploaded, all files must be correctly labelled within the Confirmation app. Submissions should align with the relevant *Confirmation submission information* in the Syllabuses app (*QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v5.0*, Section 9.7.3). Care needs to be taken to ensure that the complete student responses are uploaded as required.

Internal assessment 2 (IA2)



Extended response — complex transformation and defence (20%)

Students select a literary text suited to the demands of the assessment instrument (and different from the text selected for Internal assessment 1). They select and apply aspects and strategies from text-centred and world-context-centred theoretical approaches to intervene in this selected base text, or part of the text, to create a complex transformation. In a complex transformation, the rewritten text invites alternative and/or resistant readings other than those the base text seems to invite. Alternative and resistant readings require students to move beyond merely inverting the base text's ideologies. Transformations must relate to repositioning the reader in a purposeful way and must be theoretically defensible.

Assessment design

Validity

Validity in assessment design considers the extent to which an assessment item accurately measures what it is intended to measure and that the evidence of student learning collected from an assessment can be legitimately used for the purpose specified in the syllabus.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment

Validity priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions*
Alignment	29
Authentication	1
Authenticity	0
Item construction	4
Scope and scale	11

*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 75.

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- aligned with the syllabus specifications in the task description to direct students to each step of the task, e.g. tasks that included the syllabus specifications' direction to analyse, with specific examples, how relevant textual features and language details of the base text support or construct key assumptions and values, and position audiences
- included the task requirement for the complex transformation to intervene in the base text and produce a discursive or ideological shift, e.g. 'alternative and resistant readings require students to make an ideological shift that moves beyond mere inversion. Transformations must relate to repositioning the reader in a purposeful way and must be theoretically defensible' (Syllabus section 2.5.2)

- made students aware of the two aspects of the task that require evaluation when they evaluate how effectively the transformed text offers audiences an alternative reading position/s, e.g.
 - evaluate the aspects of the text-centred and world-context-centred theoretical approaches used to determine the invited and alternative readings of the base text and to reposition audiences within the complex transformation
 - evaluate the alternative reading position offered by the complex transformation, making explicit the aspects of text-centred and world-context-centred theoretical approaches that underpin it
- included scaffolding with prompts that helped cue students to demonstrate an understanding of the relationships among and within text-centred and world-context-centred theoretical approaches, e.g. how does the identification of binary oppositions reveal the dominant ideologies at work in the base text and, by extension, which aspects of world-context-centred theory could be applied to produce a discursive shift?

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- maintain the language of the syllabus specifications to cue students to evaluate how the rewritten text offers readers an alternative position/s through the application of theoretical understandings
- specify an appropriate context for the defence, e.g. indicate where, who and for what purpose students are presenting the spoken defence.

Accessibility

Accessibility in assessment design ensures that no student or group of students is disadvantaged in their capacity to access an assessment.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment

Accessibility priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions*
Bias avoidance	0
Language	2
Layout	0
Transparency	3

*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 75

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- provided clear instructions that the complex transformation should not be incorporated at the beginning of the spoken presentation or as part of the defence, clarifying for students that the 8–10 minutes only included the defence
- provided task instructions that specified the complex transformation was simply the catalyst for the theorised defence and, as such, was not the focus of this instrument

- included chronological steps for undertaking the task, e.g. steps that described how to intervene in a text, how to produce the alternative or resistant reading, how to craft a complex transformation and how to theoretically defend.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- include scaffolding to assist students to complete all required aspects of the task
- use checkpoints with clear stages of completion that reflect the two-part nature of the task to help students manage their approach to it.

Additional advice

- Make clear for students that the mode of delivery (spoken) still requires use of academic textual features and use of the conventions of an academic genre, including correct terminology, citation and referencing conventions, in order to demonstrate Assessment objectives 6 and 7.
- Specify the need for three separate files to demonstrate all aspects of the task — a video of speech, a script of the spoken defence, and the written or multimodal complex transformation as stated in Section 4.1 of the *Confirmation submission information* in the Syllabuses app.

Assessment decisions

Reliability

Reliability is a judgment about the measurements of assessment. It refers to the extent to which the results of assessments are consistent, replicable and free from error.

Agreement trends between provisional and confirmed marks

Criterion number	Criterion name	Percentage agreement with provisional	Percentage less than provisional	Percentage greater than provisional	Percentage both less and greater than provisional
1	Understanding and analysis of literary texts	98.59%	0%	1.41%	0%
2	Understanding and application of theories	90.14%	8.45%	1.41%	0%
3	Evaluation and synthesis	97.18%	2.82%	0%	0%
4	Controlling textual features and conventions	97.18%	2.82%	0%	0%

Effective practices

Accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG for this IA was most effective when:

- for the Understanding and analysis of literary texts criterion, judgments for the discerning performance levels were matched to evidence in student responses of defences that

- drew conclusions about the base text’s meaning, which provided motivation for the complex transformation. This overall interpretation was informed by the selected world-context-centred theoretical approach, placing greater emphasis on the inherently political nature of the base text. Responses identified the key assumptions or values underpinning the base text, highlighting to audiences the ideologies or prevailing world views that prompted the student to produce an alternative or resistant reading through their complex transformation
- cited specific and varied evidence of the base text’s genre, structure and textual features to support an overall interpretation. These defences then analysed how similar features in the complex transformation were manipulated to produce alternative meanings. By dedicating equal time to analysing how the features of the base text and complex transformation supported different interpretations, responses were able to clearly establish the repositioning of readers in a purposeful way. Alignment of balanced analysis of the base text and transformation often assisted responses in demonstrating effective or discerning levels in the Understanding and application of theories and Evaluation and synthesis criteria, by drawing clear comparisons to synthesise ideas
- for the Evaluation and synthesis criterion, judgments
 - for the third descriptor in the discerning performance level (5 marks) were matched to evidence in student responses of balanced analysis of both the base text and complex transformation, drawing together relevant ideas and supporting evidence. This analysis was combined with well-balanced application of both world-context-centred and text-centred theoretical concepts to explain how the transformation repositioned readers in relation to the base text and its underpinning ideologies
 - about performance levels 4 and 5 were matched to evidence of
 - explicit appraisal of the value, strength and/or significance of relevant text-centred and world-context-centred theoretical concepts to generate specific interpretations of the base text and its underpinning ideologies. This evaluation was linked to further appraisal of how the same theoretical concepts helped to prompt and generate interventions within the complex transformation through the manipulation of textual features
 - evaluation of the strength of the complex transformation, by considering how it repositioned readers to resist the base text and its political worldviews. To do this effectively, it was important that responses synthesised analysis of the two texts and application of theory to draw specific comparisons and conclusions. This was in contrast to responses that analysed the base text or transformation in isolation without these cohesive ties, thereby limiting their ability to evaluate how the reader was repositioned and making them better matched to the characteristics of performance level 3. For instance, some responses discussed the many textual features and interventions employed within the transformation, with limited references back to the base text. Due to this, the defences did not specifically emphasise how these interventions and changes positioned readers to adopt resistant or alternative interpretations and were appropriately matched to the lower performance levels 3 and 2.
 - the spoken defence, marking a clear relationship between the base text and complex transformation. The syllabus specifications state that transformations must relate to repositioning the reader in a purposeful way that is theoretically defensible. When choosing a base text, students ensured that their selection featured specific ideological assumptions, values or worldviews that the selected world-context-centred approach would seek to resist or challenge. When the base text had only tenuous links to the theoretical perspective, it limited opportunities for the complex transformation to specifically intervene in the text to reposition audiences purposefully. This in turn

affected the quality of evaluation within the defence and responses were appropriately matched to the lower performance levels 3 and 2.

- a complex transformation that moved beyond simply an inversion or removal of the issue, as these may not have purposefully prompted readers to read the base text resistantly. Instead, complex transformations were subverted and challenged relevant power structures that were naturalised within the base text by manipulating how readers perceive the issue, e.g. the problem may have been foregrounded in the transformation rather than normalised. A character may have fought against or become aware of the issue, and blame may have been allocated more specifically. Alternatively, the complex transformation could have deliberately juxtaposed dominant and oppressed characters to prompt readers to reconsider the inherent inequalities. It may have revealed the consequences and effects of the political worldview that the base text had hidden in its attempt to portray the issue as ‘just the way things are’.

