Ancient History subject report

2022 cohort

February 2023

Contents

Introduction

Throughout 2022, schools and the QCAA worked together to further consolidate the new Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) system. The familiar challenges of flood disruption and pandemic restrictions were managed, and the system continued to mature regardless.

We have now accumulated three years of assessment information, and our growing experience of the new system is helping us to deliver more authentic learning experiences for students. An independent evaluation will commence in 2023 so that we can better understand how well the system is achieving its goals and, as required, make strategic improvements. The subject reports are a good example of what is available for the evaluators to use in their research.

This report analyses the summative assessment cycle for the past year — from endorsing internal assessment instruments to confirming internal assessment marks, and marking external assessment. It also gives readers information about:

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

The report promotes continuous improvement by:

- identifying effective practices in the design and marking of valid, accessible and reliable assessments
- recommending where and how to enhance the design and marking of valid, accessible and reliable assessment instruments
- providing examples, including those 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 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 General subjects (including alternative sequences (AS) and Senior External Examination (SEE) subjects, where relevant) and General (Extension) subjects.

Report preparation

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

Subject data summary
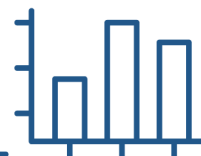
Subject completion

The following data includes students who completed the General subject or AS.

Note: All data is correct as at 31 January 2023. Where percentages are provided, these are rounded to two decimal places and, therefore, may not add up to 100%.

Number of schools that offered the subject: 197.

Completion of units	Unit 1	Unit 2	Units 3 and 4
Number of students completed	2849	2642	2339

Units 1 and 2 results

Number of students	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Unit 1	2554	295
Unit 2	2405	237

Units 3 and 4 internal assessment (IA) results

Total marks for IA
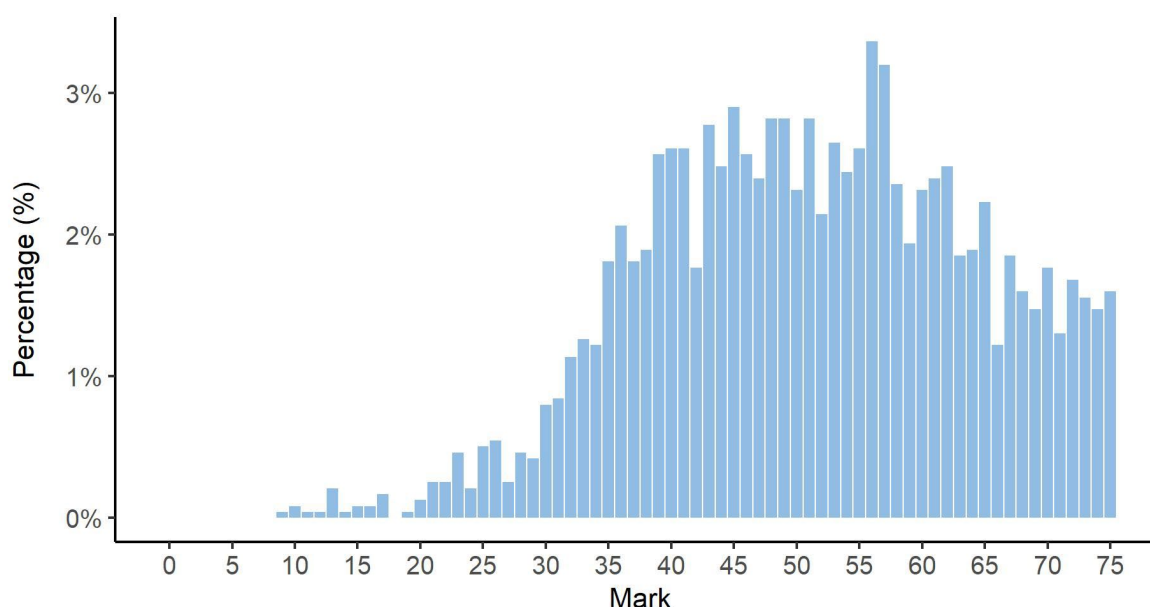
IA1 marks

IA1 total
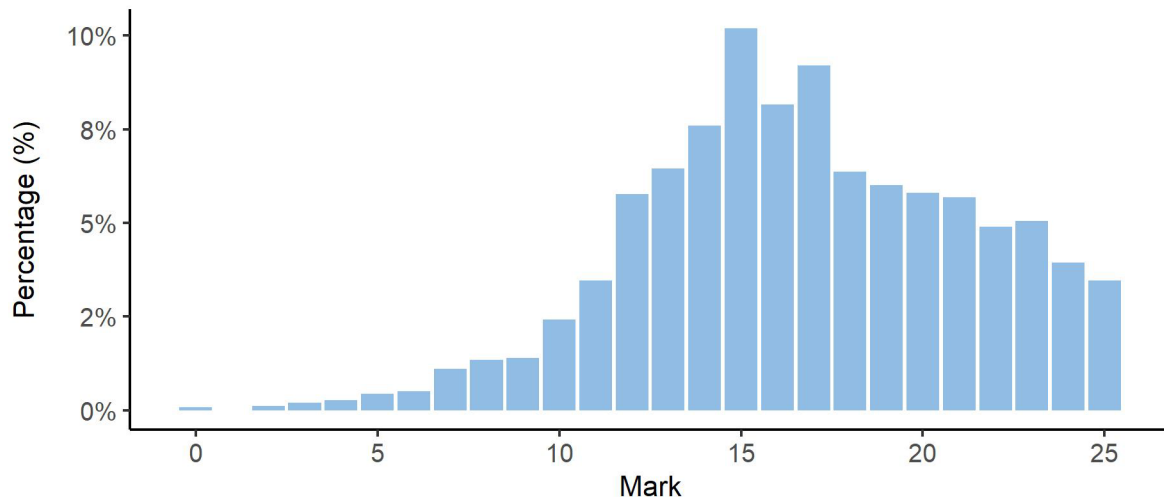
IA1 Criterion: Comprehending
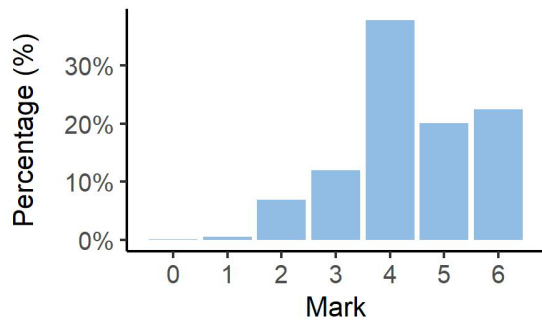
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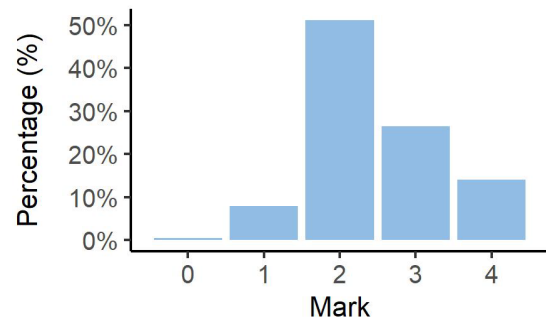
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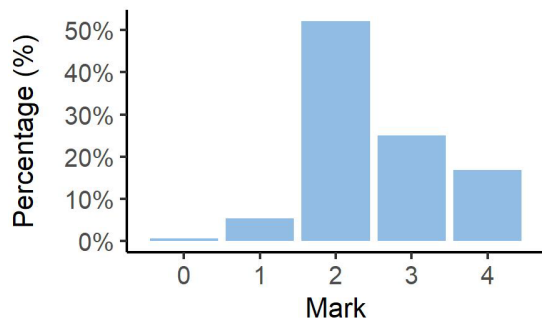
IA1 Criterion: Evaluating
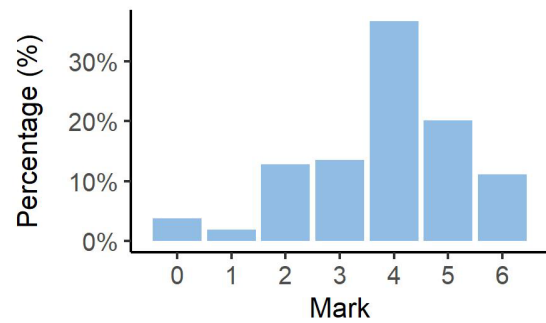
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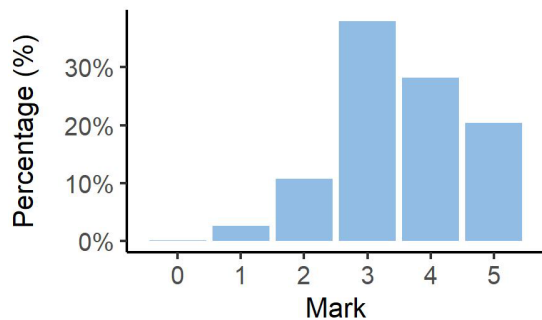
IA2 marks

