

# Essential English subject report

2025 cohort

January 2026





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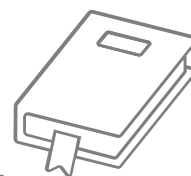
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# Introduction



The annual Applied (Essential) subject reports seek to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement of internal assessment processes for all Queensland schools. The 2025 subject report is the culmination of the partnership between schools and the QCAA. It addresses school-based assessment design, and student responses to assessment for Applied (Essential) subjects. 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 2026.

The report also includes information about:

- applying syllabus objectives in the design and marking of assessments
- patterns of student achievement
- important considerations to note related to the revised 2025 syllabus (where relevant).

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, heed 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 common internal assessment (CIA).

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.

## Subject highlights

**501**  
schools offered  
Essential English



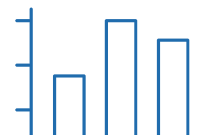
**85.10%**  
of students  
completed  
4 units



**98.46%**  
of students  
received a  
C or higher



# Subject data summary



## Subject completion

**Note:** All data is correct as at January 2026. Where percentages are provided, these are rounded to two decimal places and, therefore, may not add up to 100%.

Number of schools that offered Essential English: 501.

Completion of units	Unit 1	Unit 2	Units 3 and 4
Number of students completed	20,957	20,999	17,835

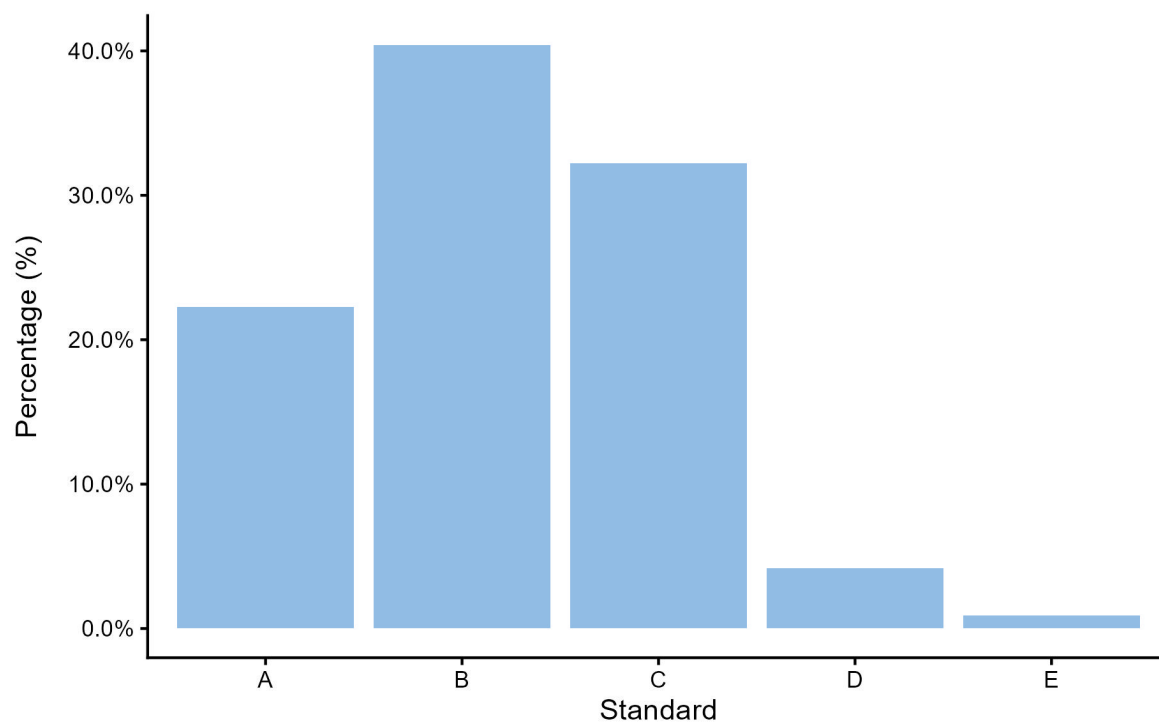
## Units 1 and 2 results

Number of students	Unit 1	Unit 2
Satisfactory	18,701	19,439
Unsatisfactory	2,256	1,560

