

Subject report: Endorsement

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies — 2026 cohort

This resource identifies strengths and opportunities to improve the development and submission of internal assessment instruments for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies (General subject). Refer to *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v7.0*, [Section 9.5](#).

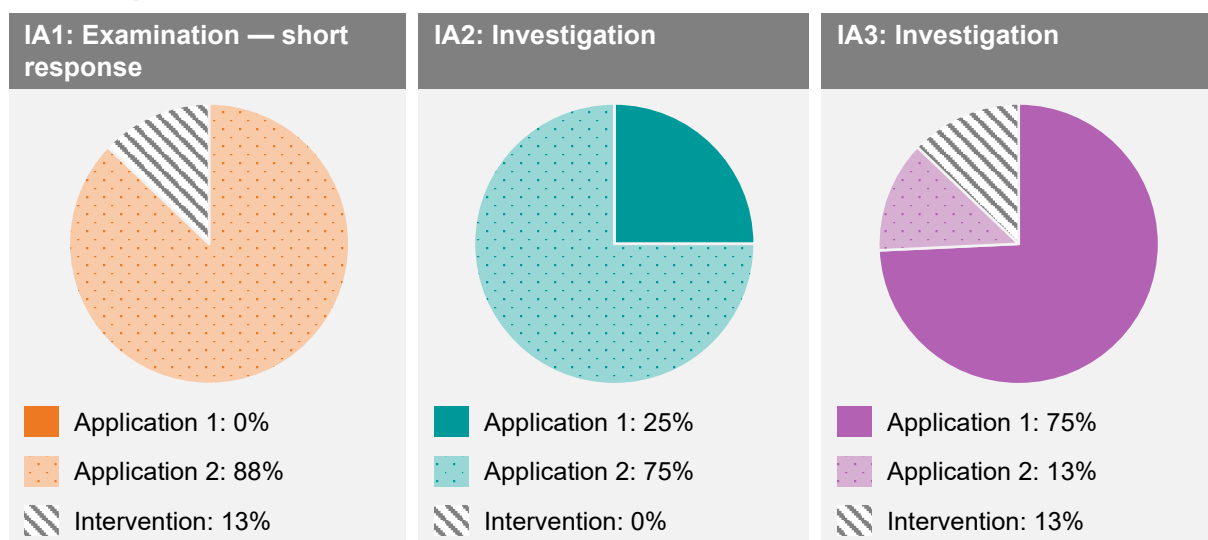
Summary of endorsement for the 2026 cohort

Number of internal assessment (IA) instruments submitted for endorsement

IA1	IA2	IA3
8	8	8

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: 6	Alignment: 6	Alignment: 1
Authentication: 0	Authentication: 0	Authentication: 0
Authenticity: 1	Authenticity: 1	Authenticity: 0
Item construction: 0	Item construction: 0	Item construction: 0
Scope and scale: 1	Scope and scale: 0	Scope and scale: 0

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

IA1	IA2	IA3
Bias avoidance: 3	Bias avoidance: 0	Bias avoidance: 0
Language: 4	Language: 1	Language: 0
Layout: 0	Layout: 0	Layout: 0
Transparency: 8	Transparency: 1	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 — short response (25%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- aligned all components of the task to the assessment objectives and assessment specifications from the 2025 syllabus, e.g. instructions reflected the requirement to analyse viewpoints and perspectives (**alignment**)
- included a range of subject matter in the questions and stimulus that related to responses, contributions and rights and freedoms. This enabled distinct short response questions without a repetition in focus (**authenticity**)
- ensured appropriate scope and scale across the short response questions, with each question clearly outlining what was required in regard to assessment objectives and content. This allowed students opportunity to demonstrate all performance levels in the instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG) (**scope and scale**)
- used neutral context statements that presented clear information about relevant publishing details and background. While not required, neutral context statements allow students to demonstrate the interpretation of sources and analysis of viewpoints and perspectives (**bias avoidance**).

Practices to strengthen

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

- ensuring questions and stimulus used to assess the Interpreting and Analysing criterion allow students to identify and analyse several viewpoints and perspectives that formed and informed responses and contributions. The stimulus selected must provide students with opportunities to do this (**alignment**)
- ensuring questions that assess the Evaluating assessment objective clearly align with the ISMG, i.e. direct students to formulate a judgment about significance and to include evidence from the sources to support their judgment (**alignment**)
- removing word length limits for each question. Word lengths are not included in the specifications for this instrument (**transparency**)
- ensuring stimulus sources use easy-to-read text and clear images, e.g. using an easy-to-read font size and high-resolution scanned images. This will enable clear access for students, allowing them to meaningfully engage with all sources (**layout**).

■ IA2: Investigation (25%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- directed students to frame a unique context and hypothesis relevant to their investigation. This aligned the task to the syllabus specifications and ensured that students were provided the opportunity to demonstrate the Evaluating and Creating criteria, e.g. to provide a judgment and use the features of an analytical essay (**alignment**)
- used instructions that clearly aligned with the specifications, directing students to demonstrate key components of the ISMG, e.g. including the instruction to interpret information from sources. This instruction aligns with the interpreting assessment objective, the specifications and the requirements of the Interpreting and Analysing criterion (**alignment**)
- specified an appropriate scope and scale in the choice of subject matter. This ensured that the focus and timeframe of the 20th century was used within the task and/or task context statement (**scope and scale**)
- instructed students to write their response in the form of an analytical essay, using recognised referencing conventions. This instruction ensured that students were able to fully demonstrate the requirements of the Creating criterion (**transparency**).

Practices to strengthen

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

- directing students to interpret and analyse a range of viewpoints and perspectives that investigate how land rights have been influenced, addressed and recognised in relation to *cultural interaction*. It is not mandated that students use primary and secondary sources, rather that they interpret and analyse multiple viewpoints and perspectives (**alignment**)
- ensuring that if a context statement is included, it is relevant to the task and allows students to devise a hypothesis. While context statements can provide an entry point to the investigation, they should not provide a specific position or hypothesis that can be used by the student to drive their investigation (**authenticity**).

■ IA3: Investigation (25%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- identified that the focus of the investigation was on the relationship between cultural expression and resilience, as demonstrated in the form of cultural expression selected by the student or specified in the task. This was clearly indicated in the context statement, task description and/or task instructions (**alignment**)
- reflected the shift in language used to describe the role of cultural expression and resilience in the task description and instructions. The terminology in the 2025 syllabus differs from the 2019 syllabus and includes *connectedness, recognising and sustaining, living cultures* and *living cultural practices* (**alignment**)
- directed students to focus on only one form of cultural expression. This direction often appeared in the task description and/or task instructions (**alignment**).

Practices to strengthen

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

- ensuring that the 2025 syllabus is used when designing assessment instruments. This will ensure that the correct specifications and terminology are used, providing instructions that will allow students the opportunity to fully demonstrate the requirements of the ISMG (**transparency**).

Additional advice

- Before submitting an IA1 instrument in the Endorsement application (app), use the Print preview function to ensure enough lines for responses are included and page breaks are suitable. This allows submitters to reflect on how students will experience the instrument layout under examination conditions.
- Across all three IA instruments, ensure specifications are explicitly addressed and reflected in the short response questions, stimulus and task instructions, e.g. for IA1, ensure the number and nature of sources align to the specifications.
- If an instrument is not endorsed at Application 1, consider consulting 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.



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