

Literature subject report

2025 cohort

January 2026





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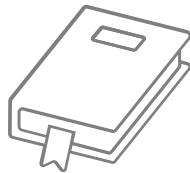
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Introduction



The annual subject reports seek to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement of internal and external 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 judgments, and student responses to external assessment for General and General (Extension) 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:

- 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
- 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, 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.

Subject highlights

229

schools offered
Literature



92.74%

of students
completed
4 units



16.76%

increase in enrolment
since 2024



Prescribed text highlights

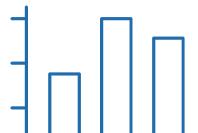
Number of schools selecting these texts — internal assessment

69	Gwen Harwood
66	Maya Angelou
52	Ellen van Neerven
41	TS Eliot
40	<i>Short stories</i> by Ursula K Le Guin
40	Les Murray
36	WH Auden
36	Elizabeth Barrett Browning
34	Kae Tempest
33	<i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i> by Oscar Wilde

Number of students studying these texts — external assessment

2,223	<i>Hamlet</i>
2,040	<i>King Lear</i>
1,399	<i>In Cold Blood</i>
427	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>
134	<i>Stasiland</i>
117	<i>Terra Nullius</i>
83	<i>Catch-22</i>
69	<i>Beloved</i>

Subject data summary



Unit completion

The following data shows students who completed the General subject.

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 Literature: 229.

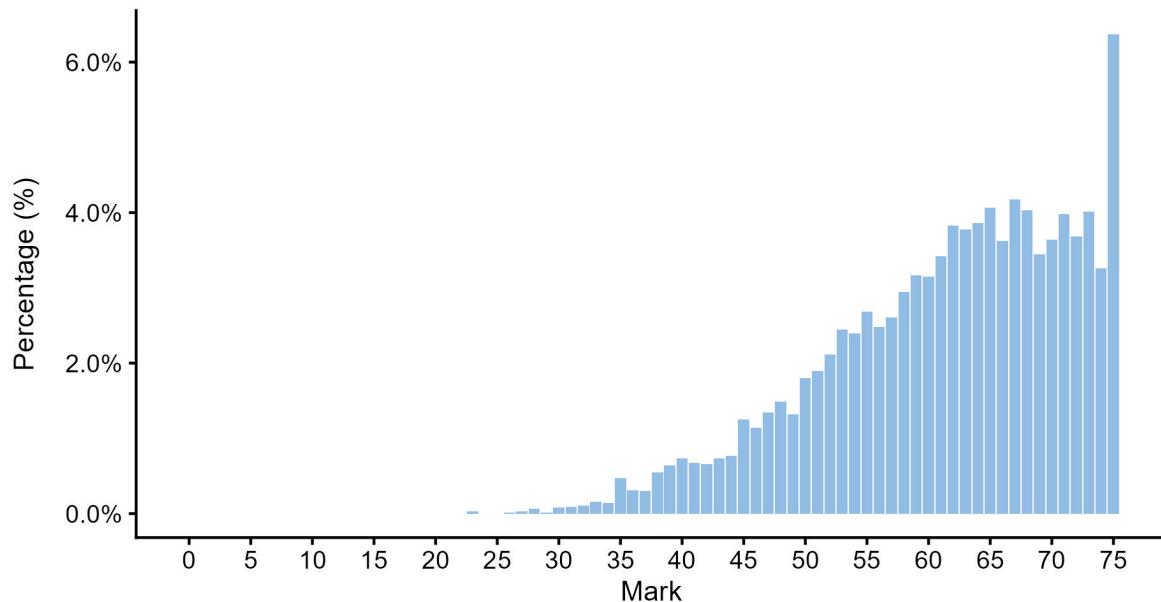
Completion of units	Unit 1	Unit 2	Units 3 and 4
Number of students completed	6,848	6,609	6,351

Units 1 and 2 results

Number of students	Unit 1	Unit 2
Satisfactory	6,714	6,516
Unsatisfactory	134	93

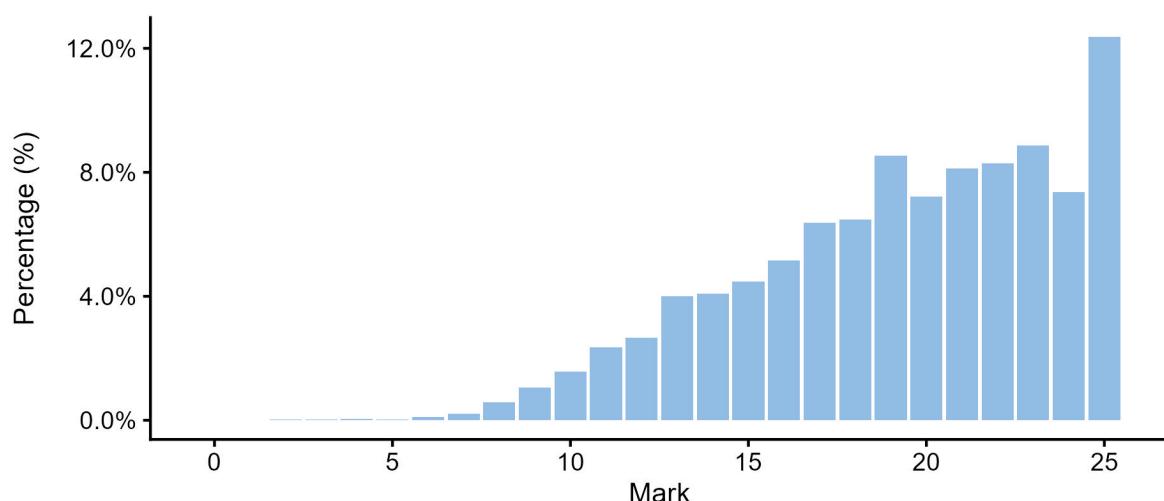
Units 3 and 4 internal assessment (IA) results

