

Subject report: Endorsement

Ancient History — 2026 cohort

This resource identifies strengths and opportunities to improve the development and submission of internal assessment instruments for Ancient History (General subject and alternative sequence (AS)). Refer to *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v7.0*, [Section 9.5](#).

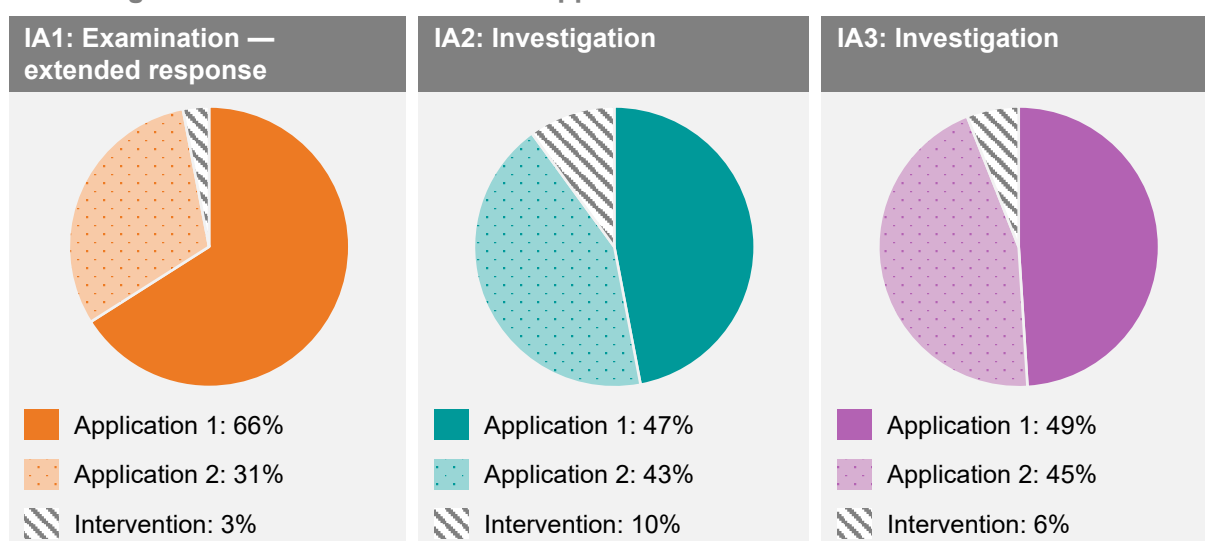
Summary of endorsement for the 2026 cohort

Number of internal assessment (IA) instruments submitted for endorsement

IA1	IA2	IA3
211	210	213

Note: Number of instruments may vary due to changes in schools offering the subject after the endorsement process started.

Percentage of instruments endorsed at Applications 1 and 2



Note: Percentages have been rounded to whole numbers and, therefore, may not add up to 100%.

Validity: Reasons for non-endorsement at Application 1 by assessment priority

IA1	IA2	IA3
Alignment: 63	Alignment: 100	Alignment: 101
Authentication: 0	Authentication: 53	Authentication: 5
Authenticity: 3	Authenticity: 8	Authenticity: 13
Item construction: 4	Item construction: 14	Item construction: 7
Scope and scale: 3	Scope and scale: 0	Scope and scale: 0

Accessibility: Reasons for non-endorsement at Application 1 by assessment priority

IA1	IA2	IA3
Bias avoidance: 1	Bias avoidance: 0	Bias avoidance: 0
Language: 1	Language: 2	Language: 3
Layout: 13	Layout: 1	Layout: 1
Transparency: 5	Transparency: 2	Transparency: 1

Note: A priority may be identified more than once in the endorsement decision for an assessment instrument.

Advice for assessment design

Endorsement is the quality assurance process based on the attributes of validity and accessibility. The following advice is based on the endorsement process for the 2026 completion year. In acknowledging effective practices and areas for refinement, it offers schools timely and evidence-based guidance to further develop valid and accessible assessment.