IA2 total
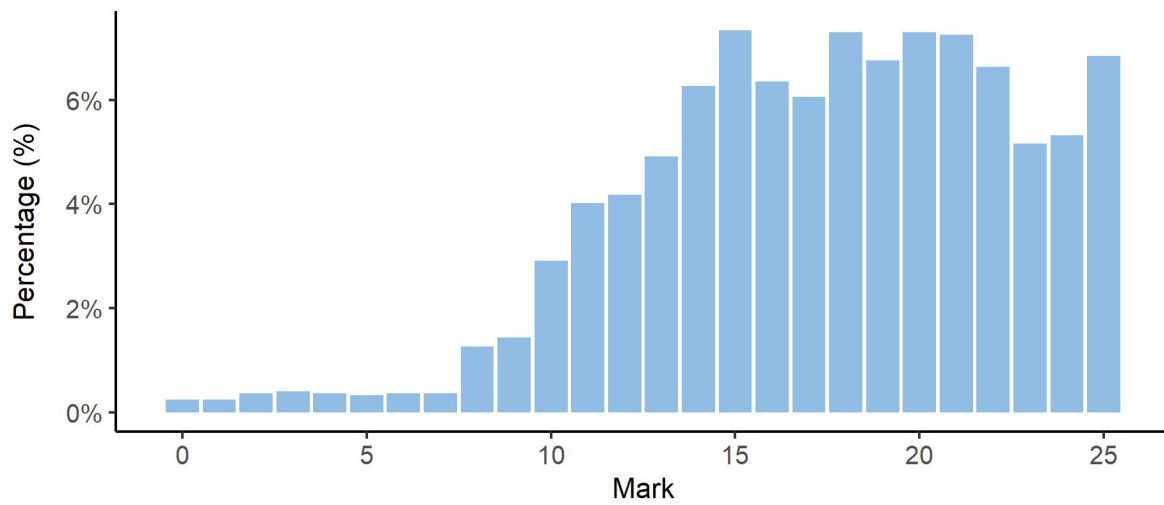
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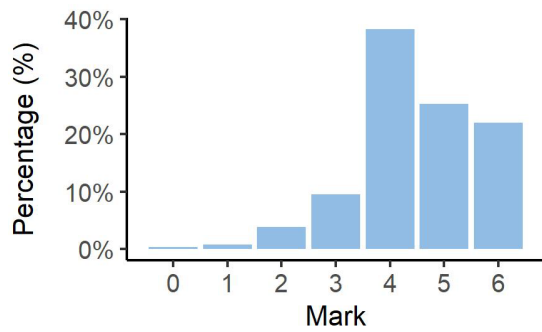
IA2 Criterion: Analysing
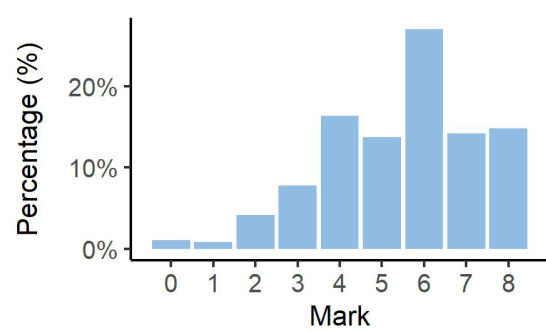
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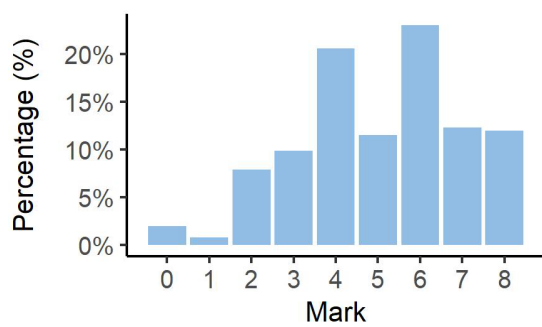
IA2 Criterion: Creating and communicating
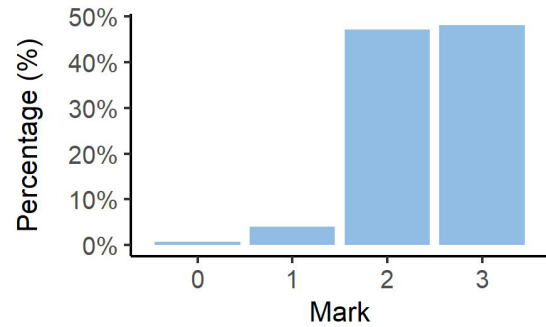
IA3 marks