Total marks for IA

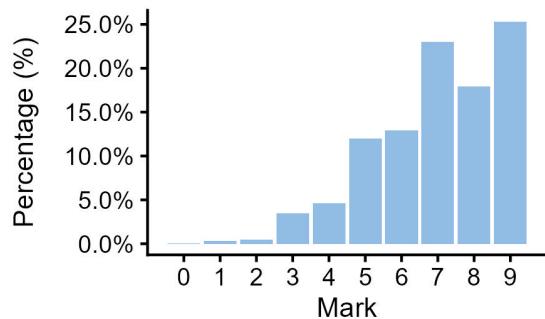


IA1 marks

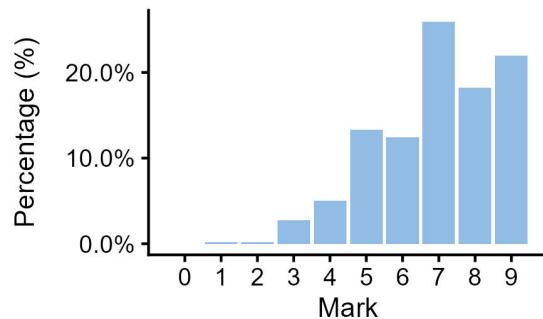
IA1 total



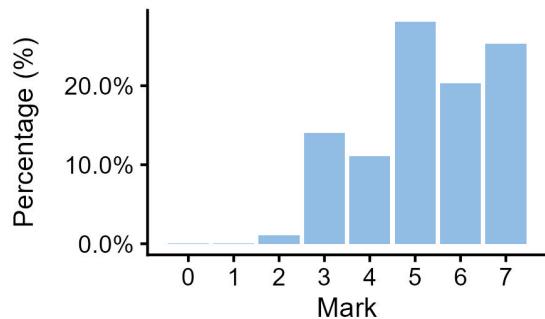
IA1 Criterion: Knowledge application



IA1 Criterion: Organisation and development

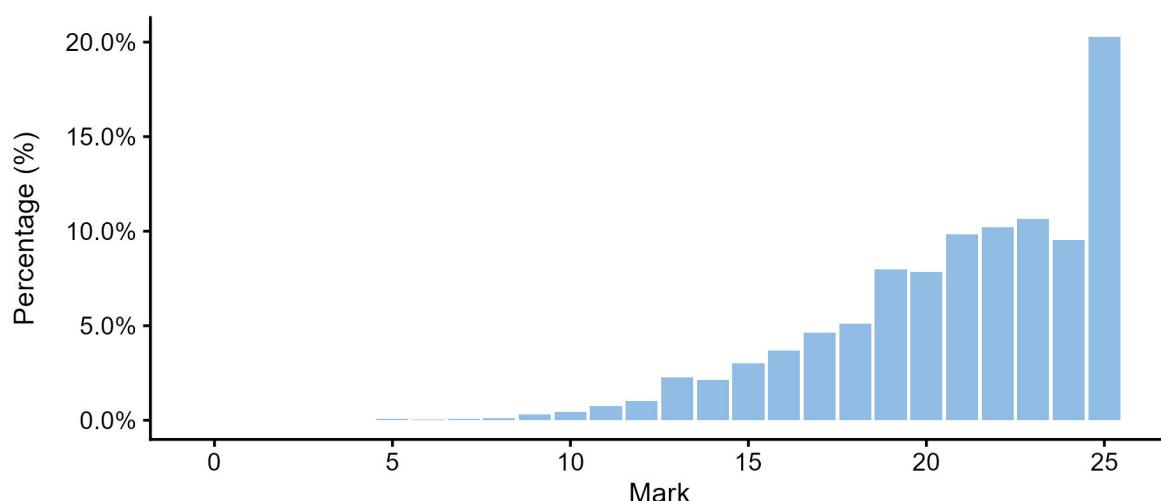


IA1 Criterion: Textual features

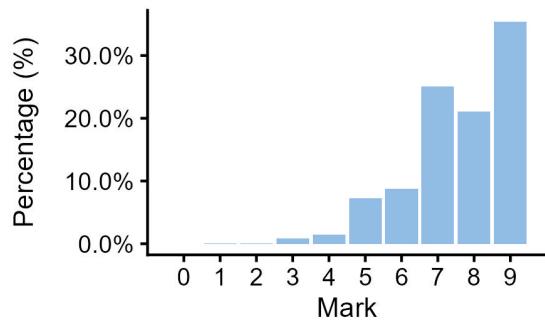


IA2 marks

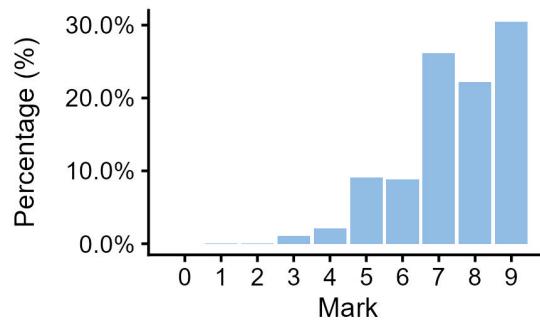
IA2 total



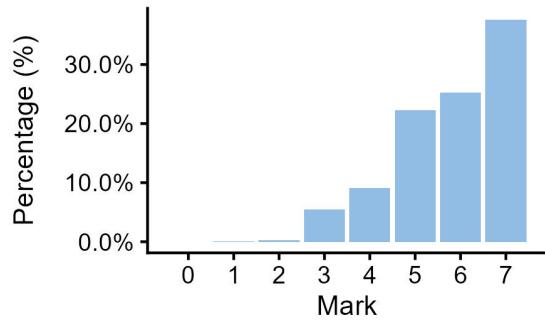
IA2 Criterion: Knowledge application



IA2 Criterion: Organisation and development

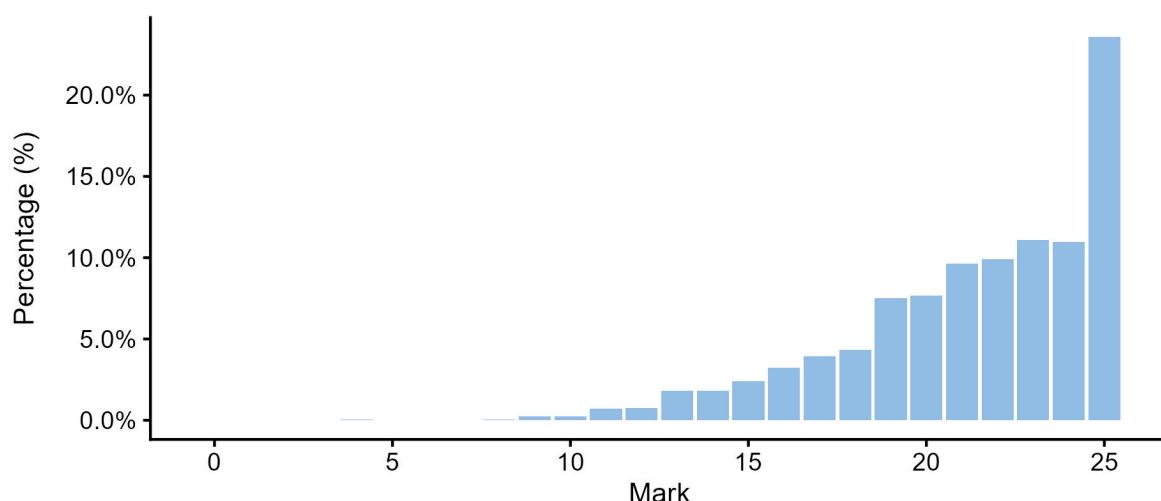


IA2 Criterion: Textual features

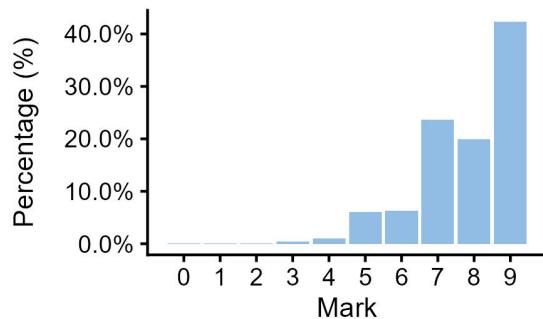


IA3 marks

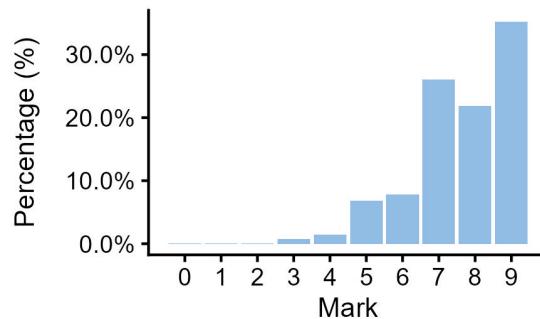
IA3 total



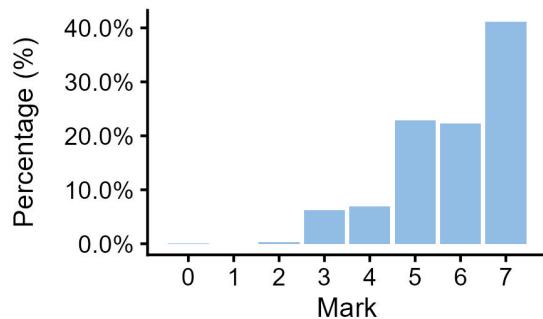
IA3 Criterion: Knowledge application



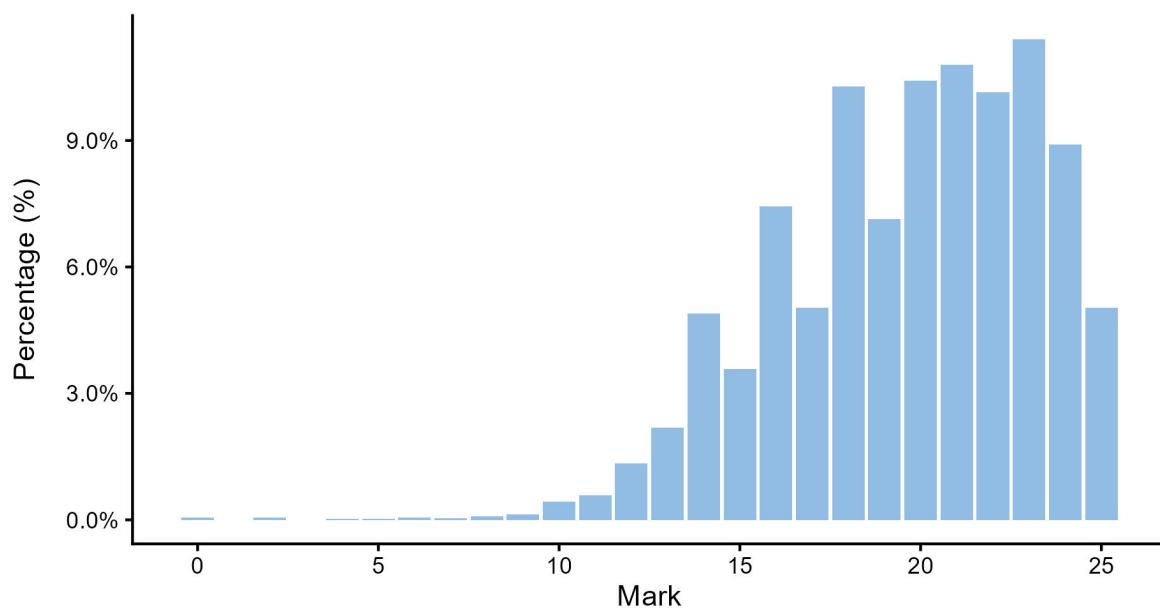
IA3 Criterion: Organisation and development



IA3 Criterion: Textual features

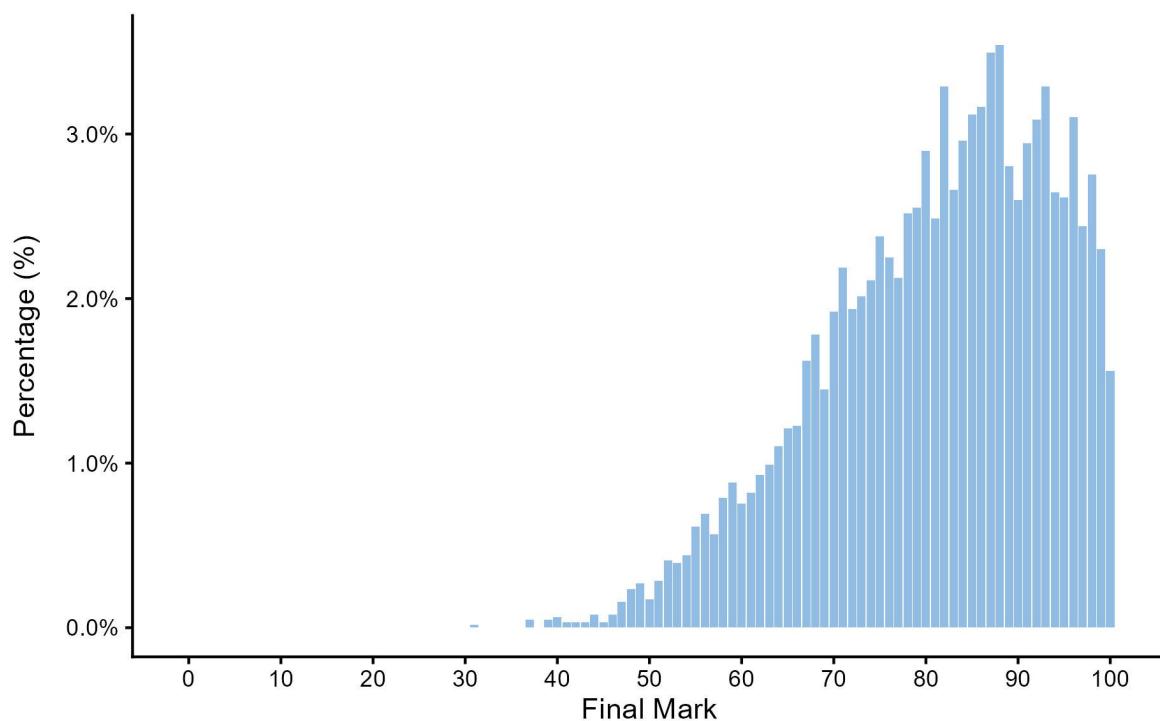


External assessment (EA) marks



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	84–66	65–43	42–17	16–0

Distribution of standards

Number of students who achieved each standard across the state.

Standard	A	B	C	D	E
Number of students	2,887	2,691	758	15	0
Percentage of students	45.46	42.37	11.94	0.24	0.00

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

Internal assessment	IA1	IA2	IA3
Number of instruments	229	229	229
Percentage endorsed in Application 1	72	67	77

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 v7.0*, Section 9.6.

The following table includes the percentage agreement between the provisional marks and confirmed marks by assessment instrument. The Assessment decisions section 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	228	1,754	7	95.18
2	228	1,740	19	91.67
3	228	1,733	0	96.93

Internal assessment 1 (IA1)



Examination — analytical written response (25%)

The examination assesses the application of a range of cognitions to a provided question on a literary text from the prescribed text list.

Student responses must be completed individually, under supervised conditions, and in a set timeframe.

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	31
Authentication	0
Authenticity	4
Item construction	5
Scope and scale	18

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- clearly aligned with syllabus specifications (Syllabus section 4.4.1)
- followed the item construction conventions, i.e.
 - identified the title and author of the text from the *Prescribed text list, Literature 2023–2025*
 - selected a critic's interpretation related to Unit 3 subject matter
 - used cognitive verbs aligned with assessment objectives to provide opportunities for students to analyse others' interpretations of or responses to the literary text
- developed questions or tasks about how a particular literary text from the prescribed list addressed issues and ideas related to culture and identity. This enabled students to analyse the text in a variety of ways.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- manage scope and scale in text selection if using poetry, short stories or television programs from the prescribed list by requiring students to respond to one or two poems, one short story or one television episode, rather than an entire anthology, collection or series

- ensure the scope of the task is appropriate for conditions, i.e. select a critic's interpretation that relates to how a particular literary text from the prescribed list addresses issues and ideas related to culture and identity. It is beyond the scope of the syllabus to
 - direct students to include references to more than one critique in their responses
 - include theoretical approaches such as a 'post-colonial perspective'
 - specify subject matter that students should include in the response to a critic's interpretation
- provide tasks that clearly prompt students to analyse others' interpretations of and/or responses to the literary text studied to enable students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and/or places in texts
- avoid ambiguous wording or instructions that require students to analyse a critic's perspective of a text rather than directing them to critique others' interpretations and/or responses to literary texts. For instance, asking students to analyse the extent to which a critic's perspective on specific representations in the text is justified, gives the impression that the critic's interpretation should be analysed in depth with supporting evidence from the literary text
- provide only one examination question or task for students. There is no requirement for schools to design two separate questions or tasks each year.