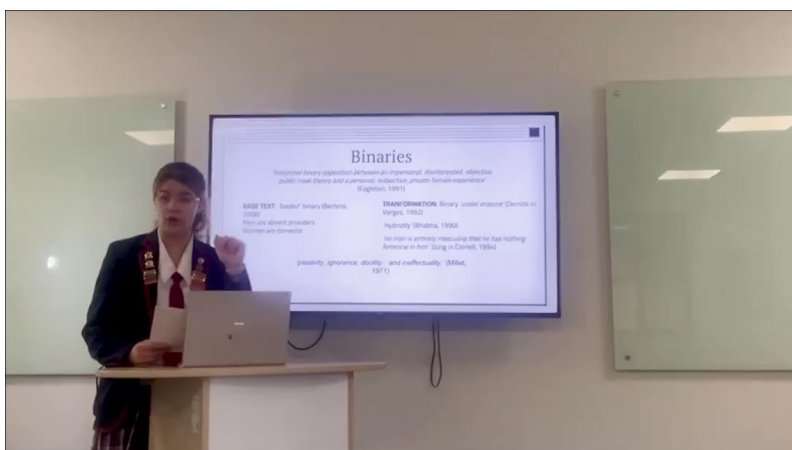
Samples of effective practices

The following excerpt illustrates discerning use of patterns and conventions of academic genres and communication for a spoken defence. The student uses clear verbal, nonverbal and complementary features to communicate ideas with clarity and precision. Theoretical terminology is used and referencing conventions are evident in the complementary slideshow.

The response:

- demonstrates discriminating application of relevant aspects of text-centred and world-context-centred theory to both the base text and transformation. Specific theoretical concepts are aligned with each text in a balanced way, to systematically explore meaning
- evaluates how the application of these theories and textual interventions prompts readers to reconsider the base text’s ideologies
- demonstrates discriminating analysis of genre, structure and textual features in the base text and transformation, through application of text-centred theoretical perspectives (e.g. the second paragraph). A discerning overall interpretation of the base text is communicated and further developed (evident in the introduction).

Note: The characteristic/s identified may not be the only time the characteristic/s has occurred throughout a response.



Video content: (3 min, 30 secs) www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/curriculum-assessment/portal/media/sr-2023/snr_english_lit_ext_ia2_e1.mp4

Video content: (4 min, 30 secs) www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/curriculum-assessment/portal/media/sr-2023/snr_english_lit_ext_ia2_e2.mp4

Defence

I Stand Here Ironing, written in 1956 by Tillie Olsen, explores gender as a social construct and how the role of women and their worth during this time was defined by their success as mothers. The story is a monologue from the perspective of 'the mother' of Emily. Throughout the text, the protagonist recounts her raising of Emily, revealing her feelings of inadequacy as a mother due to her daughter's development. In doing so, the text highlights how '*society and social institutions are selective of what comprises good or bad mothering*' (Davin, A, 1978).

By '*reading against the grain*' of the text (Eagleton, 1986), it is revealed that *I Stand Here Ironing* promotes the ideology that a woman's worth, and adequacy is determined by their competency as mothers in the domestic sphere. From a structuralist view, I, '*expos[ed] what might be thought of as the 'textual subconscious', where meanings are expressed which may be directly contrary to the surface meaning*' (Barry, 2009). This is evident through the symbolism of the iron and the ironing board. In analysing the '*surface meaning*', the iron represents her ties and responsibilities to motherhood, but in '*harassing*' the text (Barry, 2009), it is revealed that the protagonist is invariably 'stuck' behind the ironing board. She expresses her feelings of obligation to certain acts of motherhood, stating '*I nursed her. They feel that's important nowadays,*' (Olsen, 1956), and '*the old man living in the back once said... "You should smile at Emily more..."*' (Olsen, 1956). This represents her as a negligent or uncaring mother, and therefore, unworthy woman. Furthermore, the protagonist frequently refers to an omniscient, metaphorical 'they', for example, '*old enough for nursery school they said*' (Olsen, 1956) and '*they persuaded me at the clinic to send her away to a convalescent home in the country...*' (Olsen, 1956). 'They' highlights society's patriarchal expectations for her to raise her child in the 'natural' way. According to Saussure, these '*elements fit together*' (Saussure, 1983) to highlight her feelings of failure as a mother and therefore a woman, with her stating '*she was a child seldom smiled at...my wisdom came too late,*' (Olsen, 1956). This shows that within the '*textual subconscious*', (Barry, 2009), '*traditional gender norms are not only instilled in the individuals but they are also naturalized by making them relevant to the identities and also by imposing punishments for those who fail to follow them*' (Davin, A., 1978).

My desire to intervene in the base text originates from Marcherey, who theorised that '*a text has not said everything and therefore remains the possibility of saying something else*' (Marcherey in Rivkin and Ryan, 2004). Because texts '*work within (a) horizon of culture constructed by ideology*' (Bertens, 2008) in *I Stand Here Ironing*, the protagonist, is silenced and marginalised, adhering to the culture of the 1950s. The protagonist, who as a single mother must work to support her child, is

silenced as the text does not disclose the nature of her work outside of the domestic sphere, only disclosing her work in the private: domestic chores and motherhood. This reinforces *'the hierarchal binary opposition between an impersonal, disinterested, objective, public, male theory and a personal, subjective, private female experience.'* (Eagleton, 1991). In addition, the protagonist is defined as 'Emily's mother'. The nondisclosure of her name highlights that she is defined by her motherhood, not her personhood. Because as Macherey says, *'the text is, as it were, is ideologically forbidden to say certain things, in trying to tell the truth in his own way,'* (Macherey in Eagleton, 1976), my transformation aims to challenge the silencing and marginalisation of the protagonist by giving her identity and autonomy beyond motherhood.

In the base text, there is a *'loaded'* (Bertens, 2008) binary opposition between men and women. The text represents men as providers, absent from the home and all knowing, while women are represented as domestic, mothers and full of guilt. This is established when Emily's father, *'who "could no longer endure"...sharing want with us,'* leaves the family, but the protagonist was *'a young mother, a distracted mother,'* and *'the old man living in the back once said in his gentle way: "you should smile at Emily more,"* (Olsen, 1956). This reinforces the *'hierarchal binary opposition between an impersonal, disinterested, objective, public, male theory, and a personal, subjective, private female experience'* (Eagleton, T., 1991). The text defines the roles of men and woman, in establishing Emily's father as absent without condemning him, but the protagonist's apparent inadequacy despite her active attempts at motherhood as more worthy of condemnation, actively placing her into a subordinate role with *'passivity, ignorance, docility...and ineffectuality,'* (Millet, 1971).

My transformation puts the loaded binary *'under erasure,'* (Derrida in Verges, 1992). Based on Homi Bhabha's theory of *'hybridity'* (Bhabha, 1994) which includes a cross-cultural *'exchange'*, I created a *'hybrid'* male character in the ex-husband who contributes equally to the domestic space, because *'no man is entirely masculine that he has nothing feminine in him'* (Jung, 1928). This is demonstrated when the protagonist states, *'now he [ex-husband] sits home and irons my shirts.'* At the same time, the protagonist functions in both the domestic and public space, *'sometimes stand[ing] at the ironing board'* and sometimes *'rule[ing] boardroom[s]'*. This intervention, *'...reopen[s] the play of differences around these terms'* (Pope, 2001).

Feminist literary critics theorise that *'gender is a social institution...which determines the norms and accepted attitudes...No one can go beyond these accepted norms and attitudes without inviting social scorn because of the naturalization of these norms'* (Lorber, 1997). Within the text there exists a gender norm that women belong solely in the domestic realm, *'imprisoned and constrained by the dominant ideologies of womanhood'* (Woolf, V., in Selden R., et. al. 2005). As a result, women are

represented as 'bad mothers' and therefore 'bad people' if they attempt to challenge the social norms by maintaining employment or not raising their children in the home. The base text perpetuates the idea that *'in order to achieve acceptability..., the female has to lose the power which men take for granted, namely power over their own destiny.'* (Gilbert and Gubar, 1980). In fact, Tyson theorised that *'women's obligation to care for whichever members of the family can't care for themselves...the overall effect is to deprive women of...their independence and autonomy.'* (Tyson on Guillaumin, 1998). The base text portrays the norm that the protagonist should be caring for her daughter in the home, despite the fact that this *'deprives'* her of her *'independence and autonomy'*.