IA3 total
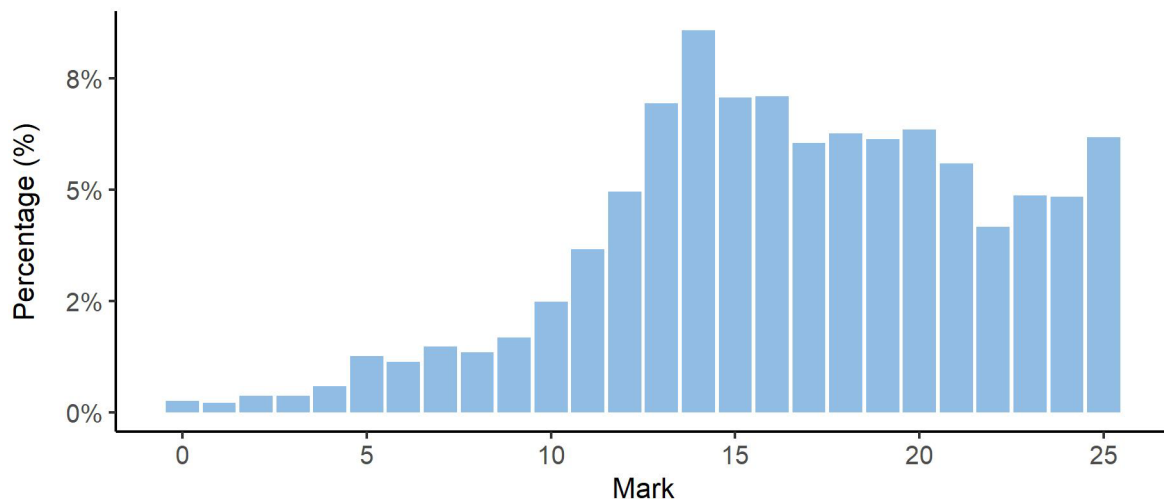
IA3 Criterion: Comprehending
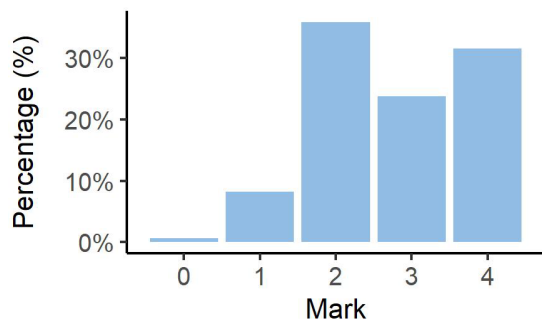
IA3 Criterion: Devising and conducting
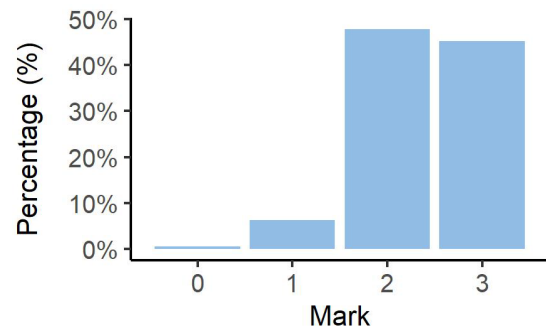
IA3 Criterion: Analysing
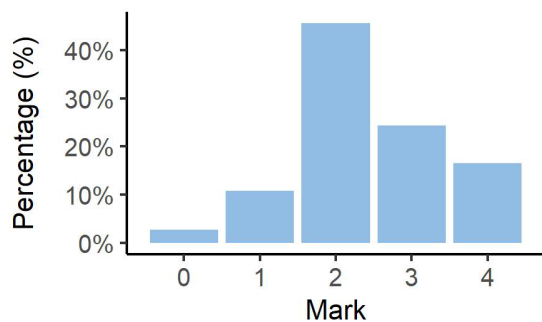
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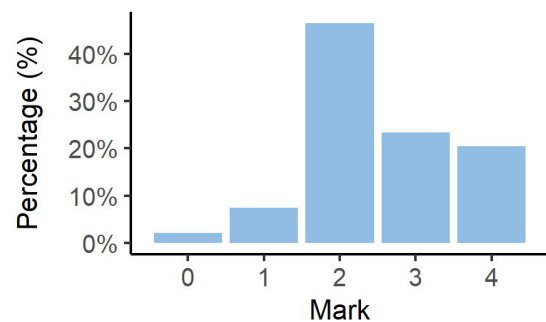
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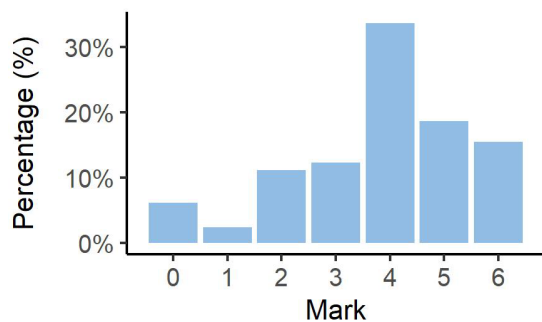
IA3 Criterion: Creating and communicating
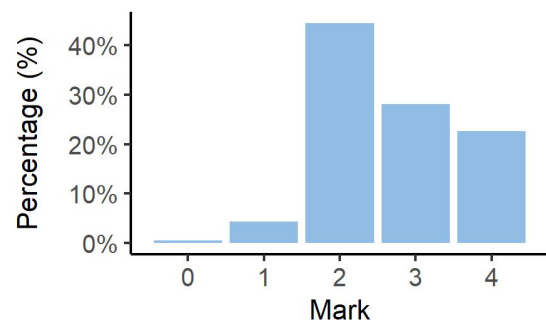
External assessment (EA) marks
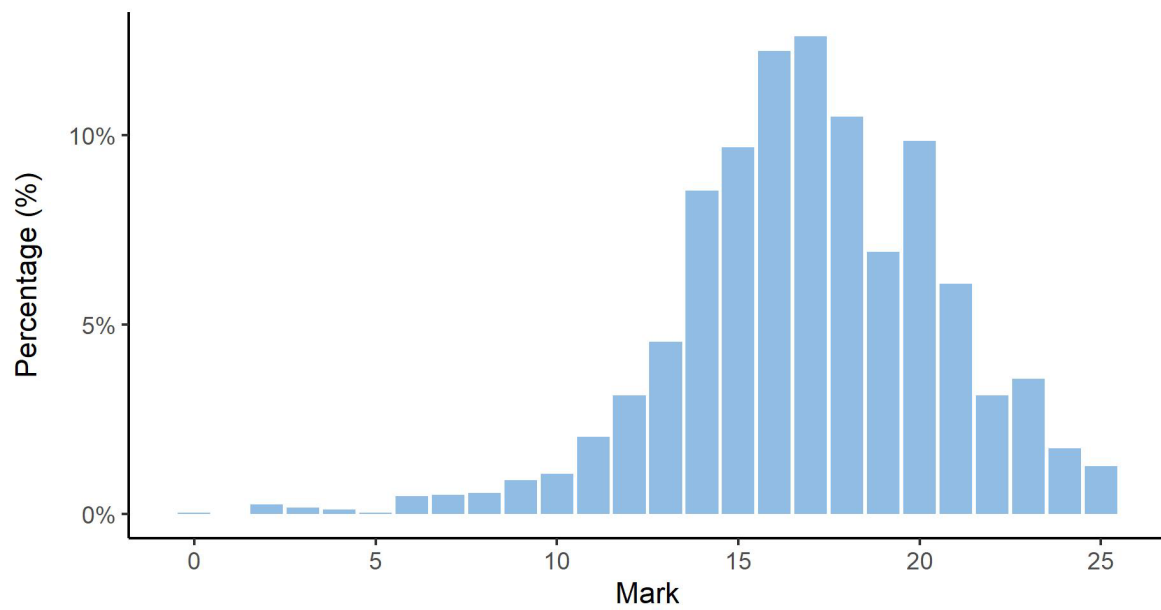
Final subject results