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	9
Layout	0
Transparency	8

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- selected interpretations or responses that were accessible and manageable within the scope of the syllabus specifications
- used clear and transparent language to frame a question or task with cues that enabled students to construct a synthesised analysis of the literary text and a critique of others' interpretations or responses to the text for an audience with a deep understanding of the text studied
- modelled effective, error-free and consistent use of textual features and language conventions in task construction, including correct spelling of the author's and director's name, using italics for selected text titles and correct punctuation and grammar.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- use language consistent with assessment objectives and specifications, e.g. students are asked to ‘analyse’ not ‘appraise’ or ‘evaluate’, to respond to a ‘question or task’ not a ‘prompt’ and ‘to write an analytical essay’ not to ‘respond in an analytical manner’ (Syllabus section 4.4)
- carefully select the critic’s interpretation to support students to demonstrate understanding of the Knowledge application criterion. Avoid complex quotations, requiring students to respond to too many concepts or ideas that would make it difficult for them to develop a synthesised analysis within the conditions.

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 revised conditions
 - no longer allow students to bring 200 words of quotations from the studied text/s into the examination
 - now provide the time allowed rather than 800–1,000 word limit.
- Assessment objectives 3, 4 and 5 now read ‘and/or’ rather than ‘and’.

Schools should also:

- ensure they refer to the *Prescribed text list, Literature 2026–2029* when developing the examination
- ensure tasks are accessible for students
- correctly reference critics’ interpretations or responses that are used in the questions.

Assessment decisions

Reliability

Reliability 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	Knowledge application	95.18	4.82	0.00	0.00
2	Organisation and development	98.68	1.32	0.00	0.00
3	Textual features	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Effective practices

Reliable judgments were made using the ISMG for this IA when:

- for the Knowledge application criterion, at the 8–9 performance level, responses
 - interpreted the literary text, consistently showing evidence of the interrelated nature of the assessment objectives. Analysis of perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times, and places was linked with analysis of the ways that cultural assumptions, attitudes, values, and beliefs, and aesthetic features and stylistic devices underpin texts and invite audiences to take up critical and emotional responses
 - addressed Assessment objectives 4 and 5 by analysing evidence from the literary text that was explicitly connected to the ways that audiences are invited to take up positions and prompted to respond critically and emotionally. Responses used implicit and explicit language to examine the way the author or director construct the literary text to position the audience for deliberate effect
 - consistently demonstrated insightful engagement with the critic's interpretation or perspective to show a developed understanding of the task, linking the interpretation of the literary text to the critic's interpretation. The evidence and analysis within all paragraphs clearly supported the essay thesis, which responded to the critic's interpretation
- for the Organisation and development criterion, at the 8–9 performance level, responses
 - contained a thesis that clearly responded to the question or direction of the endorsed task. Responses used explicit, perceptive, and discriminating elements within a thesis statement that consistently addressed the critic's idea to create a position about the literary text
 - provided evidence from the relevant critic or interpretation, rather than analysing the critic's words or quotations. This evidence was purposefully integrated and synthesised across the response in both implicit and explicit ways, such as language choices
- for the Textual features criterion, at the 6–7 performance level, responses
 - combined and used a range of textual features, including grammatically accurate clauses and sentences, to achieve the particular purposes of the analytical essay
 - used subject-specific metalanguage to purposefully interpret a literary text.

Practices to strengthen

When making judgments for this IA for the 2025 syllabus, it is essential to consider the following key differences between the ISMGs in the 2019 and 2025 syllabuses:

- Assessment objectives 3, 4 and 5 now read 'and/or' rather than 'and'.
- The middle performance level will now be a single mark, rather than a mark range, for all criteria. Making judgments will not change. To allocate a mark match the evidence in the response to the descriptors in the ISMG using the best-fit approach.
- The syllabus conditions no longer include word length for examinations. The *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v7.0* (Section 8.2.6) provides guidance about managing response length. This guidance applies to more open-ended assessment techniques, such as essays, reports and presentations. By specifying a maximum length for student generated work for these techniques, the expected scope of the task is appropriately limited. Managing response length does not apply to examinations. For examinations, the syllabus assessment conditions specify the time allocated, including any perusal or planning time. Schools should design examinations with an appropriate number of questions, and provide suitable space or

lines for responses, to guide students in completing the examination within the allowed time. A required or recommended word length must not appear on IA1 instruments.

- Conditions no longer allow 200 words of quotations from the studied text/s, and now state students must not bring notes or the studied text into the examination.

To further ensure reliable judgments are made using the ISMG for this IA, it is recommended that:

- when matching evidence to the descriptors for the Knowledge application criterion
 - distinguish analysis from identification of aesthetic features and stylistic devices. At the 8–9 performance level, aesthetic features and stylistic devices should be examined for the purpose of finding patterns, relationships, and deeper meanings within the literary text. Discerning analysis should be consistently framed by language choices that demonstrate **how** aesthetic features and stylistic devices, and underlying cultural assumptions, attitudes, values, and/or beliefs position audiences critically and emotionally. Simply labelling aesthetic features or paraphrasing the quotation through broad statements does not constitute analysis
 - distinguish character description from scrutiny of the stylistic features of characterisation. Responses should analyse the author's or director's purposeful textual construction for specific effects, e.g. examining how two characters have been created to represent opposing values, or examining constituent parts of a character's narrative voice to show how it is used for an effect. Discerning, effective, and adequate analysis must clearly treat the character/s as features of textual construction
 - consider that responses should focus on only one critic's interpretation of the literary text named within the endorsed assessment instrument. The addition of other literary texts or referring to two or more critical interpretations of the literary text does not demonstrate a discerning analysis of others' interpretation
- for Assessment objective 3, a cursory mention of the critic's interpretation in the introduction or conclusion does not provide evidence of effective or discerning analysis of others' interpretations. Also, a response that explains a critic's position without responding to this interpretation throughout does not provide evidence of appropriate, effective or discerning analysis of perspective and representations
- for the Organisation and development criterion, consider if
 - topic sentences both reflect and advance the thesis across the response. Topic sentences that fail to incorporate or address the stated thesis (including the critic's position) may result in arguments that are tangential rather than cohesive, weakening the response's ability to strengthen the thesis, draw logical conclusions, and show evidence of alignment with Assessment objective 6
 - there is evidence of the synthesis of all aspects of the Knowledge application criterion rather than separate analysis elements. Synthesis of all aspects of analysis is required for the upper performance levels of the second and third descriptors in this criterion
 - the analysis is the student's own work and words rather than large sections quoted verbatim from others' interpretations of, and/or responses to, the literary text to ensure that it is the student who is providing authentic synthesis and cohesion
 - astute choices about the inclusion and cohesion of subject matter are supported with purposeful use of cohesive devices within and across paragraphs to show sustained control of the analytical essay. At the performance 8–9 performance level, responses show sustained control through cohesive devices such as a responsive thesis with key words from the critic's interpretation in the endorsed task, topic sentences, and cohesive language devices that all work to position readers to accept an interpretation.

Additional advice

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

- When selecting an appropriate response for others' interpretations of the literary text studied in class, schools should
 - select a critique, review, or essay that presents a sufficiently contentious and complex perspective to allow students to develop a discerning interpretation of the literary text. Reviews may not provide sufficient scope for students
 - ensure that the selected critique is appropriate for the scope of knowledge application required for the 2025 syllabus. While others' interpretations may include the use of literary theory, theoretical interpretations are not the focus of this task or the syllabus. Although students may study and consider a range of critical interpretations when preparing for this task, the consideration and inclusion of multiple critics' interpretations within the analytical response is outside the scope of this assessment instrument.

Samples

The following excerpt illustrates a discerning response across the Knowledge application, Organisation and development, and Textual features criteria. The analysis identifies and dissects aesthetic features and their effects on readers. Purposeful film metalanguage is used to focus on authorial choices rather than dialogue, as seen in the analysis of *mise en scène*, which explores how set elements symbolise entrapment and poverty. Symbolism such as the viewing stone is not merely identified but analysed to reveal how Bong's direction elicits critical and emotional responses from audiences.

The response deconstructs the text's construction through detailed discussion of characterisation, *mise en scène*, and symbolism, revealing patterns and deeper meanings. Audience positioning metalanguage is applied with precision, both explicitly, 'Ultimately through Ki-Woo's ethical compromises, Bong positions the audience to comprehend that...', and implicitly. Engagement with Stuart's critical interpretation is insightful, demonstrating conceptual clarity and cohesion across the argument about identity and social mobility. Topic sentences purposefully build on the thesis, integrating the critic's perspective to produce a cohesive and analytically assured response.

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

At the film's beginning, Ki-Woo's optimism and ambition creates a hopeful mood, encouraging ^{the} audience to believe that he can transcend ^{the} social ^{1.1} ~~middle~~ class barriers, aligning with Stuart's claim that identity and social role are not defined ² based of each other. In the opening scene, Bong uses mise-en-scene to place the Kim family in a cramped semi-basement apartment with cluttered furniture, scattered belongings and decaying walls, symbolising their entrapment ³ in poverty and their precarious socio-economic status. Further, the toilet being perched on a raised platform, reinforces their deplorable living ^{1.3} underscores the lack of proper infrastructure, reinforcing the Kims' deplorable living ^{1.3} conditions and their marginalisation ^{1.4} in society as they are literally and metaphorically at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Despite these barriers, Ki-Woo ^{2.2} is portrayed as determined and opportunistic, as he tries to charm ^{3.3} his way into attaining a pizza delivery job. While ^{3.4} it illustrates his agency and resourcefulness, his struggle to secure even a modest job reveals that merit ^{3.5} alone is insufficient to break free from poverty. Therefore, it supports while ^{3.6} Ki-Woo's agency ^{3.7} and optimism support Stuart's assertion ^{3.8} regarding identity, the film critiques the socio-economic systems ^{2.3} that perpetuate inequalities ^{2.3} necessitating ethical compromises. Henceforth, when Ki-Woo's friend Min-Hyuk offers him a tutoring job, ^{willingly} Ki-Woo ^{1.5} forges his college entrance documents and immerses himself into Min-Hyuk's persona. Ki-Woo's replacement of Min-Hyuk further ^{1.6} solidifies ^{1.7} solidifies

that identity is a by-product of societal pressures and not a result of inherent social roles or labor division. ✓ 1.1

Ki-Woo ~~soon~~ imitates Min-Hyuk due to his privileged background and social status hoping he can transcend and climb up the social hierarchy. Ki-Woo's self-serving intentions highlight his willingness to make ethical compromises in his pursuit for upward mobility. However, the audience perceive ~~this~~ ^{his} pragmatic approach as a response to structural pressures and the superficiality of a status-conscious society. Ultimately, which compels the lower class to prioritise upward mobility over ethical integrity. Ultimately, through Ki-Woo's ethical compromises and self-reinvention, Bong positions the audience to comprehend that identity and social roles are fluid and contingent, where identity is largely influenced by societal pressures and systemic barriers, strengthening Stuart's interpretation of the film. 1.1

Through the poignant use of symbolism of the viewing stone, Bong reiterates Ki-Woo's ^{longing} ~~hope~~ and aspiration despite the systemic barriers that hinder him from improving his social standing, supporting Stuart's claim that inherent qualities do not define an individual's position in society. The viewing stone given to the Kims by Min-Hyuk, symbolise Ki-Woo's hope, a physical manifestation of his unrelenting yet futile desire to socially ^{1.3} advance and join the affluent class. The futility of ^{his} desire for upward mobility is starkly illustrated during the flood when the viewing stone floats.