Instead of leaving the protagonist's *'destiny'* to be that of a society determined inadequate mother, *'deprived'* of her autonomy, I intervened to define her as a character that is not *'imprisoned and constrained by the dominant ideologies of womanhood.'* (Woolf in Selden, et. al. 2005). In the transformation, she is a politician, a public person, who without guilt contributes to the workforce whilst also happening to be a mother. She says, 'I feel no guilt for doing what is best for my child.' By doing so, I undo the defining of women due to a *'cultural...basis'* (Millet, 1971) as the audience views the protagonist as a woman who can work as a provider and be a mother, rather than one who is viewed by society as 'distracted' (Olsen, 1956) from her motherhood as she works to support her family.

Reference List

- Barry, P., 2009, *Beginning Theory*, Manchester University Press, UK
- Bertens, H., 2008, *Literary Theory: The Basics*, Taylor & Francis Group
- Bhabha, H., 1994, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge
- Butler, J., 1991, *Imitation and Gender Insubordination, The New Social Theory Reader*, Second Edition, Routledge
- Davin, A., 1978, *Imperialism and motherhood*. History Workshop, (5), 9-65
- de Beauvoir, S., 1949, *The Second Sex*, Gallimard
- Derrida, J., 1992, Acts of Literature, 'as soon as the word genre is sounded...a limit is established, norms and interdictions are not far behind,'
- Dobie, A. B., 2012, *Theory into Practice: An Introduction To Literary Criticism*, Wadsworth Cengage Learning
- Eagleton, T., 1976, *Maxism and literary criticism*, Cambridge UK: Routledge Classis.
- Eagleton, T., 1986, *Against the Grain, Essays 1975-1985*, National Geographic Books,
- Eagleton, T., 1991, *Ideology: An Introduction*, Verso, New Left Books
- Friedan, B., 1963, *The Feminine Mystique*, W. W. Norton
- Gilbert, S., Gubar, S., 1980, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*, Duke University Press
- Jung, C., 1928, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, Bailliere, Tindall and Cox, London
- Lorber, J., 1997, *Gender and the social construction of illness*, Sage Publications, Inc.
- Millet, K., 1971, *Sexual Politics*, Avon Books, New York
- Olsen, T., 1956, *I Stand Here Ironing*, from *Tell Me a Riddle*, Delta/Seymour Lawrence, New York
- Pope, R., 2001, *Textual Intervention: Critical and Creative Strategies for Literary Studies*, Interface
- Rivkin, J., Ryan, M., 2004, *Literary Theory: An Anthology*, Wiley Blackwell
- Rosaldo, R., 1974, *Ideology, Place and People without Culture*, Department of Anthropology, Stanford University
- Selden, R., Widdowson, P., Brooke, P., 2005, *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*, Fifth Edition, Pearson
- Tyson, L., 1998, *Critical Theory Today*, Greenhaven Press
- Tyson, L., 2012, *Using Critical Theory*, Second Edition, Taylor and Francis
- Verges, F.G., 1992, *The Unbearable Lightness of Deconstruction*, Cambridge University Press

Practices to strengthen

To further ensure accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG for this IA, it is recommended that:

- when making judgments about the Understanding and application of theories criterion at performance levels 5 and 6 there should be evidence of
 - informed and specific understanding and application of both text-centred and world-context-centred theoretical approaches. Assessment objectives 2, 3 and 4 require both approaches to be used in the defence. Responses should clearly signpost the approaches that are being used so it is clear to the academic audience
 - the selected world-context-centred approach and its political focus prompting a response's overall interpretation of the base text and its prevailing world views, serving as motivation for the ideological shift provided by the complex transformation, e.g. responses should
 - apply specific theoretical concepts from this world-context-centred approach to aspects of the base text and transformation, to systematically explore meaning in both texts
 - move beyond using only the general tenets of the chosen world-context-centred approach, instead applying understanding of specific theoretical concepts, e.g. defences that generally discuss imperialism within a base text but do not apply specific and relevant postcolonial concepts (such as orientalism, the subaltern or hybridity) limit their ability to demonstrate effective or discerning performance levels
 - text-centred approaches that are used to systematically explore and develop interpretations of the base text and complex transformation. Consideration of text-centred theories
 - provide opportunities to analyse systemic patterning and structuring of texts and deconstruct their cultural systems of signs, gaps, silences and binary oppositions. Responses should apply specific text-centred concepts to both the base text and transformation
 - prevents overreliance on broader systems or structures of meaning such as character archetypes and narrative genre (e.g. Vladimir Propp), which can limit a response's ability to apply theory to specific evidence from the texts. As 'contemporary social semiotics takes meaning-making to be a social and therefore political activity', specific understanding and application of concepts from structuralism, post-structuralism, semiotics and/or psychoanalytic criticism can assist students in exploring how 'ideological and discursive conflicts are played out in ... textual representations' (see [Approaches to reading practices: A resource for English & Literature Extension](#), pp. 8–15, on the QCAA website), e.g., a response might explain how a complex transformation manipulated the denotations or connotations of signifiers in the base text, or exploited contradictions to reposition readers
 - allows responses to provide more specific evidence to match to Assessment objective 3 if they demonstrate understanding of this relationship between world-context-centred and text-centred approaches
 - applies specific text-centred concepts that support more specific understanding and analysis of literary texts
- when making judgments about the Controlling textual features and conventions criterion at performance level 4, there should be evidence of
 - appropriate spoken genre conventions and communication suited to an academic audience. As an extended spoken literary criticism for an academic audience, the presentation should use mode-appropriate textual features that are suited to this formal

academic audience. Mode-appropriate textual features include spoken/signed, nonverbal and complementary features (where relevant), e.g. a slideshow suits the task and its audience as it can assist in emphasising points of the spoken/signed defence and to reference theoretical citations, which can provide further evidence for Assessment objective 6

- a discerning spoken/signed delivery employing specific conventions that extend beyond simply reading the scripted defence to the camera
- defences that use patterns and conventions of appropriate spoken academic genres (e.g. an academic lecture, seminar or presentation) with consistency
- appropriate citation and referencing conventions that are followed with consistency, e.g. in the defence script and in presentation slideshow where appropriate.

Additional advice

- Teachers ensure students understand that
 - the defence, which is the principal focus of this instrument, should explain how the transformation realises the potential repositioning of audiences, and evaluate how the rewritten text offers readers an alternative position/s through the application of theoretical understandings
 - world-context-centred approaches focus on political ideologies that underpin the historical, social, cultural, economic and discursive context that govern texts. These include approaches such as feminism, Marxism, postcolonial criticism, queer theory and ecocriticism. These theoretical perspectives seek to question whose interests are being served within texts, focusing on the political consequences of particular worldviews that have been naturalised or preferred, and how other groups or perspectives have been silenced
 - psychoanalytic criticism is not a world-context-centred approach, because it does not foreground or seek to question sociocultural structural inequalities. As it predominantly focuses on the linguistic construction of consciousness, it is a text-centred approach. If used for IA2, it must be paired with a world-context-centred approach by exploring how the base text's ideological underpinnings are 'latent' and engender psychoanalytic symptoms in individuals either unconsciously or subconsciously, e.g. a response might analyse how the base text *My Last Duchess* by Robert Browning reinforces misogynistic ideologies that deny female subjectivity by making light of the mistreatment of women. In applying psychoanalytic concepts that work in tandem with feminist criticism, this response could analyse the ways the base text implies the Duchess exists in a state of psychoanalytic lack, with desire she must repress due to the Duke's gaze. This could then be brought to the foreground in a complex transformation so that readers reject the psychological manipulation the Duchess was subjected to, and the patriarchal norms that naturalised it. For more information about accepted world-context-centred approaches, see [Approaches to reading practices: A resource for English & Literature Extension](#), pp.13–15, on the QCAA website.
 - base texts should be specific publications rather than generalised storylines. When choosing a fairytale or fable that has had multiple retellings, students should use a specific version that can be cited and analysed, e.g. the Charles Perrault version of *Cinderella*. If a generalised storyline is used, understanding and analysis of literary texts can be hindered due to overreliance on genre, plot and character rather than specific text structures and features

- base texts should be shorter in length. Longer texts, such as films and novels, limit opportunities for students to demonstrate precision. A portion of a longer text could be used to control the scope and scale of what is being analysed and transformed, e.g. rather than selecting an animated film adaptation of a fairytale, a student could select specific song lyrics from the film as their base text. This shorter text could provide sufficient ideological motivation for a complex transformation, allowing for more purposeful and systematic exploration of meaning in textual features and interventions
- while the defence script and spoken delivery should match, in cases where they do not, the spoken delivery must guide teacher judgments on the ISMG, e.g. if a student does not present sections of their written script, teachers should assess what was presented in the spoken delivery. The script provides further evidence of citation and referencing conventions for Assessment objectives 6 and 7, and can be considered in addition to spoken delivery
- they can assume their academic audience is familiar with both the base text and the complex transformation before listening to their spoken defence. They should not read the full base text or complex transformation aloud in their defence, rather they should use direct evidence from both texts to analyse and evaluate how readers have been repositioned in relation to the base text's ideologies.