Final marks for IA and EA
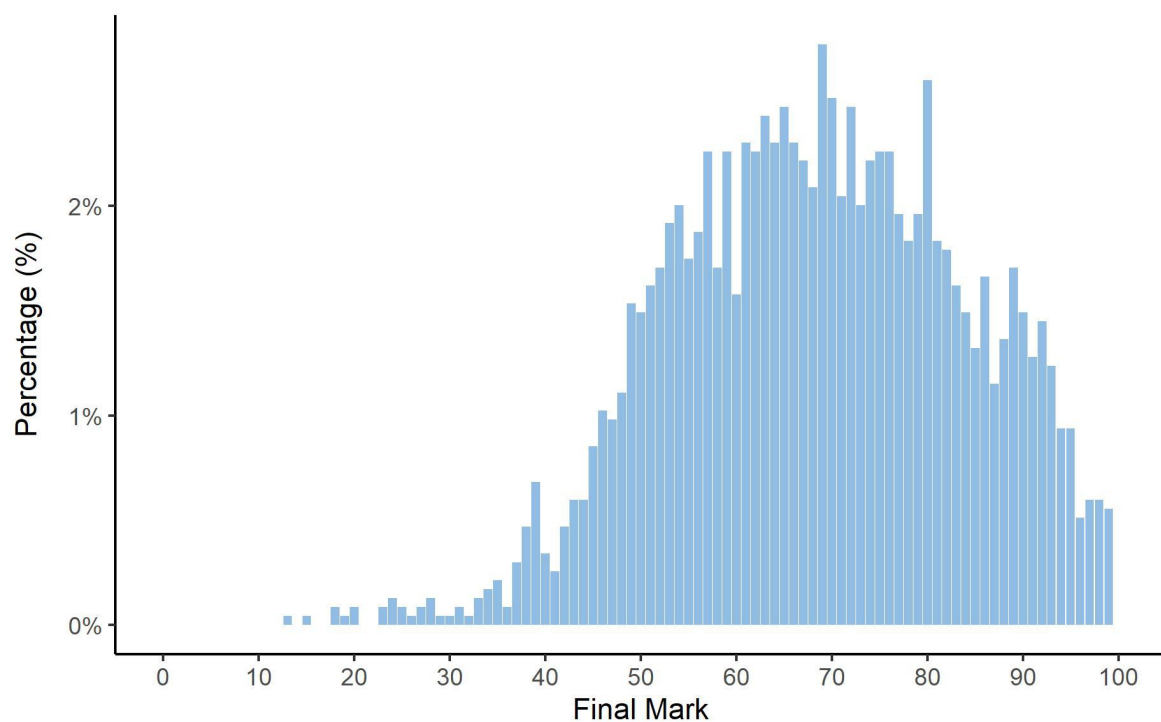
Grade boundaries

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	100–82	81–65	64–42	41–16	15–0

Distribution of standards

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

Standard	A	B	C	D	E
Number of students	511	883	858	85	2

Internal assessment

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

Endorsement

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

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

Refer to *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v4.0*, Section 9.5.

Percentage of instruments endorsed in Application 1

Number of instruments submitted	IA1	IA2	IA3
Total number of instruments	196	196	196
Percentage endorsed in Application 1	56%	64%	89%

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 v4.0*, Section 9.6.

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

Number of samples reviewed and percentage agreement

IA	Number of schools	Number of samples requested	Number of additional samples requested	Percentage agreement with provisional marks
1	197	1126	107	84.26%
2	197	1124	87	79.19%
3	197	1120	108	75.13%

Internal assessment 1 (IA1)

Examination — essay in response to historical sources (25%)

The examination assesses the application of a range of cognitions to an unseen question.

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	71
Authentication	0
Authenticity	2
Item construction	7
Scope and scale	8

*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 196.

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- provided succinct not seen sources that students were able to engage with effectively during planning time

- aligned with syllabus specifications, using language from the syllabus for instructions

- provided questions or statements that allowed students opportunities to sufficiently demonstrate sustained analysis, synthesis and evaluation supporting a student-generated hypothesis

- provided context statements that allowed students to analyse and evaluate the evidence in sources. Context statements should be in the form of a brief description that may include author, time of production, and any general details about the circumstances in which a source was produced, e.g. Robert the Monk wrote one of several Latin histories of the First Crusade. The excerpt provides an account of Pope Urban's famous speech at the Council of Clermont

in 1095 CE, in which he proclaimed the First Crusade. Robert the Monk was present when the speech was delivered, but the account was written years later after the crusade was over.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- ensure the task question or statement provides an opportunity for students to develop their own hypothesis and a unique response
- include all the specifications for the task (Syllabus section 4.13.1).

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	7
Language	10
Layout	9
Transparency	6

*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions:196.

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- provided clear instructions using language from the syllabus
- provided a layout that was free from distractors, e.g. coloured text, highlighting, hyperlinks.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- use a consistent referencing system for the sources provided for the task
- reformat sources to ensure that they are clear and legible to ensure accessibility for students.

Assessment decisions

Reliability

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

Agreement trends between provisional and confirmed marks

Criterion number	Criterion name	Percentage agreement with provisional	Percentage less than provisional	Percentage greater than provisional	Percentage both less and greater than provisional
1	Comprehending	95.94%	2.54%	1.52%	0%
2	Analysing	94.92%	2.54%	2.54%	0%
3	Synthesising	95.43%	3.05%	1.02%	0.51%
4	Evaluating	88.83%	9.14%	2.03%	0%
5	Creating and communicating	96.45%	2.03%	1.52%	0%

Effective practices

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

- for the Comprehending criterion

    - the use of terms was thorough and mostly accurate, placed in their historical context, e.g. 'demagogues' and 'ekklesia' are terms that may have been used when considering evidence about Athenian democracy. At the upper performance level, decisions about this descriptor were made by considering whether the terms had been used in the way in which they had been intended

    - issues were explained in relation to the unseen question, e.g. in an essay about Athenian democracy, issues around the lack of education among the lower class Athenians and how this affected their ability to fully participate in Athenian political life may have been explained. At the upper performance level, the explanation of issues was detailed when it gave attention to the fine points in relation to the evidence in the sources and the argument being developed

    - an understanding of the relationship between concepts and ideas was developed in response to the question, e.g. a response to a question about life in Athens in the 5th century BCE may have demonstrated an understanding of the relationship between the concept of democracy at this time and the idea of public participation. At the upper performance level, responses demonstrated an informed understanding of the relationship, meaning relevant knowledge was conveyed when developing the response to the unseen question

- for the Analysing criterion, responses at the upper performance level demonstrated discerning identification of the features of evidence from a range of sources in the stimulus supplied. This discernment was often illustrated by selecting features of evidence that were relevant to the development of the response, e.g. when analysing evidence from 'Perikles's Funeral Oration' (Thucydides) in relation to a question about whether Athenian democracy allowed for the participation of many, responses may have identified the motive, audience, perspective, and implicit meanings because they were most relevant for the development of their argument.