Internal assessment 2 (IA2)



Extended response — imaginative spoken/multimodal response (25%)

This assessment focuses on the reinterpretation of ideas and perspectives in a literary text from the prescribed text list. It is an open-ended task. While students may undertake some research in the creating of the extended response, it is not the focus of this technique.

This assessment occurs over an extended and defined period of time, of approximately 12 hours. 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	86
Authentication	1
Authenticity	5
Item construction	10
Scope and scale	14

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- demonstrated clear alignment with the specifications. These instruments provided clear instructions for students to
 - select a new cultural context for an audience familiar with the base text and the new cultural context
 - invite the audience to question or reflect on dominant cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs that underpin the base text
- gave students opportunities to choose an aspect of the base text to prompt emotional and critical responses. It is not a requirement that students reimagine the whole text.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- encourage students to choose aspects of the base text for reimagination. Tasks should be open-ended rather than outlining specific cultural contexts, perspectives, concepts or characters for reimagination. Requiring students to choose from a specified list of concepts or

characters, or to link to the base text in specific ways, such as, through the use of names and titles, limits students' abilities to demonstrate the Knowledge application criterion

- identify an audience and explicitly state that the audience is familiar with the base text and new cultural context. It is not sufficient to specify an audience such as literary festival enthusiasts, e.g. *Sydney Writers Festival*, as this type of audience may not be familiar with the base text and the new cultural context
- manage scope and scale by ensuring scaffolding provides clear instructions for students to reimagine an aspect of the base text for a new cultural context. It is outside the syllabus specifications for student to incorporate quotations, and/or examples from the base text. It is also outside the specifications to include a paragraph that explains how they have reimagined or reinterpreted the base text.

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	6

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- used language and cues such as 'use' and 'create' that aligned with syllabus objectives, task specifications and the ISMG, and explicitly instructed students to demonstrate Assessment objectives 3, 4 and 5
- provided clear and transparent checkpoints consistent with task requirements. For instance giving feedback on a spoken or multimodal response such as a video recording or digital draft in the required mode of delivery for assessment (*QCE and QCIA policies and procedures handbook v7.0*, Section 8.2.5).

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- consistently use language that reflects the assessment objectives, requiring students to create a reimagined text for a new cultural context that reflects a shift in both time and place, rather than providing the option of a change in either time and/or place. It is not sufficient to state that students should create a response for a new context — it should explicitly state that students are expected to create a reimagined spoken/multimodal response for a new cultural context sufficiently different in time and place from the base text. Also, specifying a cultural context such as contemporary Australia does not enable students to use their knowledge of the relationship between language, culture and identity to meet task specifications. It should be clear that students are creating a 'reimagined text' rather than a 'response' to the specific literary text studied

- display an understanding of the differences between spoken and multimodal responses. For multimodal responses 2026 and beyond, schools should refer to the multimodal definition in the 2025 syllabus (pp.12–13)
- ensure tasks are designed and constructed so that specific syllabus requirements are explicit. Some school assessments included key specifications and objectives in the ‘scaffolding’ section rather than in the ‘task’ description section, which could give students the impression these specifications and objectives are optional, rather than mandatory.

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 revised response requirements now allow up to 8 minutes for the spoken response and up to 9 for the multimodal response.
- Assessment objective 11 has been revised and ‘mode-appropriate features’ now replace ‘spoken/signed and non-verbals’. Mode-appropriate features are defined in the syllabus objectives (p. 4).
- Assessment objectives 3, 4 and 5 now read ‘and/or’ rather than ‘and’.

Assessment decisions

Reliability

Reliability 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	Knowledge application	95.13	4.87	0.00	0.00
2	Organisation and development	93.81	5.75	0.44	0.00
3	Textual features	96.90	3.10	0.00	0.00

Effective practices

Reliable judgments were made using the ISMG for this IA when:

- for the Knowledge application criterion, it was recognised that
 - all performance-level descriptors are informed by the importance of all elements of the response being a reimagining of aspects of the base text to invite audiences to reinterpret the base text, i.e. responses at the 8–9 performance level showed evidence of the interrelated nature of the assessment objectives by making it clear that the creation of perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and places in the reimagined text required **complementary** manipulation of the cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs which underpin texts to invite audiences to reinterpret the base

text **through** purposefully selected and created aesthetic features and stylistic devices that prompt emotional and critical responses

- responses presented obvious manipulation (i.e. to 'adapt or change to suit one's purpose') of cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs that underpinned the base text to invite audiences to reinterpret the base text. At the 8–9 performance level, there was clear evidence of a character or narrator questioning, challenging, or supporting cultural assumptions, values, attitudes and beliefs in the context of the reimagined text which allowed audiences to reflect on the base text
- the reimagining of the base text is facilitated through characters being involved in internal or external conflicts related to cultural assumptions, values, attitudes and beliefs to invite audiences to reinterpret the base text. These conflicts were identifiably reimagined rather than repeated or transposed. There was also evidence of critical engagement with concepts and ideas explored in the base text in a way that was relevant to the new cultural context of the reimagined text
- responses consistently used aesthetic features and stylistic devices within the reimagined text to **purposefully** prompt emotional and critical responses. They were not simply transposed from the base text or used in disconnected ways. For instance, the development of aesthetic features (including, but not limited to, motif, symbolism, connected imagery) that located the character/s and **developed** across the reimagined text to prompt critical and emotional audience responses were identified as discerning or effective
- for the Organisation and development criterion, the 8–9 performance level, responses
 - purposefully used the patterns and conventions of the chosen genre to invite audiences to reinterpret the base text. High-level responses exploited imaginative genre conventions to successfully prompt emotional and critical reactions in the audience. The use and manipulation of the genre conventions also complemented the ways in which the response repositioned audiences in relation to the base text. The use of pre-established or familiar imaginative genres (e.g. monologue, YouTube story/vlog, Instagram live, digital story) were manipulated for purpose, but the genre was still clear and used to engage audiences with the reimagined text
 - the synthesis of subject matter was supported by sequencing and a range of cohesive devices within the imaginative text (including but not limited to motif, developing characterisation and/or multimodal features) that **purposefully** repeated or developed across the response to support perspectives
- for the Textual features criterion, at the 6–7 performance level, responses
 - appropriately chose and manipulated language choices for particular purposes within the specific new cultural context. These choices were closely linked to the specific context of the reimagined text and used to develop the particular purpose/s of the response.
 - consistently used complementary features to achieve particular purpose/s. Responses that made use of still or moving images were, where appropriate, consistent to develop and extend the purpose/s of the text.

Practices to strengthen

When making judgments for this IA for the 2025 syllabus, it is essential to consider the following key differences between the ISMGs in the 2019 and 2025 syllabuses:

- Assessment objectives 3, 4 and 5 now read 'and/or' rather than 'and'.

To further ensure reliable judgments are made using the ISMG for this IA, it is recommended that:

- for the Knowledge application criterion, consider
 - that transposing or replicating characters in an unaltered form does not show evidence of discerning, effective, or appropriate manipulation of the ways cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and/or beliefs underpin texts, to invite audiences to reinterpret the base text. It also does not show subtle and complex, discerning or effective creation of perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and/or places in a reimagined spoken/multimodal text. Evidence of reimagining to allow audiences to reinterpret the base text must be apparent
 - that expository language choices, or ‘telling’, should not be considered subtle and complex, discerning or effective. Similarly, singular or repeated aesthetic features that are not connected to the purpose, or developed across the response, are not considered subtle and complex, discerning or effective
 - if the creation of perspectives and the representation of concepts, identities, times and places is subtle and complex within the response. This is different to the ‘discerning’ qualifier used in the other assessment objectives for the Knowledge application criterion. For Assessment objective 3, it is important to consider whether the response convincingly portrayed reimagined character/s whose perceptions, thoughts, memories, experiences and/or expectations are purposefully developed across the response. At the 8–9 performance level, there should be clear evidence of a new time and place which shapes the ways that these character/s think, act, and feel, and allows for the development of the character and perspectives
 - that responses must clearly create and sustain perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and/or places across the imaginative text. This involves students synthesising subject matter and substantiating their own responses with textual evidence. Responses that overuse silence or use a variety of pre-established media without spoken elements may not show evidence of the assessment objectives
- for the Organisation and development criterion, consider
 - if there is discerning selection and synthesis of subject matter through the use and development of a distinct time and place (usually established in the opening phase) to allow clear sequencing and organisation of the subject matter
 - whether there is clear and purposeful development of characters and ideas for a purposeful resolution. Selection and synthesis of ideas and concepts may come from characters changing their minds or actions or considering an action to arrive at a resolution. Responses may use unfulfilling or open-ended resolutions, but these must be purposefully synthesised and cohesive to engage audiences with the reimagined text and invite them to reinterpret the base text
 - at the 6–7 and 8–9 performance levels, responses must invite audiences to reinterpret the base text in some way. The base text should be considered a springboard to prompt creative responses not a text for students to intervene in. A response that relies too much on extracts, quotations or clips from a base text may not successfully invite audiences to reinterpret it, or evidence the assessment objectives
- for the Textual features criterion, consider
 - that anachronistic language or direct quotations from the base text may not be appropriate. Language choices should reflect the particular purposes of the response and the new cultural context

- whether the use of spoken/signed and nonverbal features, as well as complementary features, are manipulated to engage the audience and enhance the aesthetic effect of the text. Additionally, for multimodal responses the complementary features must be integrated in a way that each mode contributes significantly to the response.