## Units 3 and 4 internal assessment (IA) results

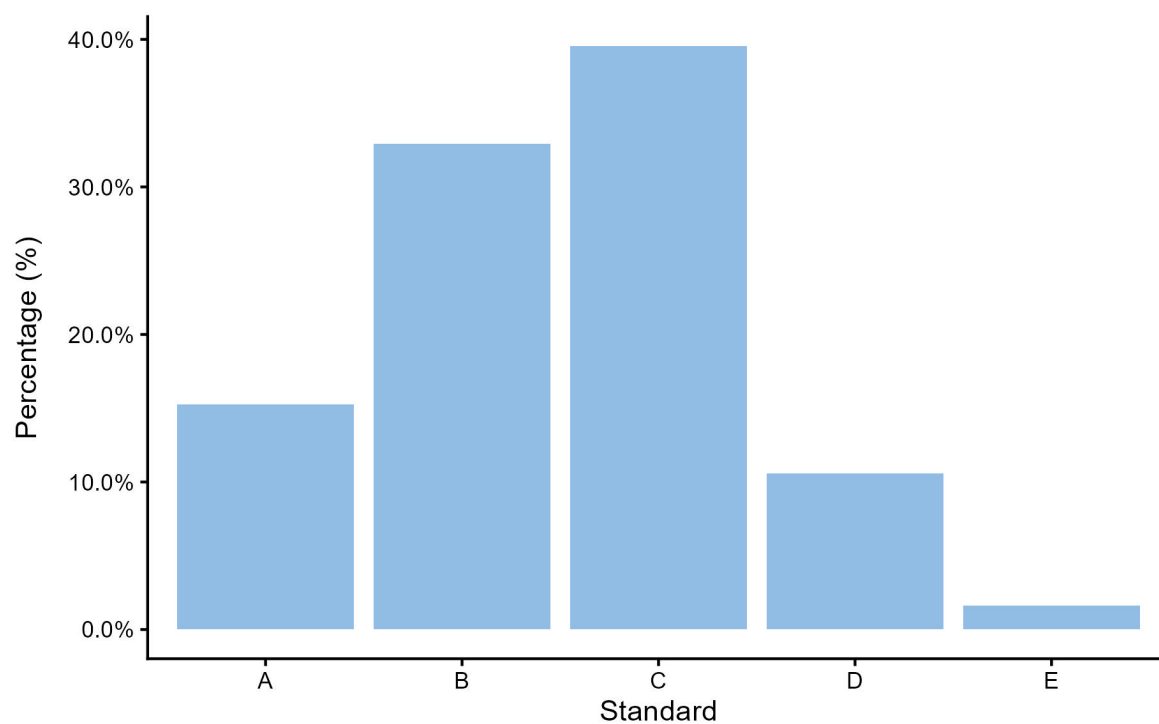
### IA1 standards

#### IA1 total

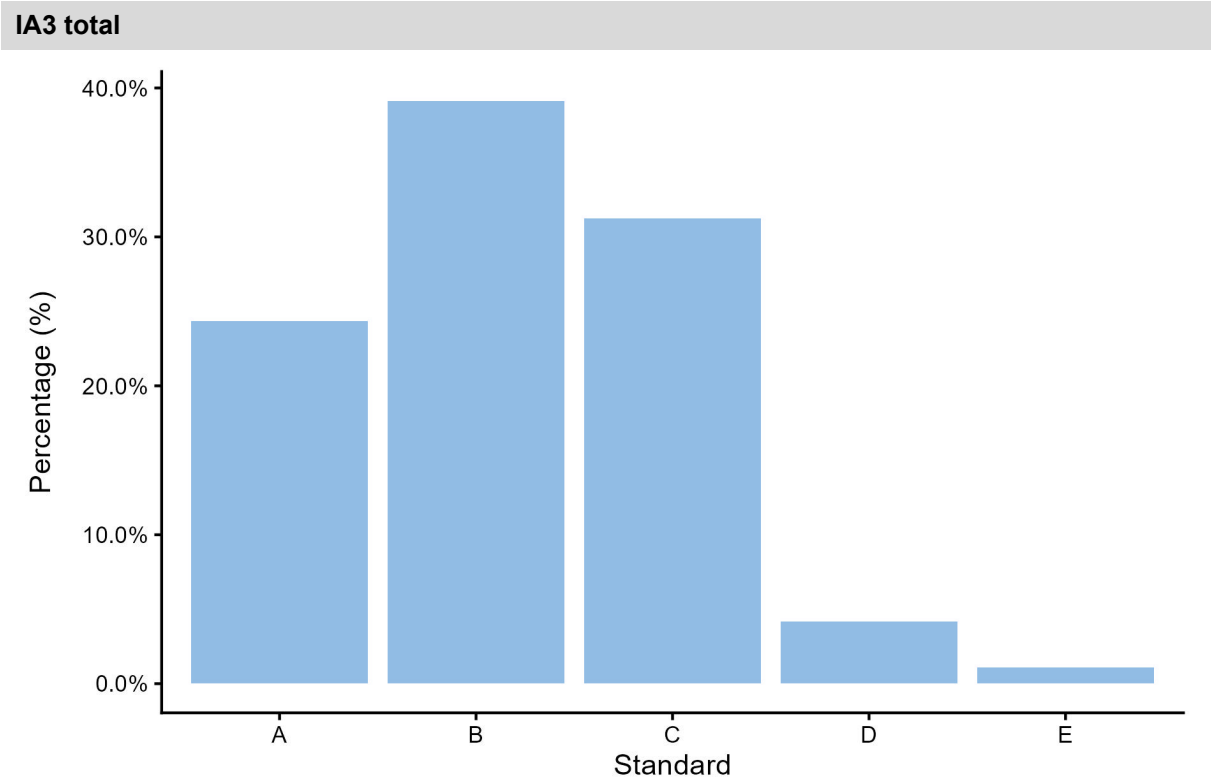


### IA2 (CIA) standards

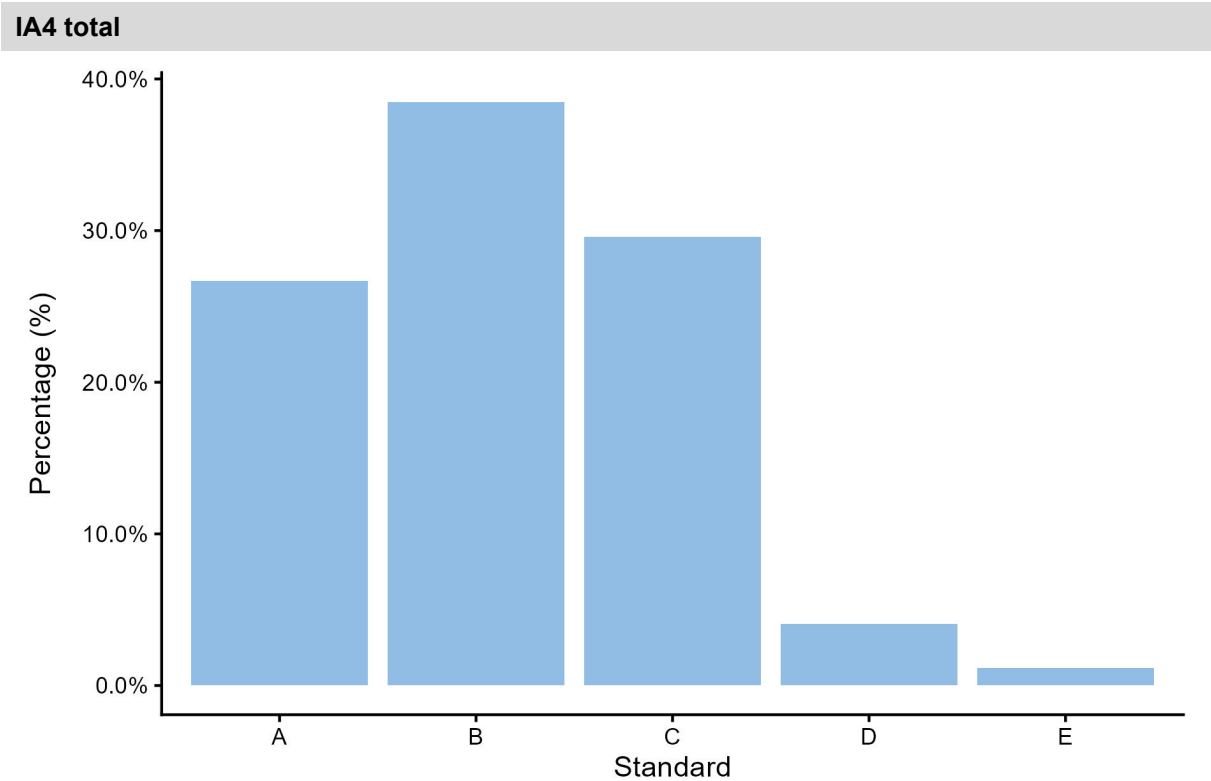
#### IA2 total



### IA3 standards



### IA4 standards



# Final subject results

## Distribution of standards

Number of students who achieved each standard across the state.

Standard	A	B	C	D	E
Number of students	3,088	8,273	6,199	257	18
Percentage of students	17.31	46.39	34.76	1.44	0.10



# Internal assessment



This 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 assessment. 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 v7.0*, Section 9.5.

### Percentage of instruments endorsed in Application 1

Number of instruments submitted	IA1	IA3	IA4
Total number of instruments	507	511	509
Percentage endorsed in Application 1	84	57	80

## Applied QA

Applied QA meetings occurred to provide feedback and advice to schools about the judgments of student work completed for Unit 3 (IA1 and CIA) and inform judgments for IA3 and IA4. The feedback was provided to schools using the *Quality assurance advice to schools* form.

# Internal assessment 1 (IA1)



## Extended response — spoken/signed response

This assessment focuses on the interpretation, examination and creation of representations of community, local and/or global issues. It is an open-ended task creating a text for a specified audience and purpose. While students may undertake some research when writing the extended response, it is not the focus of this technique.

Students may support their responses with audio, visual and digital media, where appropriate.

This assessment occurs over an extended and defined period of time. 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	20
Authentication	12
Authenticity	6
Item construction	16
Scope and scale	8

### Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- contextualised the assessment by providing a relevant issue, a clearly defined audience, and a specific persuasive genre (rather than 'persuasive presentation') to enable students to respond with originality and purpose, e.g.
  - an advocacy video to school leaders recommending that a particular issue is supported or addressed
  - a persuasive speech for a Youth Week assembly encouraging reflection on the acceptable qualities displayed by everyday role models
  - a pitch to a local council member proposing 1–3 improved youth services in response to rising homelessness
  - a persuasive media segment for a Youth Week event titled *Local Matters* about a student-selected community, local or global issue
  - a campaign video for a school website promoting action to address a community, local or global issue, such as workshops or classes to upskill the local community, involvement in

charity work to assist those in need, or a family-friendly festival advocating for community belonging and personal connections

- enabled students to construct their own representations of a community, local or global issue by providing an issue without a position attached to it, i.e. rather than directing students toward a particular stance, allowed students to develop their own position and express their own perspectives to increase the authenticity of their response and enable more nuanced arguments. Examples included
  - ‘youth mental health’ rather than ‘the importance of addressing youth mental health’
  - ‘religious freedom’ rather than ‘the value of religious freedom’
  - ‘the impact of social media on privacy’ rather than ‘the need for tighter control of social media use for teenagers’
- provided opportunity for students to practise their use of verbal and nonverbal language features before submitting their draft to the teacher, e.g.
  - recording a draft in the spoken mode (with student faces visible) in class using accessible tools such as laptops or Teams
  - asking students to provide feedback on a peer’s delivery (including tone) using a structured approach or template to guide them in providing constructive advice about how well spoken elements were used
  - submitting the spoken/signed draft to the teacher
- provided students with an appropriate number of texts/options (not too extensive) as a springboard for their persuasive responses to encourage original and diverse perspectives, e.g.
  - a curated set of different opinionative extracts from young Australians about relevant topics
  - a list of relevant charities from which students choose one
  - a list of possible issues from which students choose one
  - inclusion of ‘alternative issue in consultation with teacher’ in a list of options.

## Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- use checkpoints aligned with the syllabus-required notice of task (three weeks in 2019 syllabus; four weeks in 2025 syllabus)
- use language reflecting the syllabus-required cognitions *create*, *construct*, *shape* and *influence*, e.g.
  - instructing students to explain or analyse moves the focus away from the syllabus specifications of students delivering a persuasive response using their own attitudes, values and beliefs to a critical deconstruction
  - making the task’s purpose of influencing an audience explicit to encourage students to be persuasive rather than informative in their response.