■ IA1: Examination — extended response (25%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- instructed students to create an essay in response to historical sources that
 - included all its features and/or
 - listed the features of an IA1 as outlined in the additional subject-specific information in the syllabus and AS resource (**alignment**)
- provided context statements for each source in the form of a brief description that included, e.g. information about the author, time of production and any general details about the circumstances in which the evidence from a source was produced. Context statements that included appropriate details about the source provided students with the opportunity to analyse and evaluate evidence from historical sources across the range of performance levels in the instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG) (**alignment**)
- included a clear and consistent layout for the seen and unseen sources, e.g. used the same font and size for all information, provided the context statement in the same place for each source (above or below the source) (**layout**)
- provided a range of sources that allowed for the development of a historical argument in response to the unseen question, e.g. all sources were directly relevant to the unseen question rather than being broadly about the topic (**item construction**).

Practices to strengthen

Schools can improve the validity and accessibility of assessment instruments by:

- ensuring that context statements are free from analysis and evaluation as this prevents students from demonstrating these descriptors independently, e.g. explaining the motive of the author or judging the reliability of a historian in a context statement prevents students from demonstrating their own analysis and evaluation (**authenticity**)
- including an unseen question that provides opportunity for the development of a historical argument, e.g. prompts a historical argument rather than directing students to simply evaluate sources or discuss the topic (**item construction**)
- adhering to syllabus specifications and response requirements, e.g. a word length is not required by the syllabus and should not appear on the task (**alignment**)
- ensuring the unseen question and supporting stimulus items are narrow enough for students to create an essay that includes a historical argument, e.g. a question and/or stimulus items that cover too many aspects of a topic may lead to a descriptive response rather than the creation of a historical argument (**scope and scale**).

■ IA2: Investigation (25%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- provided a task description that allowed students to devise their own key inquiry question rather than directing students to investigate a highly specific aspect of the topic. This provided opportunity for students to address the first descriptor of Devising and Conducting independently (**authenticity**)
- provided clear instructions in the task description that were not repeated or rephrased in the scaffolding (**transparency**).

Practices to strengthen

Schools can improve the validity and accessibility of assessment instruments by:

- ensuring that, where the features of the assessment technique are included, these align with the features in the additional subject-specific information in the syllabus and AS resource (p. 11), e.g.
 - evidence selected from 4–6 historical sources, including ancient and modern, that have not been studied or supplied in class
 - the required inclusions for the interrogation of evidence and critical summary (**alignment**)
- aligning tasks with syllabus specifications, e.g. IA2 does not include a rationale (**alignment**).

■ IA3: Investigation (25%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- provided students with the opportunity to develop their own key inquiry question. Where direction around the topic choices is too specific, students cannot demonstrate all descriptors of Devising and Conducting independently (**authenticity**)
- included checkpoints that aligned with syllabus specifications and response requirements, e.g. did not require sub-questions as these are not a feature of IA3 (**alignment**)
- included relevant authentication strategies (**authentication**).

Practices to strengthen

Schools can improve the validity and accessibility of assessment instruments by:

- ensuring that, where the chosen IA3 topic overlaps with the external assessment topic, the task description includes reference to the first syllabus specification (General syllabus, p. 36; AS resource, p. 37), i.e. students cannot focus their research on the same personality the school has selected for the external assessment topic (**alignment**)
- instructing students to create a historical essay based on research that
 - includes all its features and/or
 - lists the features of an IA3 as they appear in the additional subject-specific information in the syllabus or AS resource (p. 11) (**alignment**).

Additional advice

- If an instrument is not endorsed at Application 1, schools should consult with the lead endorser before submitting the revised instrument at Application 2. These consultations are supportive and provide feedback to school communities to strengthen the endorsement process.
- When duplicating the previous year's assessment task in the Endorsement application (app), ensure all the previous year's information is revised during editing, e.g.
 - checkpoint dates
 - the topic noted in the conditions, context *and* task sections.
- Schools delivering the AS should refer to the additional advice in each Endorsement section of the *Ancient History Subject report: 2025 cohort* when developing assessments for AS Unit 1 IA1, AS Unit 1 IA2 and AS Unit 2 IA3. This report includes information about the key differences between the 2019 AS and 2025 AS resource that are relevant to instruments developed from Unit 1 and Unit 2 for use in odd years.



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