Internal assessment 3 (IA3)



Extended response — academic research paper (35%)

Students explore different way/s of reading their selected complex literary text/s through the application of at least two theories or aspects of theories to produce an academic research paper. These theories may be drawn from different theoretical approaches, or from the same theoretical approach. The selected complex literary text/s must be different from those selected for internal assessment instruments 1 and 2. Students use these theoretical approaches to produce a close reading of at least one selected complex literary text and to explore a focus question. The focus question should allow them to evaluate how effective these theoretical approaches have been in exploring and producing the close reading. Students may use class time and their own time to develop a response.

Assessment design

Validity

Validity in assessment design considers the extent to which an assessment item accurately measures what it is intended to measure and that the evidence of student learning collected from an assessment can be legitimately used for the purpose specified in the syllabus.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment

Validity priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions*
Alignment	8
Authentication	0
Authenticity	1
Item construction	2
Scope and scale	2

*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 75.

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- used scaffolding to help students manage the scope of their response, e.g. providing strategies for developing a specific and achievable focus question and close reading
- cued students to evaluate the effectiveness of at least two theories, or selected aspects of theories, when applied to the chosen text/s to produce a close reading. This included evaluation of 'the strengths and limitations of particular theoretical approaches for specific purposes' and 'how particular approaches may complement one another and/or how they clash'. Specifying that 'aspects of theories' can be applied rather than 'theories' helped students manage the scope and scale of the task (Syllabus section 3.5.1)

- used the language of the syllabus task description (Syllabus section 3.5.1) to direct students to develop a focus question that allowed them to evaluate how effective the theoretical approaches were in exploring and producing a close reading
- cued students to demonstrate an ‘understanding of relationships among and within aspects of the selected theories in order to develop and explore a focus question and the associated close reading/s of the selected complex literary text/s’ by including scaffolding steps that directed students to consider the way theories can work together or in contestation to produce specific readings (Syllabus section 3.5.1).

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- include the direction that students are not to use texts already used in IA1 and IA2
- avoid requiring students to undertake additional and unnecessary steps that may impede their ability to be independent in controlling the scope of their response and discerning when selecting texts and theoretical approaches, e.g. requiring that students read at least three novels from a prescribed list before deciding on the final text for the task is outside the scope of the syllabus specifications.

Accessibility

Accessibility in assessment design ensures that no student or group of students is disadvantaged in their capacity to access an assessment.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment

Accessibility priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions*
Bias avoidance	0
Language	1
Layout	0
Transparency	0

*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 75.

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- avoided grammar or spelling errors that may lead to confusion.

Practices to strengthen

There were no significant issues identified for improvement.

Assessment decisions

Reliability

Reliability is a judgment about the measurements of assessment. It refers to the extent to which the results of assessments are consistent, replicable and free from error.

Agreement trends between provisional and confirmed marks

Criterion number	Criterion name	Percentage agreement with provisional	Percentage less than provisional	Percentage greater than provisional	Percentage both less and greater than provisional
1	Understanding and analysis of literary texts	95.77%	0%	1.41%	2.82%
2	Understanding and application of theories	95.77%	2.82%	1.41%	0%
3	Evaluation and synthesis	97.18%	2.82%	0%	0%
4	Controlling textual features and conventions	100%	0%	0%	0%

Effective practices

Accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG for this IA was most effective when:

- for the Controlling textual features and conventions criterion, judgments for the discerning performance level (5 marks) were matched to student responses that
 - showed consistent use of patterns and conventions of an academic research paper, e.g. succinct contextualisation of theoretical ideas which assumed the academic audience was familiar with the selected theoretical approaches helped to emphasise application of concepts and avoid textbook-like introductions
 - used specific, detailed and correct academic terminology that was relevant to the selected literary theoretical approaches
 - contained consistent citation and referencing conventions appropriate to an academic audience.

Samples of effective practices

The following excerpts have been included to demonstrate a high-level response for the Understanding and application of theories criterion. The response has a signposted, complex focus question that directly relates to the selected theoretical approaches of Marxism and postcolonial criticism. Discerning understanding of relevant and specific theoretical concepts from both approaches are contextualised succinctly and applied directly to the film using frequent direct evidence.

For the Understanding and analysis of literary texts criterion the response demonstrates specific and discriminating interpretations of the text made through the analysis of varied and detailed textual features. A close reading is developed throughout the response, e.g. on the first page, the

response indicates that the proletariat in society can only assume power through tremendous measures.

For the Evaluation and synthesis criterion, the excerpts specifically evaluate how postcolonial concepts of hybridity and mimicry, when applied to the text, reveal how Western ideologies and attitudes permeate the text and invite a Eurocentric view. These synthesised and evaluative statements tie directly to the focus question, discussing how the relationship between Marxist and postcolonial approaches reveals the 'paradoxical ties' between the proletariat and the West.

Lastly, for the Controlling textual features and conventions criterion, the patterns and conventions of academic genres is maintained with discrimination. Precise and relevant theoretical terminology is used. Theoretical concepts are contextualised succinctly throughout the academic research paper.

Note: The characteristic/s identified may not be the only time the characteristic/s has occurred throughout a response.

Excerpt 1

What does the application of Marxism and Postcolonialism to the 1992 film, *Aladdin*, reveal about the symbiotic relationship between society and media?

Ron Clements and John Musker's 1992, '*Aladdin*', explores the universal concept of class struggle within an ignorantly constructed 'foreign' setting. The story takes place in 'Agrabah', a place based on Iraq's culture, but confusingly reflects Indian architecture. Here, '*street rat*', Aladdin, deceived by the sultan's vizier, Jafar, obtains a mystical lamp which gains him the service of the Genie (Disney, 1992, 7:54). Granted with three wishes, Aladdin wishes to become a prince, subsequently escaping his impoverished class that prohibits him from marrying '*desert bloom*', princess Jasmine (Disney, 1992, 1:15:53). By applying Edward Said's concept of '*Orientalism*', a '*representational tactic*' under '*post-colonialism*', it's apparent that the film depicts Eastern culture as '*Other*' and Western society as '*central*' (Mambrol, 2016 & Alsultany, 2019). This is noticeably achieved by portraying the palace guards and villainous Jafar as '*notably darker, ugly*', '*bad Arabs*' who additionally possess '*foreign accents*' and confirm '*to ethnic stereotypes much more than Aladdin or Jasmine, both of whom could easily pass (in white westerners' imaginations) as well-tanned Americans*' (Sociology Lens Insights, 2018). Moreover, Aladdin's lack of power, 'survival' lifestyle, and constant displeasure with his personal situation, which all ultimately prevent him from marrying Jasmine (until he becomes a prince or proves himself worthy through extreme measures), highlights '*Marxist*' notions within the film where viewers are invited to pursue '*bourgeoise*' status, pitying the powerless '*proletariats*' who are neglected and ostracised (Cole, 2023). Thus, through applying Marxism and Postcolonialism to *Aladdin*, it's clear that the film is a pro-capitalist, pro-white American, pro-coloniser form of propaganda that the West released to indoctrinate the masses, asserting themselves in the *centre*.

Excerpt 2

Marxism, '*a materialist philosophy*', seeks ways to '*change the world*' by establishing a '*classless society*' based on the common ownership of '*the means of production, distribution, and exchange*' (Barry, 2002). Originally deeming their theories '*Communism*', German philosophers, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, co-authored the 1848 '*Communist Manifesto*' (Barry, 2002). Explaining '*all human history as a struggle between classes*', the pair believed that when the '*proletariats*' (labourers, lower class) become '*class conscious*', they unite to seize control of the '*government and means of production*', opposing the '*bourgeoisie*' (aristocratic upper class), transforming society (Cole, 2023).