Samples of effective practices

The following excerpts demonstrate evidence of discerning identification and detailed examination of the features of evidence.

- Excerpt 1 identifies Beard's perspective, motive, explicit and implicit meanings and examines these features of evidence in detail in relation to the historical argument being presented. Across the response, a range of sources were analysed, including Thucydides, Aristotle, Bradley, Stobart and a kleroterion.

- Excerpt 2 identifies the origin and context in which the palace of King Minos was built, as well as explicit and implicit meanings. A range of sources was also used across the response.

Note: The characteristics identified may not be the only time the characteristics have occurred throughout a response.

Excerpt 1

Athenian citizenship was ~~tightly valued, and~~ strictly limited, resulting in only a ~~xxxx~~ minority of Athens' population being allowed to be ~~politicall~~ politically active. Professor emeritus ~~and histo~~ of classics, ~~Beard~~ Mary Beard, suggests that the limits of Athenian citizenship also limited accessability to Athenian democracy, and political equality, to "...a privileged cadre of the city's inhabitants... which was ethnically and culturally homogenous." (Source 7). While Beard analyses political equality through a ~~xxx~~ 21st century perspective rather than an Ancient Athenian one, her ability as a historian to ~~xxx~~ examine the faulings of democracy without the societal bias' of time, ~~povie~~ ~~provides~~ highlights the truly exclusive nature of Athenian citizenship.

Excerpt 2

Though Linear A remains undeciphered, the ~~palace sites and associated artefacts left behind illuminate~~ cult and ceremonial evidence left behind elucidates a rich culture in both the Minoans and Mycenaeans. Source 1, the Palace of King Minos firmly ~~firmly~~ establishes this. Built around a central court, through the but-and-ben principle and agglutinative method, the palace is evidence of advanced ~~advanced~~ technological innovations. Further, that the agglutinative method was applied to extend the structure suggests an expanding prosperity in Crete. The rectangular central court, originated in the Second Palatial Period, implies am need for open space and thus, the presence of large crowds and elaborate events.

Practices to strengthen

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

- for the Evaluating criterion

    – judgments are distinguished from statements. A judgment explains why/how a source may be useful or reliable, whereas a statement expresses an opinion only. Signposting of judgments may be beneficial; however, there is no requirement to use the words useful and reliable

    – judgments about usefulness and/or reliability at the upper performance-level descriptor use evidence from a range of sources and/or different perspectives. A range of sources may include but is not limited to, primary, secondary, ancient, modern, literary, non-literary, seen, and not seen

    – judgments about the usefulness and reliability of evidence from sources are distinguished from the analysis of features of evidence.

Additional advice

- Highlight or annotate the performance-level descriptors used to arrive at a mark for each of the criteria assessed on the ISMG.

- When considering the application of best-fit judgments, refer to *Module 3 — Making reliable judgments* in the Assessment Literacy tile in the QCAA Portal.

- Provide opportunities to practise strategies for writing within the word limit. If this assessment specification is exceeded, application of the school's assessment policy must be clear on the response.

Internal assessment 2 (IA2)

Investigation — independent source investigation (25%)

An independent source investigation uses research and investigative practices to assess a range of cognitions in a particular context. It is an opportunity for students to demonstrate the application of the historical concepts and historical skills — by selecting and analysing a range of historical sources and considering different perspectives — to the investigation.

Investigative practices and research include locating and using evidence from historical sources and information that goes beyond what has been provided to the student in class. Research conventions including citations and reference list must be adhered to. Responses are completed individually, under process writing conditions, over a number of hours.

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	57
Authentication	0
Authenticity	1
Item construction	10
Scope and scale	1

*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 196.

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- provided all of the task specifications for an independent source investigation using syllabus language (Syllabus section 4.13.2)

- included scaffolding that only focused on processes or presentation required for the task and did not repeat information provided in the Task section.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- include the syllabus specification for students to provide a reference list as part of ethical scholarship

- ensure the elements of the task are not repeated in the Scaffolding section.

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	3
Layout	3
Transparency	0

*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 196.

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- avoided repetition of instructions or information about the task

- used syllabus language for clear instructions about the task.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- include only specifications relevant to the task as written in the syllabus.

Assessment decisions

Reliability

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

Agreement trends between provisional and confirmed marks

Criterion number	Criterion name	Percentage agreement with provisional	Percentage less than provisional	Percentage greater than provisional	Percentage both less and greater than provisional
1	Devising and conducting	91.37%	5.08%	2.54%	1.02%
2	Analysing	87.82%	8.12%	3.55%	0.51%
3	Evaluating	84.77%	11.17%	3.05%	1.02%
4	Creating and communicating	98.48%	0.51%	1.02%	0%

Effective practices

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

- for the Devising and conducting criterion, responses at the upper performance level demonstrated

  - a nuanced key inquiry question at the upper performance level. A nuanced key inquiry question narrows the focus of an investigation to align with the conditions of the task. To do this, a key inquiry question often specifies, for example, the specific time, issue, event, place and/or space associated with the investigation

  - use of the nuanced key inquiry question, e.g. the key inquiry question is discussed in the source analysis and/or critical summary of evidence

  - use of relevant sub-questions, e.g. the sub-questions are applied across the response and are clearly linked to the key inquiry question

- for the Creating and communicating criterion, responses at the upper performance level demonstrated

  - alignment to the features of an independent source investigation as detailed in the syllabus specifications

  - minimal errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Responses are not required to be flawless

  - consistent application of ethical scholarship, including a recognised referencing system to acknowledge sources and a reference list.