## 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	4
Language	33
Layout	3
Transparency	6

## Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- used consistent formatting such as bullet points, headings and white space to break up dense information and enhance the flow of information, e.g. a bullet-point format for lists of issues to aid understanding. A clear layout
  - reduces cognitive load when interpreting task requirements
  - supports all users and learners in accessing information, including those with processing difficulties i.e. lists of issues (e.g. mental health, physical wellbeing, environmental sustainability) in dot-point formats are easier for students to recognise options and make decisions
- eliminated unnecessary information (e.g. specific local statistics or anecdotes) from the context statement and scaffolding
- avoided jargon, abbreviations and culturally specific terms and used Standard Australian English, e.g.
  - ‘public service announcement’ instead of ‘PSA’
  - ‘a topic that matters to you’ instead of ‘a topic close to your heart’
- specified a real-world audience, allowing students to engage meaningfully with the task by using language to connect with their audience and appeal to their values.

## Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- replace references to past years (e.g. 2024) with the current year (e.g. 2025) to avoid confusion and retain relevance
- limit the inclusion of sensitive topics or provide alternative options so students are not required to engage with topics that may negatively affect them
- maintain consistency across the task, scaffolding and conditions by
  - using the same audience in the task, scaffolding, and context sections removes ambiguity about tone and content e.g. addressing the UNICEF Youth Forum requires a different manner to a regional council’s program or an audience of ABC iView executives
  - specifying a clear genre (e.g. persuasive speech, video advocacy, pitch) and mode (spoken/signed) throughout the instrument
- use precise, grammatically accurate language to avoid confusion, including
  - subject–verb agreement (e.g. ‘one or two of the individuals were ...’ rather than ‘one or two of the individuals was ...’)

- consistent use of singular/plural and first, second or third person (e.g. consistent use of ‘we’ or ‘you’ throughout the task)
- accurate punctuation and capitalisation of text titles (e.g. YouTube rather than youtube)
- correct apostrophes (e.g. ‘it’s’ vs ‘its’)
- standard compound terms (e.g. ‘mainstream’ rather than ‘main stream’)
- use of the correct article (e.g. ‘an annual’ not ‘a annual’).

## Additional advice

When developing an assessment instrument for this IA, it is essential to consider the following key differences between the 2019 and 2025 syllabuses:

- Assessment objective 9 has been revised to include the use of ‘mode-appropriate language features’ rather than ‘spoken and nonverbal language features’. A task’s context should determine whether students are assessed on their use of nonverbal/gestural features (e.g. a persuasive speech pitched live to an audience would authentically include nonverbal features) or whether students are assessed on only the use of their voice to connect with audiences (e.g. a podcast or radio show segment).

If schools select a persuasive speech, they can continue asking students to include visual aids (e.g. PowerPoint slides) to complement the spoken/signed delivery. However, the task’s context determines this decision — requesting images to accompany a spoken delivery would be authentic for a persuasive TED Talk, but not for an audio op-ed (a recording of an opinion piece on a newspaper’s website).

The primary purpose is to present in the spoken/signed mode about a community, local or global issue for up to 6 minutes in a particular genre.

- Assessment objective 1 has been revised and now prompts schools to consider persuasive, reflective or imaginative responses rather than only persuasive text types. This decision — about whether students’ primary purpose is to persuade, reflect or imagine — will impact the text type and the genre students use in structuring their response. Providing students with an authentic context offers them a realistic scenario for developing and delivering their response, e.g.
  - a recording of an opinion piece in a local community online newspaper (supporting audiences who prefer to listen rather than to read) about a student-selected issue, e.g. skills important to teenage success such as relationship skills, communicating with others or resolving conflict, physical fitness, health, true crime, citizenship, justice, ethics
  - a reflective podcast for the online annual Australian youth conference on the 2025 theme, *Issues that matter to US* — their response is uploaded to the conference website with snippets posted on social media
  - a segment of a memoir about something relevant or personal to a student, e.g. an adventure or travel experience that taught them a life lesson about a particular community issue
  - a personal story about a local, community or global issue
  - a dramatic story, either fictional or based on a real event (in their own words using their own opinions and ideas) that draws on a local, community or global issue
  - a lifestyle advice session that may be health and fitness focused (probably persuasive or reflective), which may connect to a local or community issue

- a spoken personal aspiration statement about faith or spirituality related to a local, community or global issue.
- Assessment objective 4 has been revised to include the use of opinions and/or ideas rather than cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs. Despite this shift in language, students are still being tasked with using their own opinions and/or ideas about the community, local or global issue. Task instructions should reflect the updated terminology to guide students in constructing their perspectives and positioning audiences; however, the use of cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and/or beliefs in assessment instruments is still permissible.
- The notification of task has been revised from three weeks to four weeks.
- Syllabus conditions have been revised from '4–6 minutes' to 'Up to 6 minutes'.

## Assessment decisions

### Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which the results of assessments are consistent, replicable and free from error.

Number of submissions received and reviewed: 487.

### Effective practices

Reliable judgments were made using the instrument-specific standards for this IA when instrument-specific standards were annotated for every descriptor to show how the overall on-balance judgment was made.

### Practices to strengthen

To further ensure reliable judgments are made using the instrument-specific standards for this internal assessment, it is recommended that only one on-balance judgment is made to reflect a match to the qualifiers for that standard, e.g. for a response to be awarded Standard C overall, the response needs to demonstrate, on balance, Standard C qualifiers. Responses do not need to be awarded Standard C for all descriptors to be awarded an overall on-balance judgment of Standard C. On-balance decisions are made by reviewing the evidence for each, and all descriptors, and then determining the quality of learning demonstrated across the response.

### Additional advice

It is essential to consider the following key differences between the 2019 and 2025 syllabuses:

- No grade should be provided at the top of the columns for each individual criterion. Instead, one overall on-balance judgment is to be indicated in the Grade column on the instrument-specific standards.
- The descriptors in the instrument-specific standards for Knowledge application are separated to facilitate discrete judgments for Assessment objectives 3 and 4.

### Samples

The following excerpt demonstrates a consistent use of the spoken mode using palm cards (Assessment objective 9) coupled with a controlled choice of language (Assessment objective 8):

- Palm cards are used to create a fluent delivery without impeding gestures, enabling words to be spoken for impact.

- Earnestness in facial expressions reiterates the speaker's commitment to their argument and occasional smiles develop a connection with the audience to remind them that they are all human and share an affinity with one another.
- Key words are emphasised to convey seriousness and stress the importance of points within a reasoned argument.
- Choices in language show knowledge of
  - purpose — to convince audiences of the importance of financial literacy and adapting to the skills required in a 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace
  - audience — the register is formal to address educated people
  - text type — persuasion is used to alert audiences to the imperative of recognising the need to be adaptable to workforce expectations.
- Language is formal, definitive and occasionally evocative, e.g.
  - 'dreams are birthed'
  - 'our economy is built around the exchange and management of money'
  - 'being financially literate is an essential skill'
  - 'it is imperative that we adapt and incorporate new skills suited to our changing workforce'
  - 'skills include teamwork, global thinking, time management, relationship building and work ethic ... operating in a digital environment and adapting to new ways of working'
  - 'the famous Plato once said ...'

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



Video content: (1 min, 50 secs)

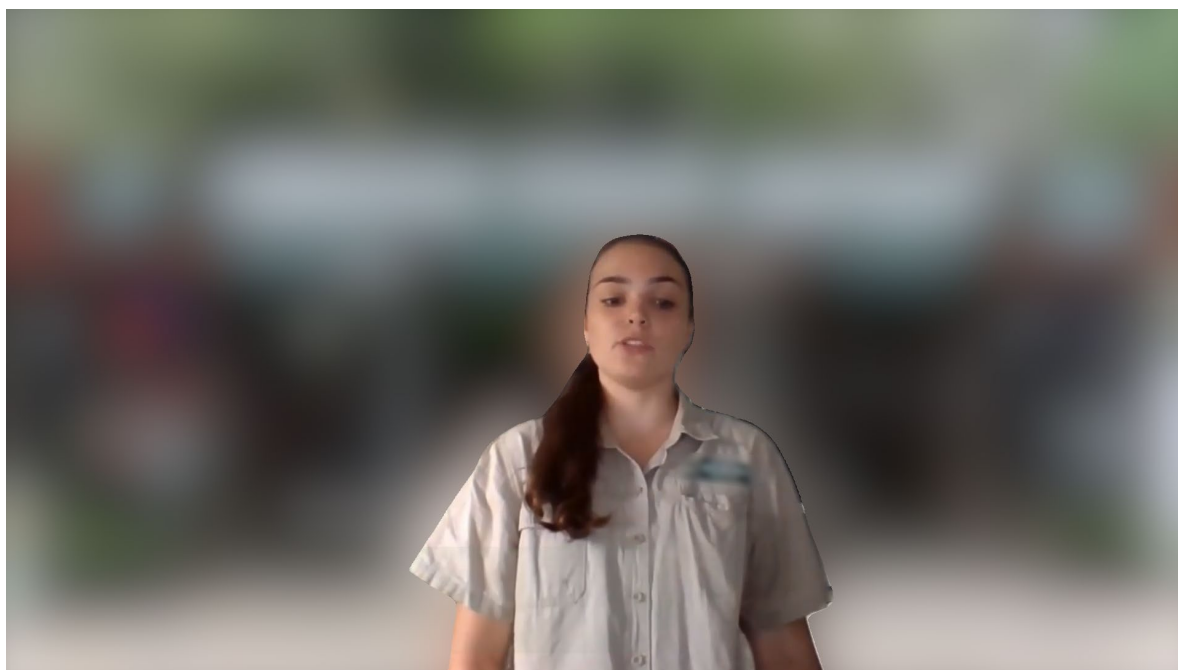
<https://youtu.be/SJ5PC4VFzMI>

The following excerpt demonstrates an effective use of integrating modes and media in a persuasive speech (Assessment objective 1) to enhance the speech's primary message of raising awareness of the bilby's struggles for survival:

- Images are used at appropriate moments to showcase the cuteness of the bilby, a deliberate strategy to ignite audience instinct to protect this animal.
- Animations emphasise the risks to bilbies by combining words with visual prompts to create a lingering effect on audiences. The effect is more than just saying 'competition for food', 'habitat loss', 'fragmentation' and 'changing fire patterns'.
- Backdrops behind the speaker change to relevant scenes to invite audiences into those environments to enhance their connection with those places and the plight of the bilby, e.g.
  - the wildlife organisation for the student's introduction to establish credibility
  - an orange desert to help audiences visualise the arid environment bilbies inhabit, further emphasising their struggle to survive
  - bushland to attest to the bilbies' versatility and determination to survive after human-altered landscapes have restricted habitation in the lush areas, further positioning audiences to admire such resilient creatures
  - an arid scene with a fence to emphasise the need to build predator-proof barriers for their protection
  - a sky at sunrise with the question 'Why should we care?' to challenge audiences and instil a sense of optimism and hope that if we act, we will succeed
  - a bilby occupying centre stage on the screen while the student suddenly relegates themselves to the bottom left-hand corner to diminish their online presence, further emphasising the importance and cuteness of this animal and deliberately using the title of 'Help Save the Bilby Today' to challenge audiences and incite motivation to act.
- Gestures and key words are combined with images to emphasise the importance of caring about bilbies and taking action to protect them.
- A prop, the uniform, is worn by the student to further establish their role with the audience as an informed speaker who is knowledgeable about bilbies and their habitats.

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





Video content: (3 min, 9 secs)

<https://youtu.be/a9GpVntRjXE>

The following excerpts demonstrate the development of a cohesive argument using regular, well-timed moments to remind the audience (executive producer of a television news program) about the necessity of featuring an issue on fast fashion on their program. The sequencing of an argument using cohesive ties also connects ideas and information purposefully (Assessment objectives 6 and 7).

- The introduction begins with a prompt asking audiences to close their eyes and ‘imagine this ...’ Statistics follow, connecting the prompt with the statistic that Australians alone throw out ‘15 tonnes of clothing’ every ten minutes, which is ‘enough to fill up an entire garbage truck’. The purposefulness of beginning with these statistics shows knowledge of how to connect with the audience from the outset to compel them to feel concern about such waste, a desire to address the issue and instil within them the importance of immediate action.
- The speaker then re-asserts the need for televising this issue by introducing themselves, addressing the executive producer and stating that due to the ‘environmental and social impacts’ fast fashion causes, this issue cannot be ignored. This direct connection between the speaker’s identity and the executive director’s responsibility of taking action about fast fashion again shows a purposeful sequencing of subject matter.
- To further build on the usefulness of these statistics, the speaker includes emotive language to sway the executive director into featuring a news story to alert audiences and transfer the burden to them, e.g.
  - ‘waste crisis’
  - ‘environmental consequences will be catastrophic’
  - ‘cause the landfill to overflow’
  - ‘add major water pollution’
  - ‘if we don’t act now, the damage could be irreversible’.

- The speaker's first argument asserts the need to make fast fashion 'a relevant and newsworthy issue for the program to investigate', which again connects this argument with the introduction, a purposeful inclusion.
- Further evidence of purposeful choices in selection and cohesion of subject matter is in the final argument and conclusion where the speaker continues to compel the executive director to recognise the importance of running a story on fast fashion to alert the community to this 'waste crisis'.

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



#### Excerpt 1

Video content: (2 min, 1 sec)

<https://youtu.be/mEnFCNoIE2I>

#### Excerpt 2

Video content: (32 secs)

<https://youtu.be/3zV4NFtLJD8>

#### Excerpt 3

Video content: (37 secs)

<https://youtu.be/wCukP3SLK0w>

# Internal assessment 2 (CIA)



## Common internal assessment (CIA)

The CIA is common to all schools and is developed by the QCAA. Schools are able to administer this assessment during the CIA phase chosen by the school in Unit 3 once it has been provided by the QCAA. It is administered flexibly under supervised conditions and is marked by the school according to a QCAA-developed common marking scheme. The CIA is not privileged over the school-developed summative assessment.

## Short response — written

### Assessment design

The assessment instrument was designed using the specifications, conditions and assessment objectives described in the Summative internal assessment 2: Common internal assessment section of the syllabus. The examination consisted of two sections:

- Section 1 consisted of 1 short response item (seen written stimulus).
- Section 2 consisted of 1 short response item (unseen visual stimulus).

The examination assessed subject matter from Unit 3. Questions were derived from the topics of:

- city living
- country living.

Each of the three CIA phases used different stimulus where students responded to questions about how one of the above topics was represented.

The assessment required students to respond to the stimulus by explaining two representations and two points of view, two cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and/or beliefs, two language features and two text structures. Explaining two of each enabled students to demonstrate a breadth and depth of knowledge about the stimulus, demonstrating the life skill of critical literacy.

The range of written stimulus across the phases included: online article, transcript of a radio talkback show, email.

The range of visual stimulus texts across the phases included: poster, magazine cover, photo story.

### Assessment decisions

Assessment decisions are made by markers matching student responses to the common internal assessment marking guide (CIAMG).

### Effective practices

Overall, students responded well to the opportunity to:

- deconstruct bias in written stimulus by explaining how the beliefs within them influence readers about the topics of city or country living
- explain how visual stimulus use language features and text structures to shape ideas about city or country living

- engage with written and visual genres across all phases
- explain how language features and text structures in both written and visual stimulus position audiences to think, believe and/or feel.

## Practices to strengthen

When preparing students for the CIA, it is recommended that students:

- have repeated opportunities to engage with the three elements of Objective 5, i.e. explaining
  - a language feature or text structure in the stimulus text
  - how the language feature or text structure shapes a perspective about the topic
  - how the language feature or text structure positions audiences to think, believe and/or feel
- engage with a wide range of stimulus containing diverse and nuanced perspectives rather than just positive and negative representations of the topic, e.g. city living could be represented in a positive way overall, for a variety of reasons. Articulating these reasons about why it is positive (rather than merely stating it is 'positive') may enable students to improve the amount of detail in their responses, e.g.
  - the Phase 2 written stimulus creates a positive representation of country living, but drilling down into aspects of how the representation is positive opens up additional ideas, increasing the detail in student explanations, i.e. students could explain that the stimulus creates a positive representation of country living, or they could state that country living is represented as
    - picturesque with its 'endless blue skies' and vast landscapes
    - providing a lifestyle fostering a deep sense of belonging
    - living in a place where people genuinely care for one another
- are offered frequent engagement with the scaffolds on the QCAA Portal to help students develop a routine, structured approach to deconstructing texts so important assessable elements (e.g. explanations about how audiences are positioned) are not inadvertently missed.

## Samples

### Short response

Effective student responses:

- articulated to readers how language features and text structures in visual stimulus are used intentionally to affect readers' feelings about the topic
- drew out meaning for audiences by explaining how visual stimulus are constructed to impart perspectives
- explained how words and layouts in written stimulus create meaning according to their location within a text, i.e. the sequencing of information shows a hierarchy, creating its own effect.

The following excerpts are responses to questions from Phases 1 and 2 on city and country living. They have been included to demonstrate Assessment objectives 3 and 6. They show how:

- explanations about points of view can be followed up with additional details to further draw out meaning for readers, showing a detailed knowledge of how points of view are constructs of the author e.g.