They relied on '*German philosopher*', Hegel's idea of the '*dialectic*' that suggests '*opposing forces or ideas bring about new situations or ideas*' – a communist society (Barry, 2002). In *Aladdin*, class binary is established as the bourgeoisie treat the proletariats as inferior, robbing them in the process. A prince suitor yells '*out of my way, filthy brats!*' to two impoverished children, while Jasmine simply takes an apple from a stall without paying the owner, yet seems shocked when there are consequences for her careless actions – '*pay?*' (Disney, 1992, 10:51, 18:31). A prince suitor moreover says to Aladdin, '*You are a worthless street rat, you were born a street rat, and you will die a street rat*' (Disney, 1992, 11:11). This also emphasises the capitalist construct of society where one is born into their status – it cannot ever be changed. Thus, Aladdin's solo endeavours to seek a better life for himself and Abu are represented as futile, because, in reality, he can never escape his unfortunate position. Albeit, through Jafar's murderous requests to '*make sure [Aladdin's] never found*', and through Aladdin's escape from poverty through marriage, the film highlights that the only way a proletariat in society can assume power is through tremendous measures (Disney, 1992, 1:02:58).

Excerpt 3

Homi K Bhabha, contemporary Indian-British scholar, additionally asserts that Said's '*Orientalism*' fails to recognise '*hybridisation*' – merging of two distinct cultures (colonised and the colonisers) (Olson & Worsham, 1998). Aside believing that '*hybrid*' cultures often emerge in postcolonial nations, Bhabha explored '*ambivalence*', which '*sees culture as consisting of opposing perceptions and dimensions*' (Barry, 2002). Bhabha studied how ambivalence allows colonised individuals to have '*doubled*' identities – they identify with aspects of Eastern and Western culture – like himself (Barry, 2002). Notably, in *Aladdin*, although capitalism is primarily present in the *Occident*, such Marxist ideals prevail in '*Agrabah*' the '*mystical land*' (Disney, 1992, 0:45). This implies that the setting of *Aladdin* is a '*hybrid*' – Homi Bhabha's '*third space*' which combines two (or more) distinct cultures – often the result of colonialism (Olson & Worsham, 1998). In this case, through clothing, music and the marketplace, Western and Eastern culture are evidently combined. The clothing worn by characters in the film are not conservative – '*so much cleavage and tummy...exposed*' and appear more 'American' in that sense, however, '*strong Indian and Turkish*' influences are also evident by the '*silky*' and colourful designs of the fabrics (Zahran, 2017). Furthermore, the music contains '*Bollywood*' undertones while being composed by an all-white musical team. Finally, the depiction of the marketplace reflects Western and Eastern elements. Although '*middle eastern markets typically carry a large variety of dried fruits and nuts*', the markets of *Aladdin* contained '*fresh produce*', like the apple Jasmine handed to the child, which is normal for Western markets (Buchanan, 2015 & Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, 2017). However, as Jasmine walks through the marketplace we see peddlers offering '*sugar dates*' and '*pistachios*', ticking the Eastern '*dried fruit*' box (Disney, 1992, 17:45 & Buchanan, 2015).

Also, Aladdin, Jasmine, and the Sultan all clearly possess '*doubled identities*', highlighting Bhabha's concept of '*ambivalence*' (Barry, 2002). 'Aladdin' and 'Jasmine' are partially Western because of their American accents, but their names both have '*Middle-Eastern origin*' – Arabic and Persian (TeachMidEast, n.d.). Further, the sultan, also possessing an American accent, has a dual identity as he makes Eastern, Islamic references, like speaking to '*Allah*' (91.7% of the modern middle-east is Muslim) (Payind & McClimans, 2019).

- Cole, D. (2023). *Marxist Ideology*. Retrieved April 27, 2023 from <https://study.com/academy/lesson/marxism-definition-basic-tenets.html>
- Cole, N.L. (2020). *What is cultural hegemony?* Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://www.thoughtco.com/cultural-hegemony-3026121>
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. (2017). *Selling produce at farmers' markets*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/small-landholders-western-australia/selling-produce-farmers-markets?page=0%2C2>
- East, G.W., Poulson, T.M., & Berentsen, W.H. (2023). *Religions of Europe*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://www.britannica.com/place/Europe/Religions>
- Karl Marx Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (n.d). *Estranged Labour*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/comm.htm>
- Lapon, G. (2011). *Karl Marx's Understanding of Exploitation under Capitalism*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://socialistworker.org/2011/09/28/what-do-we-mean-exploitation>
- Maliyana, Y. (2013) *Edward Said's Orientalism*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/psg/article/view/327>
- Mambrol, N. (2016). *Jacques Derrida's Structure, Sign and Play – Literary Theory and Criticism*. Retrieved April 27, 2023 from <https://literariness.org/2016/03/21/jacques-derridas-structure-sign-and-play/>
- Mambrol, N. (2016). *Mimicry in Postcolonial Theory*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://literariness.org/2016/04/10/mimicry-in-postcolonial-theory/>
- Mantooth, K. (2023). *Postcolonialism in Literature*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://study.com/academy/lesson/post-colonialism-in-literature-definition-theory-examples.html>
- Maqsood, R.W. (2009). *Muslim Weddings*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/ritesrituals/weddings_1.shtml#:~:text=A%20Muslim%20husband%20has%20to,settled%20with%20good%20life%2Dpartners
- McClintock, A. (1992). *The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term "Post-Colonialism"*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/466219>
- National Healthy Marriage Resource Centre. (2017). *Marriage Trends in the Middle East*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://www.healthymarriageinfo.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/MarriageMiddleEast.pdf>
- Olson, G.A., & Worsham, L. (1998). *Staging the Politics of Difference: Homi Bhabha's Critical Literacy*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20866193>
- Payind, A., McClimans. (2019). *Islam in Middle Eastern Societies*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://ohiostate.pressbooks.pub/key2mideast/chapter/islam-in-middle-eastern-societies/>

Sinha, S. (2015). *Marxism and Postcolonial Theory: What's Left of the Debate?* Retrieved July 17, 2023 from https://eprints.soas.ac.uk/22606/1/Sinha_22606.pdf

Sociology Lens Insights. (2013). *The Colour of Evil: How American Media Racializes Villains*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://www.sociologylens.net/topics/communication-and-media/the-color-of-evil-how-american-media-racializes-villains/11636>

StudySmarter. (2023). *Evaluation of Marxism: Criticism & Importance*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://www.studysmarter.co.uk/explanations/social-studies/sociological-approach/evaluation-of-marxism/>

TeachMidEast. (n.d.). *5 Things to Know About Aladdin*. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://teachmideast.org/articles/5-things-to-know-about-aladdin/#:~:text=The%20names%20Jasmine%20and%20Aladdin,has%20its%20roots%20in%20Persian>

Tikkanen, A. (2014). 'Aladdin'. Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Aladdin-fictional-hero>

Zahran, M. (2017). *What do Arabians think of Disney's Aladdin?* Retrieved July 17, 2023 from <https://www.quora.com/Is-Disney-s-Aladdin-Indian>

Practices to strengthen

To further ensure accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG for this IA, it is recommended that:

- when making judgments about the Understanding and analysis of literary texts criterion at performance levels 9 and 10, there should be evidence of
 - use of frequent direct evidence from the complex literary text/s, to generate and support perceptive interpretations. Often, responses can be more successful in producing a close reading by using more frequent, shorter quotations from the text that are selected for specific relevance to the concepts being discussed. These targeted quotations can allow students to read the text with care and attention to the language and text structures
 - a complex focus question that is clearly signposted. This focus question should be deliberately phrased as a question and subsequently explored throughout the response with explicit cohesive links that also enhance synthesis
 - balanced exploration, analysis and evaluation of the two selected theories, e.g. if a response intends to analyse *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell with Marxism and postmodern criticism, but subsequently only explores and applies one postmodernist concept in a shorter paragraph after lengthier detailed Marxist exploration, it hinders its ability to demonstrate effective or discerning performance levels in this criterion
 - succinct contextualisation of theoretical concepts to the research paper's academic audience, allowing application to be prioritised, e.g. when introducing a theoretical concept, a short quotation that defines the idea and/or its concerns is sufficient, rather than longer summaries of its historical context and origin. As the concept is applied, further theoretical quotations can be used to align with direct evidence from the complex literary text/s, developing ideas to form interpretations and draw conclusions. This targeted alignment of more precise and succinct quotations can assist in demonstrating discriminating understanding and application of theories

- a signposted focus question in the opening paragraph, using a question format. Effective focus questions were complex in nature, requiring students to apply their chosen theoretical approaches to the literary text to answer, partially answer, or explore the question
- clear and explicit communication of which two theories or aspects of theories were being used. Typically, this was evident within the focus question itself or in the introduction surrounding it
- theoretical concepts, quotations and citations that were selected for specific relevance to the focus question were applied with precision to the complex literary text/s
- for the Evaluation and synthesis criterion, judgments for the upper performance levels should be matched to
 - use of the focus question to synthesise ideas and facilitate evaluation throughout the response. Successful responses were articulate when referring to their focus question, often when drawing conclusions in arguments, and how the theorised analysis produced strengths, insights, limitations and/or implications
 - deliberate evaluation of the close reading/s developed, by appraising the strengths, implications or limitations of the interpretations resulting from theorised analysis, e.g. arguments might draw conclusions that answer aspects of the focus question, allowing for specific appraisal of interpretations and their significance
 - explicitly communicated evaluation of the selected theories and their strengths and/or limitations in producing specific interpretations that explored or answered the focus question, e.g. arguments might conclude by explaining how theorised analysis and application of specific concepts to the text revealed precise understandings, consequences or effects that were distinct to this theoretical lens
 - synthesis and evaluation of how the selected approaches complement one another and/or how they clash. The focus question or introduction should establish whether the academic research intends to use the selected theories in a complementary or oppositional way (or, if relevant, a negotiation between the two). To synthesise ideas, the response should specifically state how the relationship between theories affects exploration of the focus question and the development of a close reading. This can be done by explaining and evaluating the similar, different and/or inherently connected conclusions drawn from the text through the application of the two theoretical approaches.