Samples of effective practices

The following excerpts demonstrate evidence of:

- a nuanced key inquiry question. Excerpts 1 and 2 both reflect a nuanced key inquiry question because the selected investigations have been narrowed to a specific time, issue, event, place and/or space, e.g. Excerpt 1 includes a key inquiry question that is tightly focused on the Oscan and Latin language in Pompeii. Excerpt 2 includes a key inquiry question that concentrates on the influence and prestige of priestesses and the economy in Pompeii. Both key inquiry questions — because of their specificity — also include very particular timeframes for the investigations

- the selection of evidence from primary and secondary sources. The rationale in Excerpt 1 includes reference to some of the sources that will be analysed and evaluated throughout the response. The response indicates that primary inscriptions of Oscan language will be used, along with modern papers about the existence of Oscan and Latin languages following the Roman colonisation of Pompeii. The critical summary of evidence in Excerpt 2 includes reference to the use of evidence from primary sources including a tomb, inscription, and statue, as well as evidence from secondary sources.

Note: The characteristics identified may not be the only time the characteristics have occurred throughout a response.

Excerpt 1

Key Question:

To what extent does archaeological evidence support the co-existence of the Oscan and Latin language in Pompeii following Roman Colonisation in 80 B.C.E?

Sub-Questions:

1. What evidence exists for the continuation of the Oscan language following Roman colonisation?

2. When did the primary language of Pompeii transition from Oscan to Latin?

3. What does the use of language reveal about Pompeiian society?

4. How useful are Pompeiian inscriptions at identifying language use?

5. What aspects of contestability exist regarding the continuation of the Oscan language following Roman colonisation?

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Rationale:

The Oscan-Language was an Indo-European language spoken throughout southern Italy until approximately 100C.E, when it became functionally extinct due to the implementation of Latin following Roman colonisation. I chose to pursue this topic of study due to a personal interest in linguistics. I was also curious about how, in the case of Pompeii, Oscan could disappear within 100 years despite the continuation of the native speaking population and wondered if there had been a greater degree of linguistic integration than previously thought.

A problem encountered when researching for this investigation is an inaccessibility in language utilised in academic papers. Due to the importance of linguistics within this area of study, a majority of research papers by current academics use terms unfamiliar to a non-expert. Furthermore, as Roman-occupied Pompeii enforced use of Latin, few Oscan sources from the 1st Century B.C.E remain, as well as little documentation of their historical context.

I have chosen a selection of primary and secondary sources to analyse the presence of Oscan within Pompeii following Roman occupation in the 1st Century B.C.E. I have used several primary sources of Oscan inscriptions originating from both Pompeii's early and late colonial periods. Additionally, I have used a series of modern research papers written by contemporary historians to further determine experts' opinions. The investigation of these sources suggests that to some extent during the Oscan and Latin languages co-existed in Roman Pompeii following colonisation in 80 B.C.E.

Excerpt 2

Key Inquiry Question

"To what extent does evidence from Pompeii suggest that priestesses in the 1st century CE held significant social prestige and influence?"

Sub Questions

1. What does evidence display as being the key duties of a priestess?
2. How did Pompeiian socialites/ those with power display their influence?
3. Do sources reveal that many women in the 1st century CE held positions of social prestige and influence?
4. Did priestesses only hold power because of the wealth and prestige of the men in their families?
5. To what extent did priestesses have agency over their own actions?

Critical Summary

Source 3 and Source 5 give perspective on the wealth priestesses held, which was evidently donated to groups such as the Fullers, as well as used to commission public buildings. These primary sources clearly display the wealth of Mamia and Eumachia, and their patronage work which allowed them the opportunity for social mobility and furthering their influence. However, as these women were already of high status, and couldn't hold positions of any political power, it can be presumed that the men in these priestess' families were the driving force behind their decisions, which is clear in the evidence that Eumachia's building was built partly in her politician son's name (Source 5). Both of these sources provide primary evidence in support of the notion that priestesses possessed significant wealth and social status, but due to the patriarchal nature of society at the time, they held little agency over their actions. Mamia's tomb (Source 1) and the dedicatory statue of Eumachia (Source 4) contributed to the inquiry by demonstrating the social power and popularity of priestesses. Most of the sources, however, found that the social power of these women, whilst significant, was controlled or at least influenced by the men in their families. An extract from Longfellow in Source 2 informed the investigation by addressing the fact that the role of priestess brought women more social influence than any other female societal role at the time. However, priestesses were few and far between, and came from wealthy families who already held great prestige. It can be concluded that the power held by priestesses was reduced by their subservience to the men in their families. Pompeian priestesses in the 1st century CE held a high degree of social prestige, which was significant at the time, but due to the exclusivity of the role as well as the men in their families likely making the decisions, their power in society was limited.

Practices to strengthen

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

- decisions for the Analysing and Evaluating criteria are made based on the evidence in the 4–6 sources selected

- for the Evaluating criterion, corroboration is linked to the judgments being made about the usefulness and reliability of evidence from sources

- at least one primary source is used to meet the descriptors in the upper performance levels for Devising and conducting, Analysing and Evaluating criteria.

Additional advice

- The excerpt of the source being analysed and evaluated should be provided for authentication purposes. This does not contribute to the word limit, as outlined in the task conditions (Syllabus section 4.13.2).

Internal assessment 3 (IA3)

Investigation — historical essay based on research (25%)

This assessment requires students to research a historical topic through the collection, analysis and synthesis of primary and secondary sources. A historical essay based on research uses investigative practices and research to assess a range of cognitions in a particular context. Investigative practices and research include locating and using evidence from historical sources and information that goes beyond what has been provided to the student in class. Responses are completed individually, under process writing conditions, over a number of hours.

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	13
Authentication	3
Authenticity	3
Item construction	3
Scope and scale	0

*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 196.

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- provided a task context that used unit descriptions to link the task to the unit and topic being studied

- provided a question or statement that allowed students to generate their own key inquiry question and hypothesis

- included all the assessment specifications for a historical essay based on research (Syllabus section 5.15.1).

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- remove any scaffolding not related to the processes and presentation of the task
- are carefully proofread before submission.

Accessibility

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

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment

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

*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 196.

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- used syllabus language for the specifications of the task
- included all syllabus specifications for the task to ensure student accessibility.

Practices to strengthen

There were no significant issues identified for improvement.

Assessment decisions

Reliability

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

Agreement trends between provisional and confirmed marks

Criterion number	Criterion name	Percentage agreement with provisional	Percentage less than provisional	Percentage greater than provisional	Percentage both less and greater than provisional
1	Comprehending	96.95%	1.02%	2.03%	0%
2	Devising and conducting	87.82%	8.63%	1.02%	2.54%
3	Analysing	85.79%	12.18%	1.52%	0.51%
4	Synthesising	86.8%	10.15%	2.54%	0.51%
5	Evaluating	81.73%	14.21%	3.05%	1.02%
6	Creating and communicating	90.86%	6.09%	2.54%	0.51%

Effective practices

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

- decisions were made about the match of evidence to the Comprehending criterion across all performance levels

- for the Devising and conducting criterion, responses included

    - a clearly identifiable key inquiry question that was addressed across the entire response

    - a selection of evidence from primary and secondary sources that demonstrated application of the key inquiry question and hypothesis

- for the Synthesising criterion

    - information was combined to justify insightful decisions at the upper performance level rather than forming reasonable decisions at the mid performance level. Insightful decisions demonstrated an understanding of the relationship between the evidence and the historical argument that was being developed

    - information was combined to support a sophisticated historical argument. A sophisticated historical argument demonstrated intellectual complexity and was sustained throughout the response. A historical argument should have been established in the introduction with a hypothesis developed throughout the body paragraphs and summed up in the conclusion. A basic historical argument addressed the key inquiry question but was not as well developed or sustained.