Additional advice

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

- The time limits for both spoken and multimodal responses changes to a maximum requirement. Application of school-based length policy should be apparent in assessment decisions and must be clearly annotated within response submissions.
- Assessment objective 11 has changed to 'use mode-appropriate features to achieve particular purposes'. Mode-appropriate features are outlined the 2025 syllabus (Key terminology, p. 12).
- Imaginative interventions, prologues or epilogues are not appropriate for this response as they do not adequately demonstrate Assessment objectives 1, 3, 4 or 6, which require students to reimagine and reinterpret the base text. The cultural context for the setting of the reimagined text must be sufficiently different in time and place from that of the base text.
- Responses that simply transpose a character or events from one time period to another may not draw on appropriate cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs to invite audiences to reinterpret the base text which is required to demonstrate Assessment objectives 3 and 4.
- Genres such as
 - children's stories, picture books, letters and diary entries may restrict students' range of options to demonstrate Assessment objectives 5, 9, 10
 - speeches, keynote addresses, author interviews or news programs may limit students' ability to demonstrate Assessment objectives 1, 3, 4 and 5
 - video essays, lectures, or those that use analytical genres as their predominant form may limit students' ability to demonstrate Assessment objectives 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8.
- Multimodal responses must use a combination of at least two modes, one of which is spoken, delivered in an integrated way, so that each mode contributes significantly to the response. The combination of these modes must be entirely apparent in the recording or file. Stage directions or additional notes on scripts should not be used when matching evidence in the reimagined response with the ISMG.
- Schools are encouraged to consider the cultural appropriateness of planned responses, and to support this through teaching, learning, and drafting processes. For instance, care should be taken when working with texts that represent particular racial or cultural groups, where it may not be suitable for students to replicate these perspectives directly. Instead, students can be guided to explore the underlying ideas or issues by representing them in alternative contexts (such as a different place, time and/or through a different cultural background) without the need to assume roles that may not be culturally appropriate.

Samples

The following excerpts demonstrate that, for the Knowledge application criterion, time and place are clearly established through the personification of the 'sharp kiss of Madame le Guillotine', the naming of Paris, and imagery linked to revolutionary France. This purposeful construction of setting, distinct from the base text *Run Lola Run*, draws on specific cultural assumptions to engage the audience using concepts of guilt, fear, and cowardice. By manipulating these

assumptions, the response invites reflection on identities and ideas in both the reimagined and base texts.

The response employs allusion, extended metaphor, personification, and religious and colour symbolism to build imagery that shapes concepts, identities, and the reimagined time and place. These aesthetic features draw on cultural attitudes toward love and the corruption of revolutionary ideals, while developing the narrator's character and framing perspectives on fear, betrayal, and the self-destructive nature of power.

The reimagining extends ideas from the base text — such as the consequences of individual choice and love as a catalyst for action — without repeating or transposing them. Here, these ideas are reinterpreted as leading to destruction. Throughout, the text prompts audiences to reconsider cultural assumptions, attitudes, values, and beliefs in both texts.

Through the purposeful creation and manipulation of concepts, the narrator's attitudes, values, and beliefs develop across the narrative, building towards a tragic resolution. The final reflections reveal an awareness of how cowardice and self-preservation distort love and integrity, culminating in devastating guilt.

For the Organisation and development criterion, the monologue genre is effectively manipulated through direct address, rhetorical questions (and their answers), backfill, connective phrasing, and cohesive devices such as repetition and parallelism. These devices evolve alongside the narrator's development. The recurring image of 'Madame la Guillotine' provides cohesion across concepts and characterisation, reinforcing the fixation on guilt.

Subject matter relating to the relationship and the concept of guilt is purposefully selected and synthesised from the opening phase onward, demonstrating clear sequencing across the whole response. Ideas are revisited — not repeated — to reinforce the character's development and heighten the impact of the ending.

For the Textual features criterion, the response manipulates verbal and non-verbal features discerningly through movement, gesture, sustained eye contact, and purposeful use of space. Even when reading from notes, the speaker maintains engagement and control over the role of narrator/designer, aligning physical expression with spoken meaning. The response adheres to time requirements and does not rely on complementary features.

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

Excerpt 1***Running for Redemption***

She's gone! Gone and I'm left behind in this terror – this madness of a Revolution that I know now is a poisoned chalice. Louise is gone, dragged away through the streets of Paris by the bloodthirsty mob to meet the cold, sharp kiss of Madame la Guillotine - and I am the terrible fool who sent her there.

Where did I misstep? I allied myself to the most powerful player in this cut-throat game. I climbed the ranks of Fouche's trusted agents! In these months of upheaval, I have been the one to send so many to meet that grim spectre, the farmer who reaps his long-awaited prize – all so that I would not be the one to fall under his scythe! And now it is not me but Louise who has paid the blood-price for me!

[shudder]

The night has fractured in my memory into a horrible blur. My desperate stumbles alongside the tumbril that carried her to her doom. The leaping flares of torchlight. The flashing eyes of the savage demons crying out for blood. The grotesque snarls of the smashed gargoyles from the rubble around the cathedral, terrible in their judgement. Louise's terror-stricken face.

[reach out for Louise]

How had it all come to pass...was it the Revolution? Was it the mob? Was it Fouche? No.

[buries head in hands]

It was just another name, on another warrant, that another informer slipped to me across a begrimed tavern benchtop. It was just another name, another victim, another succulent prize to feed to the insatiable hunger of Madame la Guillotine – but not to Fouche. This was a special name – a long-hated enemy; a man who had been untouchable... until tonight. Tonight, I held in my hands the life which my master most desired to snuff out once and for all – and instead of the success which would have made me invincible, I plunged myself and my beloved into the hellfire which this night has become.

Excerpt 2

Video content: (1 min, 59 secs)

https://youtu.be/RHEviv94A_Y

Excerpt 3

The black ink of the river swallowed that tiny white glimmer of light wholly, while the biting spirits in the wind tormented me and the gargoyles flapped their wings above me, rising from the piles of crumbled limestone to judge me for my hubris. It was just another warrant – a warrant like every other I had delivered – the same purpose, the same paper, and some poor bastard to be condemned to the tumbrils. Yet it was so important tonight. And tonight, I had lost it.

[hold hand out and look at it]

I couldn't go to Fouche - I had nothing to offer him; nothing to satisfy his thirst for terror. Worse, I had thrown away the chance to cast down his greatest enemy! I had to find something, anything to offer him in reparation. That was when I thought of Louise, damn me!

[buries head in hands and talks sarcastically]

I thought of her, and I was sure that she would save me. She would be my salvation, my second chance, my redemption. I went to her, and I begged her on my knees to help me. She was the angel of mercy shielding me from the angel of death looming behind, Louise with her bourgeoisie roots and her aristocratic connections. She was the daughter of a gentleman and I a Saint-Antoine labourer, and on my knees tonight, I believed without any doubt that she would be my saviour. A saviour that had the same abhorrence for her class with their pharisaical condescension as any red-capped revolutionary. How could I have known that my redemption would come at the price of her life?

Excerpt 4

Video content: (1 min, 40 secs)

<https://youtu.be/bJnfp9Ww5bM>

Internal assessment 3 (IA3)



Extended response — imaginative written response (25%)

This assessment focuses on the creation and crafting of an original literary text. It is an open-ended task. While students may undertake some research when writing the extended response, it is not the focus of this technique.

This assessment occurs over an extended and defined period of time, of approximately 12 hours. Students may use class time and their own time to develop a response. There is no prescribed text list for this assessment instrument.

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	48
Authentication	0
Authenticity	5
Item construction	3
Scope and scale	3

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- aligned with syllabus specifications to enable students to demonstrate the assessment objectives
- constructed an open-ended task that cued students to create an original literary text in any form that is predominantly prose, enabling them to demonstrate increasing independence in the creation and crafting of a literary text
- reflected syllabus specifications that there is no prescribed text, or springboard text
- identified an audience or required students to identify an audience so they could establish and maintain the role of the writer and their relationships with audiences through targeted language choices and context.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- align with syllabus specifications

- include open-ended tasks rather than provide specific texts or define how students should respond. This will support students create an original text
- specify an audience or ask students to identify a suitable audience for the imaginative written response to support them maintain the role of the writer and relationships with audiences. Task descriptions should identify audiences such as readers of a specific literary publication to support students demonstrate Assessment objective 2.

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

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- used language effectively to enable students to craft an original literary text
- used language consistent with syllabus specifications and terminology that enabled students to create an imaginative written response in any form that allowed them to demonstrate all assessment objectives
- were flexible allowing students' interests and strengths in imaginative writing
- modelled effective, error-free and consistent use of textual features, language conventions, punctuation, spelling and grammar.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- provide an open-ended task and frame the instructions to allow students to compose an original imaginative written text and demonstrate Assessment objective 1
- include specific instructions or cues to improve transparency and avoid contradicting the syllabus specifications. For instance, students should 'independently develop and create' rather than 'draw inspiration from' texts
- use language consistent with key terminology of 'an imaginative written response' and an 'original, imaginative written text' rather than language such as 'narrative or short story' response
- provide flexibility enabling students to respond in any imaginative form that allows them to demonstrate the assessment objectives, e.g. short story, memoir, interior monologue, a chapter for a novel, a drama script, and screenplay for a short film or TV series.

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 response requirements now allow up to 2,000 words.
- Assessment objectives 3, 4 and 5 now read ‘and/or’ rather than ‘and’.

Assessment decisions

Reliability

Reliability 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	Knowledge application	98.25	1.75	0.00	0.00
2	Organisation and development	98.68	1.32	0.00	0.00
3	Textual features	98.68	0.44	0.88	0.00

Effective practices

Reliable judgments were made using the ISMG for this IA when:

- For the Knowledge Application criterion, at the 8–9 performance level
 - it was recognised that the aesthetic dimension of the text is not singular and related to the creation of perspectives and representation, control and use of generic features and conventions, and the selection of subject matter. Responses showed evidence of the interrelated nature of the assessment objectives. The inclusion of all aesthetic features and/or stylistic devices **purposefully** contributed to the style, genre, purpose, character, setting or tone of the imaginative response
 - responses incorporated a clear and appropriate development of a character/identity and/or perspective across the text, using deliberate organisation, selection and synthesis of subject matter to support perspectives and invite audiences to take up positions. Additionally, the response was strengthened when the development of the character/s or identities informed and supported the audience’s understanding about a connected concept/identity throughout
 - the extent to which the response purposefully manipulated cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and/or beliefs **through** the exploration and development of characters and concepts to achieve authorial purpose was considered. Responses invited the reader to challenge, question or endorse particular cultural assumptions, values, attitudes and/or beliefs by creating and considering the subtleties of perspectives and representations. Responses that simply repeated familiar or stereotypical plotlines dealing with cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and/or beliefs in stereotypical ways, without purpose, did not match the discerning qualities of the descriptor

- for the Organisation and development criterion, at the 8–9 performance level, responses
 - that used, exploited and/or manipulated expected or known genre elements to achieve the intended purpose (e.g. to engage, explore, inspire, satirise, question, move, disconcert or subvert) throughout the imaginative response provided clear evidence to match the appropriate ISMG performance level descriptors. The use and manipulation of genre patterns and conventions supported the purpose and the relationship with the audience by connecting all parts of the imaginative text
 - consistently used appropriately imaginative cohesive devices. Additionally, responses used a range of purposeful cohesive devices such as motif, symbolism, juxtaposition, repeated grammatical structures or phrases to connect and emphasise ideas and concepts, and continue to develop the central purpose
 - consistently made purposeful choices to select and synthesise subject matter to support the chosen purpose. For instance, responses that used linear plots came to clear resolutions that invited the reader to question or reflect on the central purpose. Responses that made use of non-linear plots were appropriately organised and cohesive so that elements introduced within the different plot lines were clearly connected and resolved in ways that invited the reader to question or reflect on the central purpose
- for the Textual features criterions at the 6–7 performance level, vocabulary and sentence construction were used to contribute to the characterisation, tone, mood, or style of the imaginative response. Additionally, language choices were appropriate to the time/place of the text and supported the purpose/s of the imaginative response. This included, in some cases, intentional misspelling words or using unconventional punctuation appropriate to the intended authorial purpose.