Additional advice

- The focus question is a prominent part of the Understanding and application of theories and Evaluation and synthesis criteria. Due to this, teachers should support students to
 - avoid closed thesis statements or contentions with predetermined conclusions, as these may limit opportunities to explore and evaluate
 - develop a focus question that is complex in nature, prompting exploration, theorised analysis and evaluation. If a focus question emphasises exploration without an analytical purpose that provides an opportunity for evaluation, students may need to refine their question further, e.g.

- a focus question such as ‘what will be revealed through analysing *Where the Crawdads Sing* with feminist criticism and ecocriticism?’ prompts theorised exploration but limits evaluation and synthesis due to the absence of a purpose for analysing. This focus question could be refined to ask ‘to what extent is the othering of women and nature intertwined in *Where the Crawdads Sing*? How will the complementary application of feminist criticism and ecocriticism reveal this relationship and its ramifications?’, which features a specific analytical purpose for the close reading, allowing for interpretations that stem from theorised analysis to be evaluated more precisely. The follow-up question explicitly states that the two theoretical approaches will be used to complement one another. This also provides an evaluative prompt and opportunity for the response to synthesise ideas by judging how effectively the approaches complemented one another to produce a close reading of the text and interpretations that address the focus question.
- Students
 - should understand that psychoanalytic criticism is a theoretical approach that uses aspects of psychoanalysis to interpret literature, rather than aiming to diagnose mental disorders within clinical, medical, or scientific discourses. When using this approach, students should ensure that it is being applied as a literary theory. If a response is focused on identifying or diagnosing mental disorders within characters or authors, it can limit opportunities to develop a close reading or apply and evaluate theory effectively. Selden et al. (2005)¹ explain that the ‘relationship between psychoanalysis and literary criticism ... has moved through three main emphases in its pursuit of the literary “unconscious”: on the author (and its corollary, “character”), on the reader and on the text’ (p. 153). They explain that ‘like a psychoanalyst, the critic attends to the text’s unconscious — to what is unspoken and inevitably repressed’ (p.98) and that ‘More recently, psychoanalytic criticism has been remodelled in the context of poststructuralism by the work of Jacques Lacan and his followers’ (p. 153). This is ‘more interested in cultural theorising’ (p. 160) than science. With these factors in mind, it is recommended teachers guide students to
 - use aspects of psychoanalytic theory that adopt a literary and cultural focus, e.g. concepts such as desire, repression, lack, the uncanny, subjectivity, the unconscious, and the Other are examples of aspects of psychoanalytic criticism that are highly relevant to the interpretation of literary texts
 - consider characters as textual constructs or representations rather than real-life individuals
 - avoid clinical, scientific, or medical terminology
 - if using author-centred or reader-centred approaches for IA3, should select aspects of these theoretical approaches that provide opportunities to produce a close reading of the text (see [Approaches to reading practices: A resource for English & Literature Extension](#) on the QCAA website). Overemphasis on reader or author context can limit the development of detailed and specific analysis of the text’s language and structures. Students should consider
 - if applying reader-centred approaches, that first person analysis should be used, with targeted recognition of personal influences. References to abstract or hypothetical readers’ interpretations can inhibit effective understanding and application of reader-centred theoretical concepts

¹ Selden R, Widdowson P, & Brooker P 2005, *A Reader’s Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*, 5th edn, Pearson Longman, Harlow, UK.

- if applying author-centred approaches, that students should be discerning about how information about the author is used to develop the close reading, e.g. biographical details should be targeted and specifically help to explore the focus question and purpose for analysing.
- Schools
 - should use a best-fit approach to determine a result if evidence in an assessment response matches descriptors at different performance levels in a criterion (Syllabus section 1.3). For further information and guidance, see
 - *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v5.0* (Section 9.7.1)
 - *Module 3 — Making reliable judgments* in the Assessment Literacy application (app)
 - *Making judgments* webinar in the Syllabuses app.
 - are responsible for ensuring that student results are accurately recorded in Student Management (*QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v5.0*, Sections 11.1.2 and 9.7.2). When confirmation samples are uploaded, all files must be correctly labelled within the Confirmation app. Submissions should align to the relevant *Confirmation submission information* in the Syllabuses app (*QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v5.0*, Section 9.7.3). Care needs to be taken to ensure that the complete student responses are uploaded as required.

External assessment



External assessment (EA) is developed and marked by the QCAA. The external assessment for a subject is common to all schools and administered under the same conditions, at the same time, on the same day.

Examination — theorised exploration of unseen texts (25%)

Assessment design

The assessment instrument was designed using the specifications, conditions and assessment objectives described in the summative external assessment section of the syllabus. The examination consisted of one item (35 marks).

Conditions

Time: 2.5 hours, which includes 30 minutes for planning time

Length: 800–1000 words (excluding quotations)

Other: Selection of three unseen short texts of comparable complexity provided in the examination.

The examination assessed subject matter from Units 3 and 4. The question was derived from the context of Unit 4 (Area of study: Theorised exploration of texts).

The assessment required students to use their knowledge of text-centred and world-context-centred reading practices and interpretative strategies to construct a theorised exploration of an unseen short literary text.

The stimulus comprised three original short texts of comparable complexity. These texts were written for the purpose of the examination and were designed to elicit a unique student response that was a theorised close reading. The three unseen texts were:

- Stimulus 1 — *Ticket to Anywhere*
- Stimulus 2 — *The Next Loop*
- Stimulus 3 — *Fire in the Blood*

Assessment decisions

Assessment decisions are made by markers by matching student responses to the external assessment marking guide (EAMG). The external assessment papers and the EAMG are published in the year after they are administered.

Effective practices

Overall, students responded well to:

- analysing specific textual features and generic styles within the stimulus, and how these prompt readers to empathise with particular characters

- the opportunity to apply aspects of feminist, Marxist and structuralist theoretical approaches to each of the stimulus texts. *Ticket to Anywhere* was most frequently chosen by the subject student cohort
- supporting theorised readings with a selection of specific examples and evidence from the stimulus text
- using academic register appropriate for a close theorised reading.

Samples of effective practices

Extended response

Effective student responses:

- communicated a theorised interpretation of the stimulus text that drew upon specific understanding of text-centred and world-context-centred theoretical approaches. Effective responses typically stated this interpretation as their thesis, in their introduction. This thesis was then strengthened through arguments that expanded on the interpretation through exploration of consequences, effects or results. The following interpretations for each stimulus text are examples that represent precise and discriminating understanding of theoretical approaches. These interpretations use specific terminology relevant to the theoretical approaches, and draw conclusions about the text and its effects
 - *Ticket to Anywhere* suggests women must mimic masculine traits and conform to patriarchal ideologies in order to subvert gender hierarchies
 - *Ticket to Anywhere* ultimately reinforces patriarchal hegemony, as Padma's decisions and even her final rebellion cannot be separated from masculine control
 - The matriarchal power in *The Next Loop* mimics patriarchal hegemony, emphasising the importance of gender parity
 - *The Next Loop* explores the consequences of an education system that streamlines ideological beliefs through omission and oppression
 - *Fire in the Blood* communicates that the economic hegemony's hunger for control can never fully suppress an individual's desire for freedom
 - *Fire in the Blood* reveals the ways power consolidates itself through ideological concessions that may appease the masses, but do not address systemic inequality
- applied a range of relevant strategies for theorised exploration, by aligning specific aspects of text-centred and world-context-centred approaches to the selected stimulus text. Examples of this application included where students
 - applied the following world-context-centred theoretical concepts
 - for *Ticket to Anywhere* — feminist criticism concepts such as gender performativity, misogyny, patriarchy, essentialisation and masquerade. Marxist criticism concepts were also applied to this text effectively
 - for *The Next Loop* — Marxist criticism concepts such as class stratification, ideological state apparatuses, alienation, interpellation and false consciousness. Feminist criticism concepts were also applied to this text effectively
 - for *Fire in the Blood* — Marxist criticism concepts such as class struggle, class consciousness, use value, exchange value, base and superstructure. Feminist criticism concepts such as feminine mystique and *écriture féminine* were also applied to this text effectively