- Excerpt 1 asserts that a point of view about country living is that it offers ‘lots of diversity within the community’. This is then supported by references to the advertisement for a local show as well as additional details such as how the advertisement helps ‘the reader feel seen and included in the country community’
- Excerpt 2 establishes a point of view of ‘agricultural and economic concern’ being ‘central to rural living’, which is supported by multiple additional details such as references to ‘farming and agricultural industries’, direct quotes from the magazine cover’s titles (e.g. ‘livestock prices on the rise’) and an additional explanation about the significance of this addition, i.e. it ‘communicates the struggle’ the industries ‘are facing’
- examples from the stimulus can be used as springboards for further elaboration to make explanations more detailed and draw them together to defend perspectives about how the topic is represented. For instance, the point of view in Excerpt 2 about rural living developing a ‘close social fabric’ is linked to
  - fundraisers such as the demolition derby, street parade and ‘competitions for everyone’
  - rural people ‘supporting one another’ and ‘celebrating traditions’
  - the way rural people ‘value shared experiences’, including ‘live music’
- explanations take a variety of forms, e.g. the explanation in Excerpt 3
  - provides readers with information about audience positioning before explaining the representation (‘The audience is positioned to view city living as a friendly, close together party place’ and ‘the poster wants you to think because you are living in the city, you are all connected together’)
  - incorporates evidence from the stimulus text by supporting these claims — ‘a photo of an apartment building’ is used to ‘prove their point as city living is combined in smaller spaces’
  - develops a second point of view about city living being a place where ‘everybody is close and friendly’, which is further supported by the claim that the author wants ‘you to think city living isn’t all gloom and unfriendliness’.

**Excerpt 1**

One point of view about country living is there is lots of diversity within the community. There is an advertisement at the bottom of the page for a local show. It says there is "something for everyone" which helps the reader feel seen and included in the country community. Another point of view is that the country is full of open space for nature. The image of the house shows a lot of open plains for activities/privacy and nature. It also mentions "canape cooking on an open fire" which helps display that there is lots of open space to have fun and spend time outdoors.

## Excerpt 2

One point of view portrayed to the audience is that there is close social fabric in rural living. They enjoy celebrating traditions, supporting one another and they value shared experiences.\* The second point of view is that there is agricultural and economic concern central to rural living. Especially for the farming and agricultural industries. Sentences such as "livestock prices on the rise" and "Rain forecast hopeful for summer" communicate the struggle and concerns the agricultural and farming ~~man~~ industry are facing.

\* (2a)

They have local fundraisers, shows such as demolition derby, ~~match~~ street parade and live music and competitions for everyone.



## Excerpt 3

The audience is positioned to view city living as a friendly, close together party place. The poster wants you to think because you are living in the city, you are all connected together. They used a photo of an apartment building to prove their point as typically city living is combined in smaller spaces as it is represented a bigger atmosphere. Another point of view in the poster is that everybody is close and friendly while being connected in a smaller space, they want you to think ~~at~~ city living isn't all gloom and ~~unfriendliness~~ unfriendliness.



The following excerpts have been included to show how a variety of approaches are possible for explaining how values, attitudes or beliefs add layers of meaning to visual texts and influence audiences.

In Excerpt 1:

- the assertion of 'people in the rural town' valuing 'their communities [sic] achievements' is supported by two examples to defend this claim
  - 'Three past students return to local schools as teachers'
  - 'Local footy star makes Qld team'
- the examples are explained through detailed additional references of the community caring about one another and celebrating each other's achievements, giving them 'a sense of belonging'.

In Excerpt 2:

- the assertions that the visual stimulus harbours a belief of country living as 'accommodating' to everyone and that 'good things come from it' are supported by examples from the stimulus e.g. 'they use phrases such as 'something for everyone'
- a summarising point is made to encompass the preceding details by stating how the stimulus 'insinuates all the positives that come from country living'.

#### Excerpt 1

The people in the rural town value their communities achievements. This can be seen when it states "Three past students return to local schools as teachers." as well as "local footy star makes Qld team." This positions the reader to feel as though people in the community care about and celebrate each others achievements and gives them a sense of belonging. An attitude that is displayed is the willingness to step up and help others. A candlelit concert fundraiser is advertised which makes the reader feel like the community comes together and is willing to sacrifice in order to help their people.

**Excerpt 2**

People who live rurally value optimism and resilience. Due to it being a drought affected area, they must be positive and keep trying no matter how hard it gets. Furthermore, they believe country living is ~~area~~ accommodating for everyone and good things come from it. For example, they use phrases such as ~~an~~ "something for everyone" to emphasise the support. ~~again~~ "Three past students return to local schools as teachers" and "local footy star makes QLD team" insinuates all the positives that come from country living.

The following excerpt is for Phase 2 about how country living is represented. It has been included to show how, despite an explanation about the overall representation of country living being 'positive', the response provides deeper reasoning about why it is a positive representation, adding detail to enhance the response. The explanation:

- refers to the way Chan reiterates how everyone is 'connected despite the long distances between them'
- develops this further by stating 'you can have your own space/privacy while living in the country, but still be connected to everyone else in the town'
- includes a reference to Sam's simile ('like mares protecting their foals') to help listeners 'see the deep connection and care between people in country communities' and how this 'gives a sense of security to the listeners'
- further expounds on this by including that 'country communities are protective and trustworthy'
- adds detail about the use of a text structure (cause and effect) by explaining how listeners are given a series of pros and cons, but with a dominant representation of 'appreciation' towards country living.

Another positive representation that can be seen throughout the transcript is the sense of community and connection to people. Chan believes that everyone is connected despite the long distances between them. This shows the listener that you can have your own space/privacy while living in the country, but still be connected to everyone else in the town!

A language feature that assists with this representation is simile. In the text, Sam says "they'd been looking out for me, like mares protecting their foals." This helps the listeners see ~~that~~ the deep connection and care ~~for~~ between ~~country~~ people in country communities. It also gives a sense of security to the listeners, knowing that country communities are protective and trustworthy. A text structure that can be seen in the text is cause and effect. Sam also says "sharing or trading with neighbours, like exchanging eggs for veggies, is an inborn reflex, an imprint on our genes. I only realised what I'd lost after I left." This signifies that there is less of a sense of community outside the country towns. It also gives a sense of appreciation

of <sup>the community</sup> ~~what~~ Sam had grown up/around.  
By using cause and effect, the listener  
can think about the pros and cons of  
country living and visualise the positive  
impact that living in the country has on  
people.

# Internal assessment 3 (IA3)



## Extended response — multimodal response

This assessment focuses on the identification, consideration and explanation of ideas and information in texts. It is an open-ended task responding to a popular culture text or texts and constructed for a specified audience and purpose. While students may undertake some research in the creation of the response, it is not the focus of this technique.

Students may support their responses with visual, audio and/or digital elements appropriate to the mode.

This assessment occurs over an extended and defined period of time. 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	138
Authentication	25
Authenticity	15
Item construction	14
Scope and scale	75

### Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- framed the task around a single concept represented in a particular class-studied text (e.g. resilience, belonging, community, justice) to provide students with a clear focus and enable them to respond within the syllabus conditions of 4–6 minutes
- specified a clear audience (e.g. youth forum, student panel, pitching to *Voices of Youth*, viewers of *The Gruen Transfer*) to enable appropriate tone, language choices and content aligned to the required genre
- selected rich, culturally relevant texts to engage students.

### Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- use a specific multimodal genre (e.g. vlog, video essay, multimodal slideshow film review) rather than simply stating 'multimodal presentation' to help students understand the expected patterns and conventions required in their response

- frame the required response in a way that enables students to engage authentically with the text and critique its representation of a particular concept while preserving their own perspectives about that representation's portrayal, e.g.
  - explaining how *Bluey* represents family and whether it reflects their own reality, or if the representation is a healthy or reasonable construction for young children
  - explaining whether the text's representation of a particular concept or identity makes it worthy of study for Year 12 students
  - commenting on whether a particular concept (e.g. love, romance, friendship, loss, family, injustice) in a musician's repertoire of 1–3 songs is an accurate representation of that concept according to their own perspectives and life experience
- limit the number of texts, scenes, characters or songs students are required to refer to in their response to ensure that the task can be completed within 4–6 minutes, e.g. ask students to explain two selected songs, not all four, or explain one episode, not an entire television series
- avoid listing too many elements for students to incorporate in their response (e.g. values, concepts, structures and multiple purposes) or copying large sections straight from the syllabus using the plural form. Instead, provide students with a clear focus, e.g. 'Explain 1–3 ways the text could be updated for a modern audience' instead of asking students to 'Explain ways the text could be updated for a modern audience'.