Practices to strengthen

When making judgments for this IA for the 2025 syllabus, it is essential to consider the following key differences between the 2019 and 2025 syllabuses:

- Assessment objectives 3, 4 and 5 now read ‘and/or’ rather than ‘and’.

To further ensure reliable judgments are made using the ISMG for this IA, it is recommended that:

- for the Knowledge application criterion, consider
 - if the use of aesthetic features and/or stylistic devices are coherent and purposefully developed to support the overall purpose. Aesthetic features used in isolation (such as a repeated simile or several examples of alliteration) cannot be considered discerning or effective. Responses that do not move beyond expository language choices, or ‘telling’, are not considered subtle and complex, discerning or effective
 - that responses using previously established characters or plot points from an existing text do not show subtle and complex creation of perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and places. Similarly, responses that reuse cliché archetypes without clear purpose or development do not show evidence of the upper performance-level qualifier. For instance, using a well-known character/character type with a slightly altered name, repeating a stereotype without clear purpose, or a response that is a reimagination (and therefore is not appropriate for this assessment instrument) does not meet the requirements of ‘create’ for Assessment objective 3
 - if the manipulation and use of all aspects of Assessment objectives 3 and 4 allow audiences to take up critical and emotional positions. Responses that were overly didactic, used predominantly dialogue, and/or contained one-dimensional characters that lacked

development of character, time and place or perspective did not match the upper performance-level qualities of the descriptor

- for the Organisation and development criterion
 - appropriately identify Assessment objectives 1, 2, and 6. For the upper performance levels there must be evidence of the ways that patterns and conventions of the chosen genre or form are used to contribute to the development of the central purpose **through** selection and synthesis of subject matter. For instance, extensive use of simplistic dialogue may not show appropriate selection and synthesis of subject matter to support perspectives in an imaginative text, especially if this dialogue is devoid of aesthetic description and/or does not contain imaginative description of the identities, times and places
 - consider whether the patterns and conventions of the imaginative text establish and maintain a clear purpose (e.g. to engage, to explore, to inspire, to satirise, to question, to move, to disconcert, to subvert) as outlined in syllabus specifications. Unconventional narrative forms that are predominantly prose, as well as more traditional narrative forms, may show discerning or effective selection and synthesis of subject matter if they achieve the purpose established in the opening phase of the text.
- for the Textual features criterion
 - encourage the use of punctuation to indicate time jumps or shifts in perspective. For non-linear or unusual narrative forms especially, to show evidence of discerning control of textual features, responses should use recognised ways to indicate shifts in time or location such as punctuation marks like asterisks or bullets, or changes in font
 - an extended vocabulary or a control over complex sentence structures must contribute to the characterisation, tone, mood, or style of the imaginative response to demonstrate a discerning control over textual features
 - responses that only use simplistic and repetitive grammatical structures, without clear purpose, may not meet the upper performance level descriptors. Responses should consider the relationship between the Textual features criterion and the overall purpose of the response

Additional advice

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

- Responses are required to make use of an imaginative genre that is predominantly prose. For this assessment instrument, students should be given the opportunity to create ('bring something into being or existence; produce or evolve from one's own thought or imagination'), rather than analyse to demonstrate student achievement in the Knowledge application criterion and the Organisation and development criterion. Analytical and reflective genres may limit students' ability to demonstrate Assessment objectives 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8. Similarly, students should be deterred from using narrative poetry as a genre or form as it is not appropriate for the syllabus specification for this instrument, which stipulates the imaginative form 'is predominantly prose'.

Samples

The following excerpts demonstrate the three criteria, exploring the tension between authenticity and conformity in love and life, revealing the quiet suffocation that occurs when someone chooses the right thing over the true thing.

For the Knowledge application criterion, the response employs familiar tropes of a 'rom-com' or 'chance meeting' narrative, but avoids reusing characters or plotlines, ensuring that it is original

and imaginative. It avoids the cliché and actively subverts the archetypes associated with love, romance and the perfect match inviting audiences to question or reflect on the associated stereotypes as well as the idea of perfection in relationships. It achieves its purpose by manipulating and exploiting the familiar genre patterns and conventions, sometimes by actively referencing them, to strengthen the subversion and the purpose of the text.

The use of familiar symbols and imagery related to love as well as the performative nature of the 'romantic' acts and relationships in the narrative draw on stereotypical cultural understandings of love and romance, inviting audiences to question the attitudes and values that modern society put on the 'act' of engagement and romance.

The aesthetic features of symbolism, metaphor, and sensory detail engage the audience, complementing the development of representations and perspectives relating to performative love and societal expectation. The framing device of the swan motif works to undermine traditional archetypes while also acting as a metaphor for the facade of perfection and authenticity. These elements allow readers to feel sympathy for the main character's choices and understand their decision as well as being disappointed by their final choice.

For the Organisation and development criterion, the non-linear elements of the narrative are appropriately signposted through familiar and recognisable punctuation. The response also chooses tense and language to enhance the connection and synthesis of the action across the different sections of the text. The use of repeated words or phrases that develop with the narrative action helps to cohere the elements and synthesise the concepts and ideas. The ideas within the non-linear sections are cohesively developed and clearly connected and resolved. The resolution references ideas from the opening, but develops these rather than repeating them, inviting the reader to question or reflect on the central purpose.

For the Textual features criterion, the language choices and grammatical structures support the response and are appropriate for the selected patterns and conventions. The varied sentence lengths allow for the pacing to increase and decrease, enhancing the discerning selection, synthesis and sequencing of the subject matter. The language is appropriate for the place and context providing authenticity to George's performance and conformity as well as Sophie's stereotypical and therefore bland personality, which helps to develop the concepts and representations of cultural assumptions relating to love and romance.

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

Excerpt 1**Swan Dive**

The whirr of his car engine gradually eased as George sat, suctioned to the seat as he stared at the ring. It had been wedged between his index-finger and thumb for so long that the metal had become hot and heavy. George flipped it, slowly twisting the band as he inspected its smooth silver surface. He wondered again if it was just right.

The sun's fresh rays were trapped and twisted in the diamond's facets, throwing dapples of light across the roof. He wondered again if Sophie would think it was perfect. Or nothing special at all. George flipped it again. And again. Releasing a held sigh, he meticulously nestled the ring in its box, and safely deposited it back into his pocket where it was held still by the weight of the fabric.

George looked up through the dashboard which faced the park. Large trees tilted over a path that wrapped around a lake. Their spindly fingers reached out trailing just above the surface, which, still as glass, held up a mirror. Nothing moved. No joggers, no wind, not even any birds.

George sat frozen in his car. For a moment, it was as if the whole world held its breath.

A sharp honk sounded. Ripples shattered the surface.

Of course, the swans were here.

Wings the size of umbrellas slapped George in the face as he frantically paddled backwards. The swan reared, hissing with fury as he stumbled over his own feet; his toes suddenly felt webbed and cumbersome. George felt his heart dive, splashing hot waves of panic over his body.

"Shoo! Get-"

A girl charged this time, flapping her arms as she chased the honking bird back into the water. She barely glanced at his half-eaten sandwich—now congealed with the mud—and dusted off her hands with a grin.

"Could've been worse!" she chuckled at her own joke, inserting herself into his solitary picnic with the confidence of a Pilates instructor.

Her name was Sophie. Her blonde hair always smelled like fresh DOVE shampoo, and she smiled like the sun. Mum had always said he'd end up with a blonde.

Their meeting at the park had turned into a first date that had never really stopped. She'd told him it was their place now. George didn't mind. He would wait with a book while Sophie did yoga or laid in the grass. Or fed the swans. The bloody swans. She said they were her spirit animal.

George hated them. He hated their beady black eyes. He hated the way their necks were unnaturally stretched like an unravelled balloon animal. He couldn't understand how people didn't see the filth that yellowed their feathers. Or their gnarled, bat-like feet. Or the fact that they swam around all day in their own [REDACTED] But George just kept quiet. He knew he shouldn't mention it.

Excerpt 2

"Isn't it beautiful?" Sophie announced, pulling him from his thoughts, "The swans... They mate for life you know..." Her voice trailed off in an upwards twang.

A smile blossomed across her face as she squeezed her eyes shut.

"I'm manifesting that for us right now." She sounded like a wellness influencer.

George nodded absentmindedly. He'd figured out where the smell was coming from. He'd stepped in swan [redacted]

George wondered whether the grass would get the [redacted] off his shoe.

"Your shoe! You were thinking about your shoe! You're an idiot mate!"

Tim had George grasped by the shoulders. The foam of their after-work beers wobbled and spilt, slowly seeping into the wooden bar table in a fizzling, hissing mess, like those snapping swans.

Tim couldn't believe that he'd missed the hint.

"The. Hint." Tim had over enunciated, "The till-death-do-we-part-I-want-to-love-you-forever-until-you're-old-and-grey hint."

Like Tim, their colleague Paul had also proposed to his wife bang on the 2-year mark, following textbook tradition. Paul had thrown his arms up in the air, staring at George with an exasperated look.

George chuckled along with them, as they explained that he'd 'waited long enough' and that it was 'about time' but didn't say anything.

Tim slapped him on the back, square and hard right between his shoulder blades, "She's a great girl mate, you've got to stop swanning around!"

George smiled again, but his gaze focused on the beer, watching the golden bubbles swim to the top, burst with a soft hiss and disappear into nothingness.

They were probably right.

Excerpt 3

The sterile shopping-centre air burnt his nose.

George stared at the glass coffins smudged with fingerprints as the uniformed sales lady asked if any rings 'spoke to him'.

As she questioned him on Sophie's metal of choice, favourite cut, rock and shape, her words scratched across him gleaming and cold.

The longer he hesitated, the more trays she pulled out. A sea of silver eyes blinked at him, fracturing his reflection into distorted pieces. George followed her hand as she pointed out 'the classics', 'the statement pieces' and the ring 'most popular with the brides-to-be'. He went with that one.

The box bulged in his pocket. The wind held its breath. The sky held back tears. It was empty, bright and blue.

The balloons bobbed behind them; the lake shone.

A large swan glided out of the water, its powerful wings flapping as it effortlessly rose. The park gasped as it soared just overhead, pointing with delight. George couldn't help but notice its awkward feet, and the green scum that clung to its underbelly. He blinked, forcing himself to turn away, to turn to Sophie.

Her hands were pressed tight against her face, shaking as they smothered her joyful tears.

He knew she loved him. She knew she loved him.

Maybe that was enough.

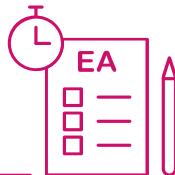
George slowly sank to one knee.

The box opened like it was meant to.

The ring glistened like it was designed to.

George smiled like he was supposed to.

He just hoped he hadn't knelt in



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. The external assessment papers and the external assessment marking guide (EAMG) are published in the year after they are administered.