Samples of effective practices

The following excerpts demonstrate evidence of:

- a nuanced key inquiry question about the usefulness of coins for understanding the nature of Caesar's power during the civil war period. The key inquiry question in Excerpt 1 provides specificity and is of a suitable scope and scale for the conditions of the task

- the use of primary and secondary sources which is required in responses at the upper performance level for the Devising and conducting, Analysing, Synthesising and Evaluating criteria. Excerpt 2, which forms part of the body of the essay, refers to evidence from primary

sources (e.g. Caesar's own work and coins), as well as evidence from secondary sources focused on coinage during the time of Caesar and the civil war

- the synthesis of information from historical sources to support a sophisticated historical argument. Excerpt 1, in the introduction, clearly contextualises the focus of the response with a hypothesis that directly answers the key inquiry question and an outline of the insightful decisions which will be explored in the body paragraphs. Excerpt 2 provides evidence of one of the main decisions justified to support the historical argument identified in Excerpt 1, i.e. that Caesar used coins to project a particular image about his connection to religion, an important element of life in ancient Rome. It combines evidence from primary and secondary sources in support of the historical argument

- discerning judgments about the usefulness and reliability of evidence from sources. These judgments in Excerpt 2 are carefully crafted to weigh up the relative strengths, weaknesses, and limitations of the sources in relation to the historical argument.

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

Excerpt 1

How useful is Caesar's coinage in understanding the nature of his power during the Civil War period?

Gaius Julius Caesar, born 100BC and assassinated 44BC changed the course of Roman history. As one of ancient Rome's most powerful politicians his involvement in the ignition of the Civil Wars that began in 48 BC ultimately led to the breakdown of the Roman Republic (Toynbee, n.d.). A general's imperium granted him power to issue coins (Carson, 1971), and Caesar's career is traceable through the coins he issued over the course of the Civil War until his assassination. Throughout this period, Caesar appealed to the Roman people in an almost populist manner, which angered the elite. He calculatingly exploited coinage as a widely distributed vector for first rate propaganda – an opportunity to broadcast messages about his power which Caesar could be sure every Roman, even the illiterate, would see (Grant, 1952). The *populus Romanus* could quite literally carry Caesar around in their pockets. The result stands today as a liberal body of archaeological evidence for historical study, opening a window into Caesar's changing policy, self-representation, and cultural values over time (Stewart, 2018). Thus, given that Caesar's coinage served as a form of propaganda, it is highly useful in revealing how he consolidated his power during the Civil War period by fostering public favour. Using coins, Caesar promoted his military success, which he knew would strengthen his *Dignitas*. He also used coinage to privilege his connections to Roman religion in the public eye. And, most importantly, Caesar manipulated numismatic convention to solidify his quasi-monarchical position in the peoples' perception.

> Caesar also used coinage to strengthen his connection to Roman religion in the public eye. In a pertinent excerpt from his Civil War commentaries, Caesar expresses his frustration with the senate's disregard to Roman religion during this time, complaining that "Neither divine nor human rights were regarded" (Caesar, Comentarii De Bello Civile, 1.6, trans. 1856). Caesar himself composed this personal commentary on the Civil War conflict to promote the decency of his case to the Roman people. Though obvious bias taints the historical accuracy of his account, it is reliable as first-hand insight into Caesar's desire to appear pious in comparison to the senate's religious wrongdoings. Consequently, it is highly useful in interpreting Caesar's motives informing the religious symbolism appearing on his coinage. The obverse of a denarius (Figure 3) issued by Caesar in the first and largest issue of the Civil War promotes his priestly position, featuring pontifical emblems: A cullulus (cup),
>
> **Excerpt 2**
>
> aspergillum (sprinkler), axe, and apex (*RRC 443/1*, n.d.). Historian Roberta Stewart (2018) perceptively states that these symbols are intended to be read left to right as a narrative frieze for sacrifice – each item representing a stage in priestly ritual. Hence, the coin is symbolically a signifier of Caesar's priesthood at the head of Roman religion: *pontifex maximus*. Given Caesar's agenda in pursuit of praise from the masses, the source cannot reliably disclose the extent of Caesar's true religious contribution to any extent. However, belonging to the very first issue of the Civil Wars, the historical context of the coin's mint provides useful evidence that Caesar deemed it of foremost importance to disseminate knowledge of his dedication to ritual at this specific time: genuine or not. Likewise, this coin is unique in that it belongs to the largest issue of the Civil War period. It is consequently highly useful in signifying Caesar's desire to promote his religious piety to as many Romans as possible as a means of growing his support base. Such conclusions surrounding Caesar's motives of course align with his critique of the senate in *De Bello Civile*.

Practices to strengthen

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

- for the Devising and conducting, Analysing, Synthesising and Evaluating criteria, at least one primary source is used to meet the descriptors in the upper performance levels

- for the Evaluating criterion

  - judgments about both the reliability and usefulness of evidence from sources are made

  - judgments are distinguished from statements to meet the first descriptor in the upper and mid performance levels.

Additional advice

- It is recommended that the key inquiry question be included at the top of the response.

- Sub-questions are not required in the IA3.

External assessment

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

Examination — Short responses to historical sources (25%)

Assessment design

The assessment instrument was designed using the specifications, conditions and assessment objectives described in the summative external assessment section of the syllabus. The examination consisted of one paper (50 marks).

The examination assessed subject matter from Unit 4: People, power and authority, with a focus on Topic 12: Augustus.

The assessment required students to respond to four short response items requiring paragraph responses using evidence from the historical sources provided in the stimulus book.

The stimulus included excerpts from a range of ancient and modern sources. Context statements were supplied for each source.

The AS assessment instrument was the same as the external assessment for General syllabuses.

Assessment decisions

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

Effective practices

Overall, students responded well to the:

- Analysing criterion when evidence was carefully selected and used to support explanations

- Evaluating criterion when judgments about reliability weighed up the strengths, weaknesses and/or limitations of the evidence in the sources based on the evidence provided

- Evaluating criterion when judgments about usefulness were clearly signposted and were supported by quotes or paraphrased evidence from the sources

- Synthesising criterion when the evidence in all four sources was used to develop the historical argument.

Samples of effective practices

Short response

Question 2a required students to analyse the evidence in Source 3 to explain how Augustus is portrayed by Suetonius.

Effective student responses:

- provided a discerning explanation of the way Augustus is portrayed by Suetonius, using well-chosen evidence from the source for the Analysing criterion.