## 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	5
Language	29
Layout	1
Transparency	13

### Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- organised information in an easy-to-understand format to reduce the cognitive load required to unpack task requirements and help students from all backgrounds and skill levels understand instructions
- used appropriate language to prevent the alienation of any student from the required learning and enabled all learners to demonstrate critical thinking, including the skill of explaining how a particular concept has been represented in a text
- used popular culture text/s containing representations offering worthwhile critical contemplation (e.g. a concept related to the human condition) to stimulate provocative and intellectual engagement.



## Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- clarify the audience across all sections of the task by using consistent terminology (e.g. a specific audience such as viewers of a teen social media channel) to prevent ambiguity about who students are to address, helping them make purposeful language and content choices
- contain only the relevant patterns and conventions of the multimodal genre students are required to produce — checking the scaffolding is prudent to prevent ambiguity about the expectations, patterns and conventions required in student responses
- use syllabus language and are consistent throughout, e.g.
  - use ‘explain’ rather than ‘analyse’ or ‘evaluate’
  - avoid switching between genre descriptors mid-task such as presentation, vlog and video
- are free from errors, including
  - accurate subject–verb agreement (e.g. ‘One of the Australian films is ...’ rather than ‘The Australian movies is ...’)
  - correct capitalisation (e.g. ‘presentation’ rather than ‘Presentation’)
  - consistent pronouns and voice across the task — shifting between ‘you’, ‘we’, and ‘students’ impact accessibility
  - correct spelling of proper nouns (e.g. ‘PowerPoint’ rather than ‘powerpoint’), which models accuracy for students to emulate
  - clear and fluent phrasing (e.g. avoiding awkward constructions like ‘me spoken/signed’).

## Additional advice

When developing an assessment instrument for this IA, it is essential to consider the following key differences between the 2019 and 2025 syllabuses:

- The revision in Assessment objective 4 from ‘cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs’ to ‘opinions and/or ideas’ creates a potential change in the language students use about the text/s they are deconstructing. However, references to cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and/or beliefs remain permissible.
- Syllabus conditions have been revised from ‘4–6 minutes’ to ‘Up to 6 minutes’.

## Assessment decisions

### Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which the results of assessments are consistent, replicable and free from error.

### Effective practices

Reliable judgments were made using the instrument-specific standards for this IA when:

- differences between the qualifiers were recognised across the standards in Assessment objective 1 about the merging of modes:
  - Standard A is to be awarded when modes and media are *integrated*
  - Standard B is to be awarded when modes and media are *combined*



- Standard C is to be awarded when modes and media are evident in the response
- judgments were accurately determined for Assessment objectives 3, 4 and 5 for each task's required concept in popular culture text/s, incorporating explanations of
  - a singular representation in 1–3 texts
  - cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and/or beliefs
  - language features and text structures.

### Practices to strengthen

To further ensure reliable judgments are made using the instrument-specific standards for this IA, it is recommended that all responses include two modes (one is to be a spoken delivery of up to 6 minutes) to deconstruct the required popular culture text/s.

### Samples

The following excerpts demonstrate how the deconstruction of people in reality television shows offer insights into the constructed nature of reality:

- Excerpt 1 incorporates references to *Pride and Prejudice* to explain how producers construct the tragic romantic archetype
- Excerpt 2 explains how producers construct the amazonian archetype.

Some elements of the responses were redacted to comply with copyright and intellectual property policies.

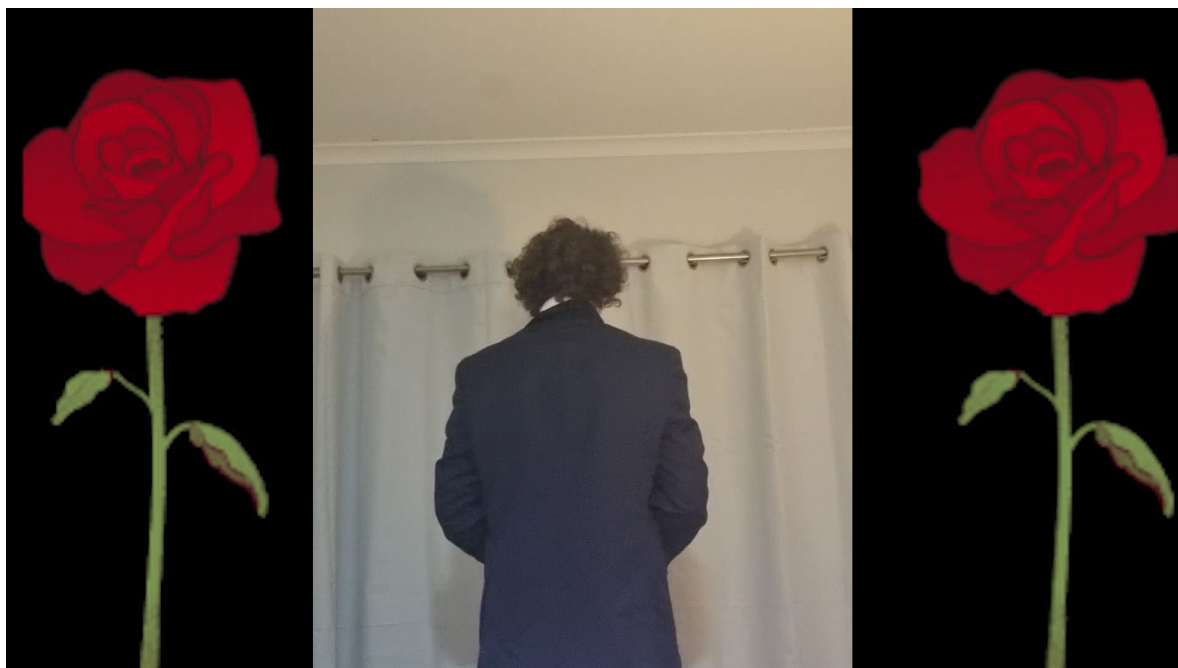
**Note:** The characteristic/s identified may not be the only time the characteristic/s occurred throughout a response.

#### Excerpt 1



Video content: (2 min, 44 secs)

<https://youtu.be/MuiZ5frfUsw>

**Excerpt 2**

Video content: (3 min, 30 secs)

[https://youtu.be/Fda\\_l3RMaJM](https://youtu.be/Fda_l3RMaJM)

# Internal assessment 4 (IA4)



## Extended response — written response

This internal assessment focuses on the creation of representations to position an audience. It is an open-ended task where interpretation of a popular culture text or texts is used as a springboard for a creative response. While students may undertake some research in the creation of the response, it is not the focus of this technique.

Students may support their responses with visual, audio and/or digital elements appropriate to the mode.

This assessment occurs over an extended and defined period of time. 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	38
Authentication	9
Authenticity	7
Item construction	11
Scope and scale	29

### Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- specified the genre and audience for the task rather than use vague instructions such as 'write a response', e.g.
  - an opinion piece for a youth magazine or school intranet
  - a short story for readers of *Pink, Blue and Rainbow Too*, incorporating a character from the class-studied text
  - an opinion piece for the *Legends Lane* exhibition committee about the impact of a surf lifesaver or medical professional in the class-studied autobiography
  - 2–3 digital diary entries describing how a concept in *Crackerjack* (e.g. power, pressures of modern life, socialising, belonging, cross-generational relationships) helped them understand themselves or someone else in their own lives
- clearly directed students to shape representations of an Australian social group, e.g. asking students to represent Australian youth through a secondary character from *Jasper Jones* in a short story

- avoided asking students to adopt unfamiliar roles or roles likely to go beyond their life experience (e.g. a celebrity) by allowing them to speak from their own perspective or as a representative of an Australian social group, enhancing authenticity and accessibility
- avoided cultural appropriation by avoiding instructions that might allow students to take on the role of a character in a class-studied text who is outside their own cultural background or heritage.

### Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- clearly specify the required stimulus text/s as a springboard for student responses
- restrict the number of texts and ideas students are required to draw on in their response, e.g.
  - specify a maximum of two events or concepts students are required to respond to from *The Apology* or *Property of the Clan*
  - focus on one concept (e.g. mental health, gender) from a single class-studied text such as *Looking for Alibrandi*
- instruct students to construct representations of a particular Australian social group, rather than to analyse or evaluate existing portrayals
- avoid task instructions requiring students to undertake extensive research or explore multiple external sources (e.g. analyse news media, interview community members), as the focus is on the class-studied text/s.