Examination — analytical written response (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 an analytical response to a literary text from the prescribed text list in the form of an analytical essay for an audience with a deep understanding of the text. (35 marks).

The examination assessed subject matter from Unit 4. Questions were derived from the context of Unit 4: Independent exploration.

The assessment required students to produce an analytical written response to an unseen question, on a literary text from the prescribed text list.

The stimulus comprised of eight texts from the prescribed text list, which were designed to elicit a unique response:

- *Beloved* — Toni Morrison
- *Catch-22* — Joseph Heller
- *Hamlet* — William Shakespeare
- *In Cold Blood* — Truman Capote
- *King Lear* — William Shakespeare
- *Stasiland* — Anna Funder
- *Terra Nullius* — Claire G. Coleman
- *Wuthering Heights* — Emily Bronte.

Assessment decisions

Assessment decisions are made by markers by matching student responses to the external EAMG.

Effective practices

Overall, students responded well when they:

- for the Knowledge application criterion
 - demonstrated an understanding of the interconnected nature of the Knowledge application criterion by integrating interpretation, discussion of cultural assumptions, values, attitudes, and beliefs, and analysis of aesthetic and stylistic choices. High-level responses used

these aspects to reinforce one another, rather than treating them as discrete or unrelated components

- developed an authoritative and distinctive interpretation that moved beyond rephrasing the question. Successful responses used the question as a springboard into its significance, e.g. exploring **why** Denver's symbolic function as 'healing' matters in *Beloved*, or what is at stake in Laertes' plea for forgiveness in *Hamlet*. These responses not only answered the explicit prompt but connected it to the broader concepts, tensions, and ideas of the text as a whole
- analysed perspectives and representations with precision, showing how the text constructs particular viewpoints about concepts, identities, times and places. Students who tied this work explicitly to the question — such as comparing Edgar and Edmund's constructed similarities in *King Lear*, or evaluating depictions of belonging and alienation in *Terra Nullius* — developed more coherent and compelling interpretations
- provided sustained, purposeful analysis that foregrounded the constructed nature of texts. Strong responses demonstrated how writers deliberately shape meaning through aesthetic features and stylistic devices, and how these choices position readers. For instance, students discussing comments such as 'The enemy is anybody who's going to get you killed' in *Catch-22* interpreted how Heller's satirical mode and narrative fragmentation work to represent moral absurdity. Discriminating responses integrated complementary techniques within paragraphs to build layered analytical claims
- demonstrated understanding of the interrelated aspects of Knowledge application by linking analysis of writer's choices with the cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs underpinning the text. For instance, in responses on *Stasiland*, high-level responses did more than restate attitudes towards surveillance; they showed how Funder's narrative construction and interview framing shaped readers' perceptions of complicity, trauma, and memory
- for the Organisation and development criterion
 - formulated a discriminating thesis that clearly articulated what, how, and why of the interpretation. High-level thesis statements blended interpretation (what), key aesthetic or stylistic features (how), and insights into purpose, significance, and cultural context (why). For instance, strong responses to *In Cold Blood* did not simply assert that Perry is neither good nor evil; they established how Capote's narrative shaping invites ethical uncertainty and why that ambiguity is central to the text's critique of justice and empathy
 - created a clear internal logic that sustained the argument across the response. Effective essays established a pattern of reasoning (such as cause/effect, similarity/difference, or conceptual progression) in the introduction and maintained it consistently. Essays that used this logical organisation to deepen the argument, rather than shifting structures paragraph-to-paragraph, were typically more successful
 - ensured that all components of the argument — thesis, topic sentences, evidence, and analysis — were tightly integrated. High-level responses showed how textual, conceptual, and contextual elements operated interdependently to build a discriminating interpretation across the response
 - employed a range of cohesive devices to signal relationships between ideas, beyond reliance on simple connective terms. Discriminating responses used nominalisation, lexical cohesion, and topic strings to clarify shifts in focus, reinforce conceptual patterns, and strengthen the development of the argument
 - structured paragraphs so that ideas progressed from broader conceptual claims to precise textual analysis and logically derived concluding insights. In effective responses, paragraph

conclusions emerged organically from the development of the argument rather than as discrete or isolated statements.

- for the Textual features criterion
 - used grammatically accurate and varied sentence structures to shape meaning with clarity and precision. High-level responses blended simple, compound, and complex sentences to control emphasis and communicate nuanced analysis fluently
 - selected precise vocabulary appropriate to a literary analysis, avoiding vague or formulaic language. Strong responses used terminology that supported conceptual depth, particularly when discussing aesthetic features, narrative structures, and representational choices, without reverting to unnecessary technical jargon
 - used punctuation deliberately to support meaning-making, such as to signal shifts in argument, manage complex syntactic structures, or build emphasis. Discriminating responses used punctuation as a rhetorical resource to guide the reader through sophisticated ideas and maintain coherence and flow.

Practices to strengthen

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

- for the Knowledge application criterion
 - support students to analyse aesthetic and stylistic features that allow for depth of interpretation. Some students rely on identifying isolated or surface-level devices that do not clearly connect to how the text constructs perspectives or invites readers to take up positions. Encouraging students to work with devices such as metaphor, symbol, motif, narrative structure, and characterisation helps them develop interpretations that respond to the conceptual scope of the question/task, including prompts about symbolic meaning, moral complexity, or broader conceptual concerns
 - emphasise the importance of addressing all parts of the question/task. Questions contain multiple conceptual elements (e.g. an argument about a character's responsibility or a statement inviting reflection on a theme). Regular practice with identifying and planning for these elements builds students' confidence in developing precise and authoritative interpretations
 - provide exposure to a wide range of question constructs. The Literature external assessment does not mandate fixed item types; students should practise responding to a variety of prompts, including quotation-based tasks and conceptual 'Discuss' questions. Reinforcing a strong knowledge of the text enables adaptability and helps students to manage unfamiliar constructs
 - encourage students to limit extensive historical or biographical detail, as overemphasis on authorial context may detract from purposeful textual analysis and limit opportunities to draw clear conclusions directly aligned with the task
 - reinforce that students are not required to apply formal literary theory in the external assessment, and that attempts to force theoretical frameworks can lead to superficial or formulaic analysis that does not directly address the question or task. Strong responses prioritise close engagement with the text itself — its construction, representations, and effects — rather than broad theoretical statements that sit outside the interpretation being developed
 - teach students how to use quotation-based prompts effectively. For tasks such as 'Analyse this comment in relation to the text as a whole', students should understand that the quotation can be used as a conceptual entry point into broader ideas, not confined to its

immediate context. Encouraging students to explore how the comment illuminates recurring concerns or tensions across the text strengthens their interpretations

- for the Organisation development criterion
 - encourage students to craft thesis statements that take a clear, arguable position, rather than summarising the quotation or the plot. Successful thesis statements articulate what is being argued, how the text constructs this idea, and why the construction is significant — allowing the argument to develop logically and consistently
 - support students to craft one clear, overarching thesis rather than listing multiple discrete concepts that are subsequently treated as isolated points. When ideas are separated rather than unified by a conceptual thread, the response cannot demonstrate the sustained development of arguments
 - guide students to craft topic sentences that extend and advance the central argument rather than simply introduce forthcoming evidence. Effective topic sentences signal conceptual direction and maintain lexical ties with key terms from the thesis, strengthening logical progression
 - support students to avoid relying on pre-prepared or generic essay structures that are not responsive to the specific demands of the question or task. When students attempt to adapt a memorised interpretation rather than developing an argument directly from the prompt, the thesis often becomes disconnected from the question, resulting in limited internal logic and reduced validity. Teaching students to plan quickly, identify the conceptual elements of the task, and shape a thesis that directly addresses those elements leads to arguments that are more coherent, defensible, and clearly developed
 - reinforce the need for explicit responsiveness to all elements of the task in the thesis. For instance, where a question refers to a ‘comment’ or a character’s claim, students should move beyond paraphrase and instead offer a judgment that connects the statement to the text’s larger conceptual concerns
 - discourage self-referential or procedural statements, such as ‘This essay will analyse ...’ Instead, students should use active analytical language that integrates evidence directly into argumentation, emphasising connections, patterns, and developments in ideas
 - provide explicit modelling of cohesive argument structures. Cohesion should emerge from the internal logic of the argument (e.g. comparison, causation, conceptual progression), not from formulaic connective words. Teaching students how to use topic strings, lexical cohesion, and deliberate paragraph sequencing helps them present more coherent and discriminating arguments
- for the Textual features criterion
 - strengthen students’ academic vocabulary so that they can make precise language choices suited to a literary analysis. Avoiding vague or generic terms enables students to articulate interpretations with clarity and nuance
 - develop students’ control of sentence structures and grammar, enabling them to vary sentence forms to express complex ideas fluently. A command of syntax supports clearer argumentation and allows students to use punctuation and structure purposefully to guide the reader through sophisticated analysis.

Samples

Extended response

The following excerpts are from Question B for *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare. It required students to respond to the question: 'In the final scene of the play, Laertes says, "Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet". Analyse this comment in relation to the text as a whole'.

Effective student responses:

- began with a discriminating thesis that clearly answered the question/task and presented a thoughtful, arguable position. The argument was consistently advanced throughout the essay, with each point contributing meaningfully to the central claim
- went beyond surface-level observations and engaged with the text on a deeper level. They provided a detailed analysis of a range of stylistic and aesthetic features (e.g. figurative language, structure, tone) and explained how these elements work together to create meaning or convey the author's message
- had a clear and logical structure. Ideas were organised to support the thesis, with smooth transitions between paragraphs and within individual paragraphs. The response moved fluidly from one idea to the next, building a cohesive argument throughout.

These excerpts have been included:

- to demonstrate how the response develops an interpretation grounded in a sustained conceptual interpretation — namely that Shakespeare uses the exchange of forgiveness between Hamlet and Laertes to critique the moral corruption and existential uncertainty that pervade Denmark, positioning this moment as a resolution to a broader pattern of disorder across the text. The response clearly contends that the pursuit of vengeance, moral decay, and Hamlet's introspective hamartia collectively precipitate the tragic conclusion, allowing Laertes' request for forgiveness to function as a symbolic restoration of order. This establishes a coherent interpretation that is maintained across the paragraphs
- as the writing shows how high-level responses identify and analyse patterns across the text, drawing on repeated motifs, character functions, and the play's tragic structure. The excerpt references the recurring motif of decay, Hamlet's philosophical introspection, and the foil relationship between Hamlet and Laertes to build a cohesive explanation of how the final exchange of forgiveness is shaped by prior tensions. This demonstrates a thoughtful analysis of aesthetic and stylistic features and how they position readers
- to illustrate integrated discussion of aesthetic features and stylistic devices, including close reference to soliloquy, motif, characterisation, and tragic conventions. The response connects Hamlet's 'To be or not to be' soliloquy to his paralysis and moral uncertainty, and contrasts this with Laertes' unrestrained pursuit of vengeance, analysing these stylistic and character elements as purposeful constructions that clarify the significance of the final plea for forgiveness. The analysis moves beyond surface observations of plot to consider how Shakespeare's craft shapes meaning across the play
- to show the development of a logically sequenced argument that progresses towards a relevant conclusion aligned with the thesis. The excerpts move from characterisation (Hamlet as a tragic anti-hero) to broader conceptual concerns (corruption, morality, stability) to the culmination of these ideas in the final scene. By linking evidence to the overall interpretation at each stage, the writing models the cumulative reasoning characteristic of high-quality analytical responses
- to highlight clear organisation and cohesive ties used to structure the response. Connectives such as 'however', 'in the final scenes', 'thus', and 'finally' guide the reader through shifts in

focus and clarify the relationship between evidence and argument. The chronological movement — from early portrayals of Hamlet to the final resolution — supports coherence and enables the response to show how meaning is constructed across the whole text.