- applied the following text-centred theoretical concepts effectively to stimulus texts
 - structuralist, semiotic and post-structuralist concepts such as binary oppositions, signification, denotation and connotation, aporia and trace
 - psychoanalytic criticism concepts such as repression, the symbolic order, Name of the Father, desire, lack, *jouissance*, ego, superego and id
 - postmodernist criticism concepts such as simulacrum
 - narratological concepts such as external and internal focalisation, narrative distance and perspective
- applied interconnected theoretical concepts and strategies to the text to develop and explore the overall theorised interpretation. These responses were awarded full marks in the assessable element ‘applying theory to explore meaning’, linking applied theoretical concepts and strategies together with purpose. Ways that responses connected ideas together to apply a complex range of strategies included
 - using cause–effect patterns to tie applied theoretical concepts together, e.g. a response may explain how the hierarchical binary oppositions of bourgeoisie and proletariat in *Fire in the Blood* leads to widespread alienation and subversion which ironically undermines the authority of the ruling class
 - combining applied theoretical concepts together to synthesise specific understanding of the stimulus text, e.g. a response may explore how the semiotic connotations of the monorail signifier in *The Next Loop* can be combined with an application of the concept of economic rationalism to draw conclusions about the loss of humanity caused by ideological market forces
 - comparing or contrasting applied theoretical concepts to distinguish between the meanings they generate, and how these develop or give fullness to the overall interpretation, e.g. a response may explore how postcolonial concepts such as diaspora may suggest motivations for the father’s plan in *Ticket to Anywhere*, and how Padma reacts. This might be contrasted with the gender expectations that Padma is both upholding and challenging when navigating through the plan, to further develop an overall interpretation about the consequences of rigid economic and gender expectations on a young person
- analysed how specific generic style, structure or textual features shaped the text to position readers in particular ways. Effective responses recognised how the stimulus text was a construct that made stylistic choices to prompt readers to be receptive or resistant to particular ideas and representations. They acknowledged the nuances of the text by examining with authority how textual details developed and shaped interpretations, e.g. some responses to *Ticket to Anywhere* noted that the ‘threadbare’ curtains, ‘knock-off luggage’ and ‘scholarship[s]’ coded Padma’s family as working class and possibly struggling financially. Specific inferences such as this made interpretations more perceptive and discriminating, by examining how the text prompts readers to be critical of how gender and economic success are interwoven.

The following excerpts are in response to the stimulus text *The Next Loop*. It required students to produce a close theorised reading.

These excerpts have been included to illustrate:

- a discriminating theorised interpretation of the stimulus text
- discerning application of aspects of text-centred and world-context-centred approaches to the stimulus
- a complex range of relevant strategies for a theorised exploration.

Excerpt 1

The short story 'The Next Loop' demonstrates the inherent flaws in a society designed to uphold only the upper class. A Marxist world view provides insight into the effect of social infrastructure upon society and the ways it is upheld. Additionally, text centred theories describe the impact of ideology upon the psyche. The text demonstrates that capitalism's constant pursuit of commodities is utilised to uphold class stratifications. Through this, the text positions readers to criticise how this ideology naturalises the repression and alienation of humanity.

Excerpt 2

Class divides such as these formulate ~~the~~ what Marxist theorists refer to as the 'economic base' which drives the direction of society. The ideology of the economic base is 'interpellated' and upheld through ~~the~~ concept of capitalism's 'superstructure'. This concept describes ^{how} "schools of the ~~at~~ Outer Edge" interpellate society that class stratifications is "for the safety of the whole community." As such it can be seen ^{that is believing} that the superstructure ~~acts~~ acts as a tool to indoctrinate ideology perpetuating the economic base. Furthermore, the result of deliberate interpellation manifests in what Marxist theorists call ~~of~~ 'false consciousness'. By "only hearing things... the Inner Edge wanted him to hear" the populous is directed to the belief ~~that~~ that "people could not be trusted to make their own decisions." ~~This~~ As such,

The working class in the ~~at~~ Outer Edge is brainwashed to fabricate an arbitrary dependence Inner Edge. This approach reveals that mediated exposure to ideology deludes the working class to their potential value. The realisation of this is further estranged from the proletariat as "he did not stop... monotonous work." ~~the~~ By forcing the proletariat to "work into the night" the upper class distracts them from class conscious realisations through the constant pursuit of commodities.

The following excerpt is in response to the stimulus text *Fire in the Blood*. It required students to produce a close theorised reading.

This excerpt has been included to illustrate:

- authoritative examination of how the writer's generic style, structure or textual features shape the text
- a discriminating interpretation of the stimulus text and discriminating understanding of its complexities.

~~Fran~~ Additionally, ~~we consider the portrayal of representation of~~
~~will be considered.~~
 women, Frau Troffea is said to be "afflicted by spirits" and
 said to have ~~having~~ "bewitched" others. This is an example of the feminine
 mystique. ~~Fof~~ Troffea is mystified ~~and~~ in order to alienate
 her concerns and dehumanise her. Thus, the cause of dancing
 is thought to be mystical rather than ~~the true~~ the unfavourable
 truth ~~of~~ ^{the} starving and suffering of the lower class. Furthermore,
 when the councillor's wife begins to dance, a moment of
 aporia is presented, as "she has no reason. She is ~~neither~~
 neither hungry nor ill!" This contradiction is ^{formed} due to the
 silencing of Lena's voice. Thus, ~~we are lead to consider~~
 the audience is positioned to consider ^{the} political solidarity
 between women that underpins her actions. Indeed, Frau
 Troffea claims that "dancing is [every woman and child's]
~~own~~ only freedom!" Here, political solidarity is again
 reinforced in the ~~electri~~ collective class struggle for
 freedom. Therefore, the text conveys the perspective that
 oppressed groups have no choice but to engage with
 political solidarity to restore their access to the
 superstructure. However, it is also revealed that power can only be
 held through class, as the councillor only takes action after his upper
 class wife joined in the dancing. ~~This is~~

The following excerpts are in response to the stimulus text *Ticket to Anywhere*. It required students to produce a close theorised reading.

These excerpts have been included to illustrate:

- a discerning thesis, with arguments that strengthen the thesis across the reading and defensible conclusions based on the arguments
- a discerning selection of evidence from the stimulus, used explicitly to support the theorised reading.

Excerpt 1

The short narrative 'Ticket to Anywhere' uses numerous overarching themes to convey its message, most primarily, escapism. Present in even the title, suggesting sheer desperation to be released from her current situation, it immediately provokes a sense of empathy in the audience, ~~considering~~ who are left with a desire to see the protagonist Padma achieve happiness. The connotations of this theme's instant provocation of emotion are that Padma's situation is less than desirable, and that the cause of her anguish must be that which restrains her. This force, revealed to be her controlling and bitter father, is used throughout the text to depict power dynamics which enforce concepts of feminine oppression and ~~misogyny~~ misogyny. The intrinsic ~~essentialist~~ ^{misogynistic} and patriarchal ideologies represented through these dynamics are used as a tool to critique capitalist and consumerist ideologies ~~within~~ inherent within the text.

Excerpt 2

Her father's ~~possessive~~ desire for patriarchal power within the family is again indicated through both essentialist views and a belief in gender performativity. Essentialism, stating all beings have a predetermined role and nature which will influence their behaviours, is her father's belief, is supported by and founded on gender performativity, the idea that gendered actions are what provide gender identity. His insistence that Padma play soccer, decorating her room with fabric that ~~was~~ ^{had} 'never been intended to be curtains', is his last-ditch effort to ~~make~~ theoretically make her a man. Sport, as a stereotypical male activity, is used as a gendered activity to provide her with a gender identity desired by her father. However, the statement, 'If he could not have a football-playing son, he'd make do with a soccer-playing daughter,' affirms the distinction between the two genders lying in essentialism. Even with an identity designed to make her appear his patriarchal heir, she in essence will never be able to live up to this role. This ~~distinction~~ ~~between~~ contrast again villainises her father for his disconnection and ignorance of her daughter as herself, allowing his views to be criticised.