This excerpt has been included:

- to show an example of a discerning explanation that used well-chosen evidence. The excerpt was discriminating but considered all the evidence presented in the source. The response identifies that Suetonius portrayed Augustus as an esteemed, capable, and just leader, as well as humble and fair. The evidence is well-chosen as it supports the point being made in the response. There is also a clear explanation about how the evidence supports the point being made. This is signposted in the excerpt by words such as, 'suggesting' and 'implying'.

> Suetonius (Source 3) conveys a highly ~~largely~~ favourable perspective of Augustus that portrays him as quite an esteemed, capable, and just leader of the Roman state. He firstly portrays Augustus as a man of great military prowess as he "conquered [much of Hispania and Gaul" and was able to pacify ~~pacified~~ "tribes who gave trouble", suggesting that Augustus established strong leadership through his military victory (Source 3). Yet, Suetonius also conveys Augustus as being humble and fair ~~who did not~~ as he did not brutally punish "[those] who surrendered" and "never wantonly invaded any country", implying that he was a man of honour and mercy who did not desire to rule as a tyrant (Source 3). Finally, evidence from Suetonius suggests that he portrayed Augustus as a bringer of peace to Rome who encouraged "barbarian chieftains" to "faithfully keep the peace", and was largely embodied by virtues of "courage and clemency" (Source 3). Therefore, Suetonius' perspective of Augustus sheds light on the leader as a man of virtue, honour and humble success.

Question 2b required students to evaluate the reliability of Suetonius for understanding Augustus's leadership of the empire.

Effective student responses:

- explained a discerning judgment about reliability, referring to relevant evidence from the source for the Evaluating criterion.

This excerpt has been included:

- to demonstrate the way in which the strengths, implications and/or limitations of the source have been assessed to develop a discerning judgment about the reliability of Suetonius for understanding Augustus's leadership of the empire. The judgment that Suetonius is partially reliable is supported by evidence from the source, including the excerpt and context statement.

> Suetonius (Source 3) proves somewhat reliable in understanding Augustus' leadership of the empire as despite his credentials, his perspective is quite subjective. As Suetonius is the esteemed author of 'The Twelve Caesars' and writes extensively on the Roman emperors (including Augustus), he would have been well-researched for his biography, increasing his credibility, (Source 3). However, although he held both military and imperial administration posts, he provides an intentionally favourable view idealising Augustus as a model leader who was not only a successful military victor, but a leader of both "courage" and "clemency" (Source 3). As he disproportionately praises Augustus' achievements compared to his flaws, Suetonius' reliability is decreased significantly when understanding the full scope of Augustus' leadership of the Roman empire (Source 3).

Question 4 required students to synthesise evidence from Sources 6–9 in the stimulus to develop a historical argument about the extent to which the sources suggest self-promotion was the key to Augustus's power. They also had to include an explanation about how evidence from these sources corroborates a point being made in their argument.

Effective student responses:

- presented a sophisticated historical argument that responded directly to the question

- skilfully combined evidence from all four sources to develop the historical argument

- demonstrated appropriate use of relevant terms, placed in historical context

- demonstrated an informed understanding of concepts associated with Augustus's power

- explained how evidence from two sources corroborated a point being made in the argument

- organised paragraph/s purposefully to succinctly and fluently convey ideas related to the question, acknowledging sources used.

These excerpts have been included to:

- demonstrate the way in which evidence from the four sources can be used to develop a sophisticated historical argument that directly responds to the question. Excerpts 1 and 2 provide examples of the introductory sentence of the historical argument. Both responses clearly demonstrate an understanding of the four sources and their relationship to the question, suggesting that self-promotion was important for Augustus, but that other factors also played a role in enabling him to gain power. Although not included, the arguments were sustained and supported by evidence making them sophisticated.

Excerpt 1

While it can be seen that Augustus did indulge in self-promotion in order to increase his power, it is also evident that external forces, specifically the Roman Senate and the state of Rome at the time of Augustus' reign, assisted Augustus in consolidating his power.

Excerpt 2

To a significant extent, ~~the~~ sources 6, 7, 8 and 9 together suggest that while self-promotion was a key element to solidifying Augustus' power, it was also his genuine actions and reforms that increased his power and support with the Roman people as he introduced programs/reforms in the interests of the Roman people.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that when preparing students for external assessment, teachers consider:

- modelling the *explain* cognition. An explanation requires students to not only include the relevant evidence, but to explain or unpack how the evidence supports the assertion that has been made

- providing examples of questions for the Evaluating criterion that require students to respond using the evidence in, or what can be reasonably inferred from, the source (including the context statement)

- emphasising that judgments about the reliability and usefulness of evidence from sources need to be made in relation to the question. Responses cannot be pre-prepared. A judgment is discerning when it is linked to the statement in question and evidence is well-chosen when it supports the judgment being made.

Additional advice

- It is recommended that teachers prepare students to use their planning time effectively. This time could be used to

  – unpack precisely what each question is asking

  – develop an understanding of the stimulus

  – consider the relationship between the evidence in the sources and the questions being asked

  – determine the value of each question and how much detail might be required (guided by the line space provided)

  – consider the way in which time could be divided to ensure all questions are addressed in full.

Senior External Examination

The Ancient History Senior External Examination (SEE) is a standalone examination offered to eligible Year 12 students and adult learners. It contributes 100% to a student's final subject result.

Assessment design

The assessment was designed using the specifications, conditions and assessment objectives described in the summative external assessment section of the Ancient History Senior External Examination syllabus.

The SEE consisted of two assessments:

- SEE 1 contributed 50% of the marks
- SEE 2 contributed 50% of the marks.

Note: The SEE information should be read in conjunction with the rest of the subject report.

Number of students who completed the Ancient History Senior External Examination: 7.

There were insufficient student enrolments in this subject to provide useful analytics.

Assessment decisions

Effective practices

Overall, students responded well to:

- short response questions in SEE 1 Section 1 and SEE 2 Paper 1
- questions where they were required to develop a nuanced key inquiry question and relevant sub-questions in SEE 1 Section 1 and SEE 2 Paper 1
- questions that required students to consider the range of information in the sources, to support the development of a historical argument
- the organisation of ideas in both SEE 1 Section 1 and 2 and SEE 2 Paper 1.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that when preparing students for the Senior External Examination, teachers consider:

- the difference between an explanation and a description or statement
- evaluation of the reliability and usefulness of sources within the essay in SEE 1 Section 2
- exam preparation strategies, including time management, particularly for the SEE 1 paper
- the importance of the assessment objectives for teaching and learning when preparing students to respond to unseen questions in a skills-based examination
- the resources available on the QCAA Portal for the Ancient History SEE syllabus. The IA1 high-level annotated sample response to help prepare students for SEE 1, Section 2. The IA2 and IA3 sample responses help to prepare students for SEE 1, Section 1 and SEE 2, Paper 1. The 2020, 2021 and 2022 papers also support students to prepare for SEE 1, Section 1 and SEE 2, Paper 2.