Excerpt 1

William Shakespeare's timeless revenge tragedy, Hamlet, set against the backdrop of the Elizabethan Era, explores the corruption of power, the fragility of order, and the complexities of human morality. In the final scenes of the play, Laertes (foil to Prince Hamlet's inaction) exclaims, "Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet," as he acknowledges how the pursuit of ^{unrestrained} ~~unrequited~~ vengeance, amid a deceitful and corrupt court, obscures integrity and conscience, thus asking for an exchange of pleasantries. Here, forgiveness is interpreted as the divine restoration of order; mutual death as a means of restoring Denmark's stability. However, it is through this construction that Shakespeare critiques how moral corruption and existential uncertainty ultimately leads to the play's tragedy, ^{contemporary} positioning audiences to reflect on the consequences of the human condition. This is illustrated through the recurring motif of decay, the characterisation of Prince Hamlet's introspective hamartia, and finally, through the play's thematic resolution (inevitable tragedy).

Excerpt 2

Through his characterisation of Hamlet as a tragic anti-hero, Shakespeare scrutinises moral corruption and uncertainty, revealing how Hamlet's hamartia — paralysed introspection/inaction — prolongs the State's corruption and propels the tragic ending. As a moral compass tasked with the revenge of his father's murder, Hamlet (play's protagonist) is initially portrayed as an intellectual and Prince, sensitive to the corruption that surrounds him. However, as the play unfolds, he becomes infected by the State, succumbing to inevitable tragedy. In Act 3.1, during his famous soliloquy, "To be, or not to be: that is the question," Hamlet contemplates moral existence and existential thought.

Furthermore, in that same soliloquy, Hamlet posits, "Thus conscience does make cowards of us all" (Act 3.1). The alliteration of "conscience cowards" and collective pronouns "of us all", universalises Hamlet's moral paralysis ~~paralysis~~, therefore reinforcing Shakespeare's critique of the Renaissance Humanism, and how moral ambition and uncertainty can result in self-destruction. Additionally, by admitting that it is one's conscience that constrains one's ability ~~to~~, Shakespeare likens to Aristotelian Senecan tragedy, where the anagnorisis of Hamlet's ~~burden~~ (a fatal flaw) doesn't prevent the foreseeable tragedy he faces, as a result of a corrupt court and a violated GCOB.

The following excerpts are from Question B for *Stasiland* by Anna Funder. It required students to respond to the question: 'In chapter 23, Funder says, "The Wall persists in Stasi men's minds as something they hope might one day come again, and in their victims' minds too, as a terrifying possibility". Analyse this comment in relation to the text as a whole'.

These excerpts have been included:

- to demonstrate how the response establishes a clear and conceptually grounded interpretation of Funder's exploration of the psychological and moral consequences of authoritarian control in the former German Democratic Republic. The writer contends that the Stasi legacy persists as a haunting psychological force long after the fall of the Berlin Wall, shaping both perpetrators and victims. This provides a sustained conceptual analysis aligned directly to the prompt
- to demonstrate how the response identifies and analyses patterns across the text, such as the recurring symbolism of the Wall, the intrusive presence of surveillance, and the characterisation of the Stasi as an overwhelming, dehumanising entity. By linking these patterns to Funder's critique of coercion, memory, and trauma, the response analyses how aesthetic and stylistic choices construct meaning and position readers to empathise with those affected
- to illustrate integration of aesthetic features and stylistic devices, including metaphor, symbolism, characterisation, and juxtaposition. For instance, the description of the Stasi as 'it' is analysed as a dehumanising symbol of total control, while references to the 'overpowering population' at Charlie's funeral demonstrate how public and private spaces were infiltrated. This moves beyond recounting events to consider Funder's authorial choices and how it reinforces the persistence of fear and psychological rupture
- to show the development of a logically sequenced argument that progresses from contextual framing to close analysis of examples, widening into broader conceptual implications. The argument moves coherently from the historical context of repression to the lingering psychological impacts, to the positioning of the Wall as a symbol of both memory and threat. Evidence is consistently linked back to the thesis, modelling considered and astute reasoning
- to highlight clear organisation and cohesion. Cohesion is strengthened through conceptual progression (context, technique, representation, significance), connective phrasing, and the return to symbolic patterns such as the Wall and surveillance. These choices clarify the relationship between ideas and reinforce the development of the interpretation
- to demonstrate discerning control of textual features to support analytical meaning-making. The excerpts use precise academic vocabulary and varied sentence structures to express complex ideas fluently, while purposeful punctuation guides the reader through shifts in argument. This control of textual features enhances clarity, cohesion, and authority in the discussion of Funder's construction of trauma and surveillance.

Excerpt 1

Anna Funder's "Stasiland" (2002) investigates the psychological and moral consequences of life in the former German Democratic Republic (DDR): a totalitarian state which existed from 1949 to 1990 under communist rule. Governed by the Socialist Unity Party and controlled by the pervasive surveillance of the Stasi, East Germany was a society built on fear, conformity and control. Throughout the non-fiction tale, Funder travels through the remnants of power and memory ~~before~~ when she quotes, "The Wall persists in Stasi men's minds as something they hope might one day come again, and in their victims' minds too, as a terrifying possibility." Through utilisation of symbolic characters in conjunction with metaphorical language, Funder establishes how even after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the psychological impacts remain constant and consistent due to the hostility and abuse of authoritarian rule amongst German society.

Excerpt 2

that the extent of Stasi control doesn't lie solely in ~~physically~~, but extends into the more intimate and personal aspects of ones life. This may be viewed in an additional threatening manner, as the characterisation of the Stasi as, "It" insinuates total control, dehumanising themselves to something much more coercive and ~~overpowering~~ oppressive. This lingering fear sanctioned upon East German society is further emphasised through the numerous and overpowering population of the Stasi, both in public environments and personal spaces. This can be observed through Miriam Weber's analysis of her husband, Charles, funeral, as she conveys, "There were many people there. But I'm pretty sure there were even more Stasi," this highlights the overarching ~~overpowering~~ dominance in consistent surveillance, inferring how the general public was secondary to the apparatus of the population. It signals that government scrutiny extends far beyond mere observation, but rather invasion and deep analysis of personal factors within the lives of every single individual.

The following excerpts are from Question B for *Terra Nullius* by Claire G. Colman. It required students to respond to the question: 'In chapter 14, Coleman says, "No matter where they had come from before, whatever culture or ancient human race they had been part of, Esperance's people were one mob, one people, now". Analyse this comment in relation to the text as a whole'.

These excerpts have been included:

- to demonstrate how the response establishes a clear conceptual interpretation of Coleman's statement that 'Esperance's people were one mob, one people, now', and connects it to patterns across the whole text. The writing positions this comment not as a simple declaration of unity, but as an entry point for examining how colonisation fractures and reshapes identity, agency and belonging. By framing the quotation within allegorical exploration of invasion in

Terra Nullius, the response sustains a coherent argument about how collective suffering and resistance can forge solidarity across disparate groups

- as the response analyses how Coleman uses allegory, characterisation and genre conventions to complicate the idea of unity. The excerpts show understanding that the ‘one mob’ ideal sits in tension with ongoing violence, dispossession and cultural erasure. Through discussion of Sister Bagra’s indoctrination, colonial ideologies, and divisive language such as ‘native’ and ‘savage’, the response explains how the text constructs the conditions that both fracture and necessitate communal identity. This demonstrates purposeful analysis of aesthetic features and how they position readers to recognise the destructive mechanisms of colonial power
- to illustrate integrated discussion of stylistic devices such as imagery, symbolism and linguistic manipulation, particularly the way Coleman uses graphic detail to evoke empathy, horror, and moral reckoning. The response comments on the ‘cruel, exacting punishments’ inflicted on native children and interprets these as not merely descriptive but strategically crafted to expose the brutality underpinning colonial narratives. This moves beyond recounting to evaluate Coleman’s aesthetic choices and their effects
- to show the development of a logically sequenced argument that links the quotation to key moments across the text, such as the shifting alliances formed between Jacky, Johnny and Esperance. The response argues that while colonisation is portrayed as destructive, shared suffering produces moments of unity that culminate in collective resistance. The argument builds cumulatively toward an explanation of the broader significance of the ‘one mob’ ideal within Coleman’s critique of invasion and its aftermath
- to highlight effective organisation and cohesive ties, including the use of conceptual vocabulary (agency, colonial discourse, cultural erasure, collective suffering) that threads the argument together. The response returns to the quotation’s central idea at key moments, demonstrating cohesion and alignment between evidence, interpretation and the task
- to demonstrate discerning control of textual features, shown through precise academic language, varied sentence structures and purposeful punctuation that supports clarity and nuance. The excerpts communicate complex ideas fluently, maintaining an analytical register suited to high-level literary discussion.

Excerpt 1

Claire G. Coleman's "Terra Nullius" is a speculative novel that reimagines the colonisation of Australia through an allegorical lens, by using the science fiction genre to confront enduring injustices and cultural myths surrounding invasion, identity and survival. In the novel Coleman says, "No matter where they had come from before, whatever culture or ancient human race they had been part of, Esperance's people were one mob, one people, now", this comment underscores how colonisation can both unite people and communities ^{also} yet strip them of their identity and agency. The ~~also~~ commentary also fundamentally shapes the understanding of the novel as it forces readers to confront the horrifying parallels between fiction and history.

While Coleman conveys that colonisation in itself is clearly destructive, she also communicates how collective suffering can unite people and communities. This is most evident when we witness Jacky, Johnny Star and Esperance – people who have all suffered under colonial rule one way or another – join forces at the end of the novel to fight against their oppressors.

Excerpt 2

Coleman presents colonisation as a destructive, cruel force that aims to strip people of their identity, culture and autonomy. This is made undeniably clear to the reader from the very first chapter in which we see how Sister Bagra, a settler nun ~~is~~ leading a missionary, describes the native people as savages, ^{as} people with very little intelligence and unquestionably inferior to the settler race. Sister Bagra believes it is her purpose to discipline the natives so that they may be of some use to society, her methods ~~are~~ are cruel and violent, and echo the cultural assumption of white superiority and entitlement and its justification of violence in the name of civilisation and the betterment of society. The disturbing nature of such ideologies is further highlighted by Coleman through her use of imagery as an aesthetic device, as graphic details of the cruel, exacting punishments inflicted on the native children evoke ^{feelings of} empathy and horror to the reader. Furthermore, Coleman's ~~overall~~ manipulation of divisive language such as "Todd", "Native" and "Savage", is used stylistically to show how ~~is~~ destructive and harmful colonial discourse can be and the unnecessary division and prejudice it creates.