Practices to strengthen

When preparing students for external assessment, it is recommended that teachers consider:

- assisting students to further develop their skills for the following assessable elements within the Understanding and application of theories criterion and the Understanding and analysis of literary texts criterion
 - applying specific aspects of theoretical approaches to the stimulus text so that a range of strategies are used for a theorised exploration. Theoretical concepts and strategies should be selected for relevance to the stimulus text. To develop complexity, the concepts should be interconnected. Some responses explored generalised issues in the texts such as sexism or oppression, but did not subsequently apply specifics of theoretical approaches that explore these issues, e.g. drawing from feminism or Marxism
 - when applying the structuralist concept of binary oppositions, responses should move beyond listing binaries that are evident or identifying which holds power. Binary oppositions

discussed in the response should be selected for relevance to the overall theorised interpretation, e.g. the complex relationship between binary oppositions and their more nuanced power dynamics can be explored, with specific recognition of when these binaries are disrupted, challenged, or enforced. The effect this has on characters or the reader can be considered and tied more meaningfully to world-context-centred approaches

- when analysing narratological concepts such as focalisation, responses should move beyond discussing general effects on the reader, such as how empathy is generated. Instead, they should connect narratological concepts more specifically to the overall theorised interpretation, e.g. in *Ticket to Anywhere*, the third-person internal focalisation of Padma throughout the text further emphasises how the character still feels that any rebellion from the patriarchal demands of her father must not be vocalised. Her hidden rebellion reminds readers of the difficulty of establishing female autonomy
- ensuring that aspects of both text-centred and world-context-centred theoretical approaches are applied to the stimulus. Assessable element 2, applying theory to explore meaning, necessitates both text-centred and world-context-centred theory be used. If students apply aspects of only one approach, the response is awarded a mark of 1 and matches the qualifier of 'uneven', as explained in the EAMG notes. Some responses applied aspects of text-centred theory only, without any world-context-centred approaches. It is important to note that
 - psychoanalytic criticism is a text-centred theoretical approach. It can be successfully applied when investigating world-context-centred concerns such as gender or class power structures; however, without this relationship, it does not investigate the structural inequalities of societies, e.g. if a response applies only psychoanalytic concepts such as ego, superego, and id to a text, without any connection to the political nature of the stimulus and its social groups, it is not demonstrating application of world-context-centred theory. See [Approaches to reading practices: A resource for English & Literature Extension](#) on the QCAA website for further support and guidance about world-context-centred theoretical approaches
- demonstrating an understanding of the complexities of the chosen stimulus, by engaging with the whole text and analysing its intricacies. It is important for students to recognise when the end of the stimulus text subverts expectations or has a 'twist' to prompt readers emotionally or critically. Some responses focused on identifying the core problem in the stimulus without giving attention to the text's language and structures, e.g.
 - some responses identified where patriarchal control was evident in *Ticket to Anywhere* but did not engage with the nuances of the stimulus ending. These responses could have been improved by discussing Padma's rebellion through using the 'toughness' instilled in her to subvert her father's plan. Some responses neglected the irony of patriarchal control, forcing Padma to act in more masculine ways rather than feminine
 - some responses identified where class struggle and alienation were evident in *The Next Loop*, but did not consider Bobby's complex mix of hope and submissiveness at the end of the text and what conclusions can be drawn from this. Similarly, some responses did not consider the gender hierarchy inversion featured within the text
 - some responses identified oppression within *Fire in the Blood*, but did not discuss the hypocritical concession Councillor Gindt made at the end of the text when he learned that his wife Lena had joined the dancing crowd. Some responses could have been strengthened by exploring competing discourses of power, such as Frau Troffea's 'one hundred' followers who threaten hegemonic authority
- assisting students to further develop their skills for the following assessable elements within the Synthesis criterion

- communicating a clear thesis statement. In the 2023 EAMG, the assessable element of Development was updated to a mark range of 0–4 marks (previously 0–3). A thesis presents an interpretation of a literary text, making this assessable element interlinked with other parts of the EAMG. To achieve a mark of 4, a response must
 - provide a discerning thesis, develop arguments to strengthen the thesis, and provide defensible conclusions based on these arguments
 - have a thesis that clearly summarises the response’s overall theorised interpretation in the introduction
 - avoid copying the same identical thesis in each argument but strengthen the thesis through conclusions drawn from each argument, detailing the effects, consequences, impacts and/or results of the text on the reader. Concluding sentences of arguments can be used to draw more specific interpretations which develop the initial thesis
- understanding the difference between the Development assessable element qualifiers of discerning, informed, adequate and uneven by referring to the syllabus glossary, and the following examples
 - an adequate thesis statement provides a satisfactory interpretation of the text, e.g. an adequate thesis is that ‘*Fire in the Blood* communicates that the poor should be able to enjoy freedom’. This is a suitable interpretation of the stimulus text and provides some evidence to markers of a suitable theorised interpretation of the text, by drawing on aspects of Marxist theory
 - an informed thesis statement provides a knowledgeable interpretation of the text, e.g. an informed thesis is that ‘*Fire in the Blood* expresses that economic suffering leads to rebellion’. This is an informed interpretation of the stimulus text that is conversant with the details of the text and provides markers with evidence that contributes towards an effective theorised interpretation of the stimulus text, drawing on more specific aspects of Marxist theory
 - a discerning thesis statement provides a perceptive and astute interpretation of the text, e.g. a discerning thesis is that ‘*Fire in the Blood* reveals the innate subversive power proletariat women hold despite the intersectional oppression they face’. This is a discerning interpretation of the stimulus text that provides a thoughtful conclusion about its meaning, drawing upon aspects of theory that are central to the response’s close reading. It therefore provides markers with evidence of a discriminating theorised interpretation of the stimulus
- understanding that the 2023 EAMG mark range for the assessable element of Selection and synthesis was 0–5 marks (previously 0–4). To achieve a mark of 5, a response needed to provide a discerning selection of evidence from the stimulus, used to explicitly support the theorised reading. An overreliance on plot summary and recount can prevent a response from achieving full marks in this assessable element. Specific details and quotations from the stimulus text should be selected for relevance to the theorised reading, its interpretations of the text, and the aspects of theory being discussed. When synthesising these ideas, a response should not simply imply or suggest the connections between evidence, theory and interpretations. Explicit support requires a response to clearly and distinctly express what is meant, e.g. in a response to *The Next Loop*, Bobby’s mix of ‘curiosity and fear’ and when Mr Weeldon ‘tugged nervously at his tie’ can both be explicitly used to support the theorised reading that both characters have interpellated social ideologies to the point where it initially causes discomfort and pain to consider alternatives to the post-revolutionary world.

Additional advice

- Students
 - need to develop an interpretation of the selected stimulus text and signpost this interpretation as a clear thesis statement. The theorised exploration in a response should strengthen and develop this interpretation. Some responses did not arrive at an interpretation, and instead explored disconnected ideas about the stimulus. Without an overall conclusion about the text's meaning, marks for the assessable elements of Understanding of theoretical approaches, Analysis of literary texts, Understanding of literary texts and Development were affected. A close reading involves focusing on specific details of the stimulus text and the strategic application of aspects of theory to develop an interpretation. Assessment objectives 2, 4, 5 and 10 necessitate an 'interpretation' of the selected stimulus text is developed, which is broken into several assessable elements in the EAMG. The syllabus explains that an interpretation is a conclusion drawn about meaning, that is made clear and explicit. In light of this, a close reading in the external assessment must arrive at a conclusion about the text's meaning.
 - should use reading and planning time to synthesise and determine the text's overall meaning before writing their response. As the overall interpretation and thesis statement are central to several elements in the EAMG, this can significantly help with generating a synthesised close reading.
 - should revise a range of world-context-centred theoretical approaches and not limit themselves to only one specific approach when preparing for the external assessment. While the range of stimulus texts accommodate a variety of world-context-centred approaches, students should apply aspects of theory which are relevant and applicable to the stimulus they select. In some cases, it may be appropriate to apply aspects of more than one world-context-centred theoretical approach. Many responses to each of the stimulus texts in 2023 used aspects of Marxist and feminist criticism together, along with text-centred approaches such as structuralism and psychoanalysis.