### 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	1
Language	17
Layout	2
Transparency	8

### Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- referred to the required genre and its conventions consistently across all sections of the task
- enabled all students to engage ethically and confidently, e.g.
  - allowed students to select an Australian social group in consultation with the teacher
  - encouraged a reflective or personal voice to reduce risks occurring through clashes in the differences between students' own personal identity and characters in class-studied texts.

## Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- model accuracy and clarity in written expression (e.g. ensure subject–verb agreement, correct spelling and consistent pluralisation) by editing for grammatical accuracy and use of correct punctuation
- clearly state the number of texts required in student responses, e.g. 1–3 digital diaries, 1–2 blog posts
- avoid culturally exclusive or evaluative language, which includes
  - removing terms that assume a shared cultural background, e.g. slang, idioms, humour
  - replacing potentially judgmental phrasing such as ‘appropriate behaviour’ with task-neutral terms such as ‘a specific representation’
  - using inclusive, accessible examples in scaffolding
- maintain consistent formatting across the task, e.g. use either italics or quotation marks for publication titles rather than a combination of both and check for typographical errors that may confuse or mislead.

## Additional advice

When developing an assessment instrument for this IA, it is essential to consider the following key differences between the 2019 and 2025 syllabuses:

- The focus of the task has been broadened from ‘an Australian social group’ to ‘an aspect of an Australian popular culture text/s’. This increases the variety of potential approaches to students’ study of Australian texts and the focus of their written responses, e.g.
  - amending the focus of a task from a short story positioning audiences to accept or reject a representation of young Australians in the studied text to a short story exploring a particular concept (e.g. belonging, coming of age, conflict, redemption, survival, family) in the class-studied text
  - an email to the text creator/producer about how an event or events in the plot (maximum of three) elicited new understandings or epiphanies for either themselves, a friend, or both
  - a film review for *Teen Ink* about how studying the class-studied text is worthwhile (or not) through a discussion of a particular character’s potential value or harm to teenage audiences
  - an email to Tourism and Events Queensland (or a relevant local city council) about how the setting and backdrop used in the class-studied film affected them, e.g. resonated with them, felt significant in some way, revealed a key learning/understanding, formed a connection or otherwise.
- Assessment objective 4 has been revised to include the use of opinions and/or ideas rather than cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs, requiring consideration of the terminology used in the assessment instrument.

Students are being tasked with using their own opinions and/or ideas about an aspect of an Australian popular culture text. Task instructions should reflect the updated terminology to guide students in constructing their perspectives and positioning audiences; however, the use of cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and/or beliefs in assessment instruments is still permissible.

## Assessment decisions

### Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which the results of assessments are consistent, replicable and free from error.

### Effective practices

Reliable judgments were made using the instrument-specific standards for this IA when the overall on-balance judgment reflected how well the representations of an Australian social group (the focus of the response) were shaped.

### Practices to strengthen

To further ensure reliable judgments are made using the instrument-specific standards for this IA, it is recommended that all on-balance judgments reflect how well the response uses the patterns and conventions of the genre stipulated in the school's endorsed assessment instrument.

### Samples

The following excerpts demonstrate how the genre of the creative, non-fiction journal entry enabled students to engage with the passage of time and the evolution of a character while simultaneously retaining a sameness about particular values, e.g. family.

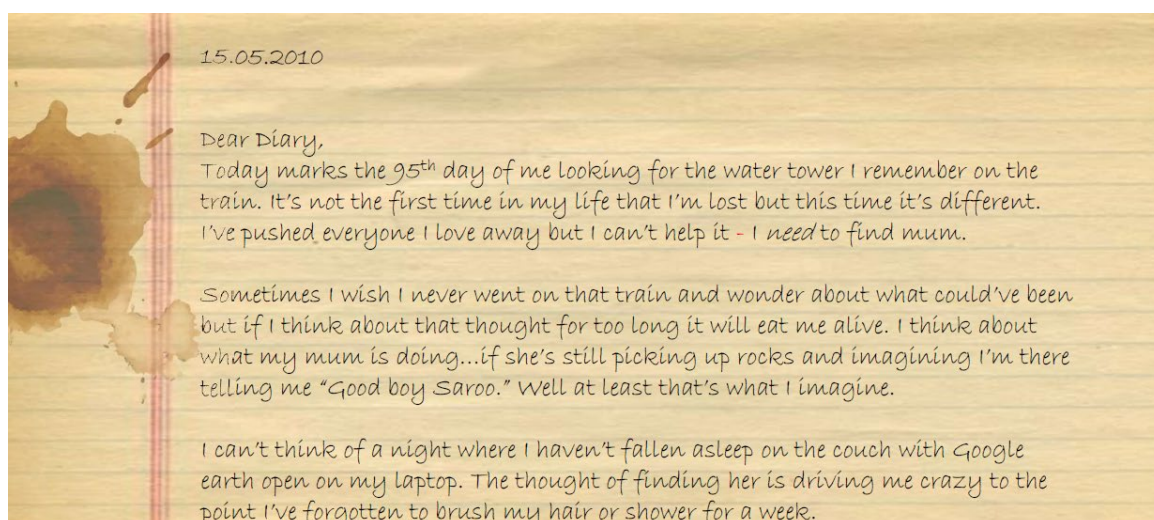
The two different diary entries spaced nearly two years apart show the internal turmoil associated with Saroo's search to find his family, contrasting his longing for reconnection, the unknown that awaits, the pining over the family's separation, and Saroo's yearning for a happy reunion.

Readers are invited into Saroo's thoughts and emotions about being disconnected from family and the tug-of-war between fear, joy and relief about finding them again.

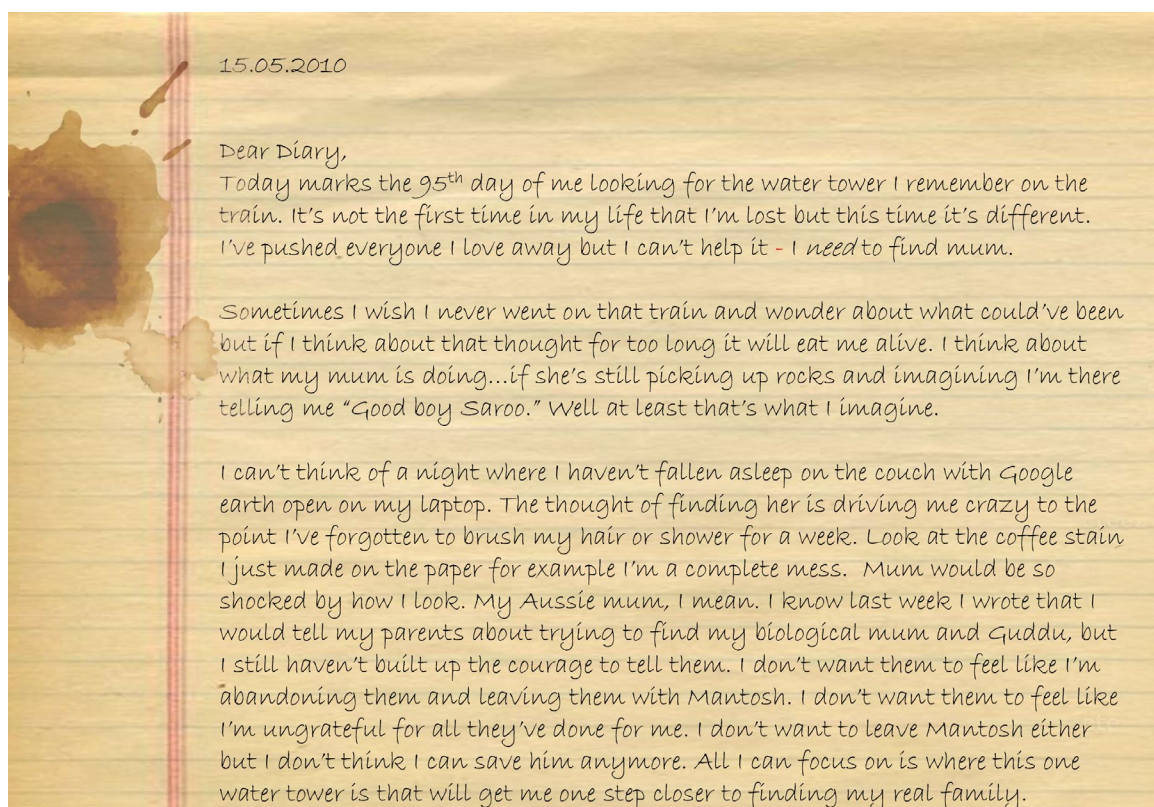
**Note:** The characteristic/s identified may not be the only time the characteristic/s occurred throughout a response.



## Excerpt 1



## Excerpt 2



The following excerpts demonstrate how motif can be used to capture the significance of a moment in time and merge it with reported thought, sentiment and plot. For instance:

- the clock is ‘ticking very loudly’, but it stops at 4:51, emulating the pause in the character’s thoughts
- readers are told that ‘everything has come to a stop’, but all the character can hear is ‘ticking’, a reference blending the clock with the heart and the interminability of time
- a landscape image is linked to a memory and suddenly the time of 4:52 is noted on the clock, reconnecting the character with the reality that life, past and present morph into one, progressing, evolving, changing
- the story ends with a final realisation that maybe ‘the clock isn’t broken after all’, reiterating that time doesn’t stand still for anyone or anything.



**Excerpt 1**

I hear the clock ticking very loudly. I look up at the clock on the wall and see that it is broken. The hand is moving back and forth. It's jammed. I sit and watch it struggle to turn but it's stuck. It is like there is a wall blocking its path. The time is 4:51. Is it fate that the clock stopped at that time? The couch is soft, but not for me. It's in an uncomfortable place. Somewhere I do not want to be. I look down at the other couch in front of me. A man is sitting, crossing his legs and holding a clipboard. His face is expressionless. I sit there and look at him as he is speaking to me. I can't make out what he's saying. I sit there and look at him, trying to understand what he says. I do not want to be here.

**Excerpt 2**

There's an uncomfortable silence. It's as if everything has come to a stop. All I can hear is the ticking. I can feel sweat breaking through on the end of my nose. 'Why is it so warm in here?' I ask myself. The air conditioning is working, but it's not getting colder. It's so quiet I hear the beating of my heart; it's beating so loudly I think that he can hear it too. He finally speaks, after what seemed an eternity. "You'd rather not be here, I realize that."

I scoff. How can he possibly understand?

**Excerpt 3**

"Take your time," he tells me.

There is a landscape painting of an apple tree behind him. It resembles the one outside our old home. I recall her there pushing me high on the swing. That memory feels so long ago.

The clock ticks forward. 4:52.

**Excerpt 4**

Maybe he's right. I picture her smile sweet, calming and radiant.

Maybe the clock isn't broken after all.

The following excerpts demonstrate how diary entries can capture changing values and attitudes according to life experiences, and through the eyes of a soldier, prompt reader reflections about the end of innocence and the dawning realisation of the ugliness of war. For instance:

- the first diary entry shows excitement and enthusiasm towards the great adventure proffered by war, including the way it turned men into heroes and made countries great
- within 10 months, the tone significantly alters from joyful anticipation to sombre descriptions of being a Tunnel Rat, revealing fear and the harrowing reality of guerilla warfare.

### Excerpt 1

Perspective of a Conscripted Australian Soldier

10th March 1965

Dear diary,

This morning, I rode my new bicycle down to newsagency to grab the daily newspaper. Much to my excitement, the top headline displayed the words "Conscription Lottery". My mates have all been talking about this strange idea for weeks, but I wasn't sure if it would come into effect.

The idea of going to war was something that I had always thought was heroic. As my eyes went from the left to the right of the paper I saw – May 22<sup>nd</sup>- my birthday!

I cannot believe it; I am going to Vietnam!

I have just turned 19 years old and started University after being forced into doing a Law Degree by mum. I am so excited that I no longer need do it anymore since my birthday has been drawn out.

I told Mum and Dad about being drawn out; they are both very worried. I don't know why.

### Excerpt 2

If I'm being honest, I have heard stories about World War I and World War II and I think that it will be a good experience for me that will turn me into a real man.

If I was to die, at least I would die a hero fighting for my country!

When I was at the supermarket this morning, I overheard people talking about a March through Main Street in Brisbane protesting the Vietnam War and how unfair it is doing a Birthday Ballot. Personally, I think that's stupid because the Ballot is much needed if we want to make Australia the greatest country on Earth.

That's all I've got for today's diary entry, it's time for me to go to bed,

**Excerpt 3**

23rd January 1966

Dear Diary,

Today I was elected as one of 10 men that was given the task of being a Tunnel Rat.

We were walking through the rough and bushy terrain in the Vietnamese jungle and our Captain found an un-natural layout of rocks, stones and sticks.

It was some sort of secret entrance leading into the Earth.

The Captain was too big to enter the hole, but he looked determined to find out what was underneath us.

He selected me amongst 9 other men in the group as we were just small enough to fit into the hole.

I enter first, the hole was very narrow but once inside it could be seen that it connected to a massive underground tunnel system supposedly created by the Viet Cong.

I was horrified, I was claustrophobic, and I felt like the tunnel was going to close in on me. Despite this, I had to remain completely silent as I couldn't make a noise.

One noise and the Viet Cong could hear us.

The tunnel was quite dark and in certain spots you may as well have been blind.

The following excerpts demonstrate how short stories with a rural setting draw upon a range of language features to create mood, generate emotional responses and create suspense. For instance:

- the story's title — *The Inner Storm* — blends an external storm with the character's internal storm, drawing upon a pathetic fallacy to merge humankind with earthly elements and create empathy in readers who are already sensing the main character's unease (without the scene being overly dramatic or overt)
- adjectives continue developing a cloak of heaviness around the scene, e.g.
  - 'the remaining scalding rays of light'
  - 'a harsh clashing noise'
  - 'Jocko flinched, his body tensed'
  - 'scarred memory'
- metaphors (e.g. 'the sky turned a shaded-bruise') hint at escalating and deteriorating conditions outside, foreshadowing an encroaching threat, mirroring the character's internal angst
- personification is used to give weather a presence as an autonomous agent, e.g. 'a curtain of red dust crawled closer' and it ends up 'swallowing any last bit of light' — later, the 'red dust swiftly swept through' the room.

**Excerpt 1****Short Story - The Inner Storm**

The remaining scalding rays of light radiated onto the rusty tin roof of Dampier's one and only pub. Inside, bustling chatter and clinking glasses filled the room. The air smelled of stale beer. Dusty well worn boots kept walking through the doors. Jocko sat everyday at the same bar stool. He clenched his drink while he stared down a faded photograph of his family, shedding a silent tear.

"Jocko, mate," uttered a fellow miner, as he clapped a hand on Jocko's shoulder. "Me and the boys are gonna play some pool, do ya wanna join us?" Jocko quickly peered at him, but returned his gaze to the photograph. "Hey, is that your wife and kid?" Jocko gave a slight nod before guzzling his beer. "Maybe we can play some other time," the miner suggested, as he left to join the others. A harsh clashing noise erupted from the billiard balls as they collided with each other. Jocko flinched, his body tensed, the familiar sound caused him to breathe rapidly, the scarred memory of the impact was brought to the forefront of his mind.

Just outside of town, the sky turned a shaded-bruise, the air became gritty and tasted like fine dirt. In the distance, a curtain of red dust crawled closer like a tidal wave, swallowing any last bit of light. This started to capture the attention of the patrons. Jocko sat quietly, he paid no mind to the chatter of others as his mind swirled like a storm.

"Hey Maureen," who was currently busy pouring beers. "The weather's not lookin' too good out there," voiced one of the blokes.

"How bad are we talking?" enquired Maureen.

"Pretty bad, looks like a devil of a storm."

**Excerpt 2**

"Not going home, love?" asked Maureen.

"Nah, I'm staying," Jocko replied with a shrug, as the storm grew ever closer.

In no time the storm hit like a roaring beast, relentless and unforgiving to anything in its path. The wind now roared a deep, guttural sound. Clanking, reverberating metal could be heard as large chunks of debris flew by smashing into the corrugated tin roof. Peeking out the boarded window revealed nothing within a close radius. Dust and dirt snuck through every crevice it could find, and a thin layer settled on the felt of the pool table. The people who stayed behind began to take cover behind the bar, but Jocko stayed put; the storm did not faze him. He spun his head and glanced towards the door, feeling the urge to walk out and let it engulf him.

The door burst open and red dust swiftly swept through the pub. Everyone directed their attention towards the presence standing at the door. A person limped on through, looking to escape the harsh weather. All over their skin was grazed, their eyes bloodshot, and their lips were desert-dry. Their hobble highlighted the glass shard that punctured their leg. Wheezing and coughing, he murmured, "help me," in a raspy, dry voice, before suddenly collapsing and hitting the floor. Without hesitation, Jocko rushed over, his mind now solely centred on helping the stranger.