

# Subject report: Endorsement

## Business — 2026 cohort

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

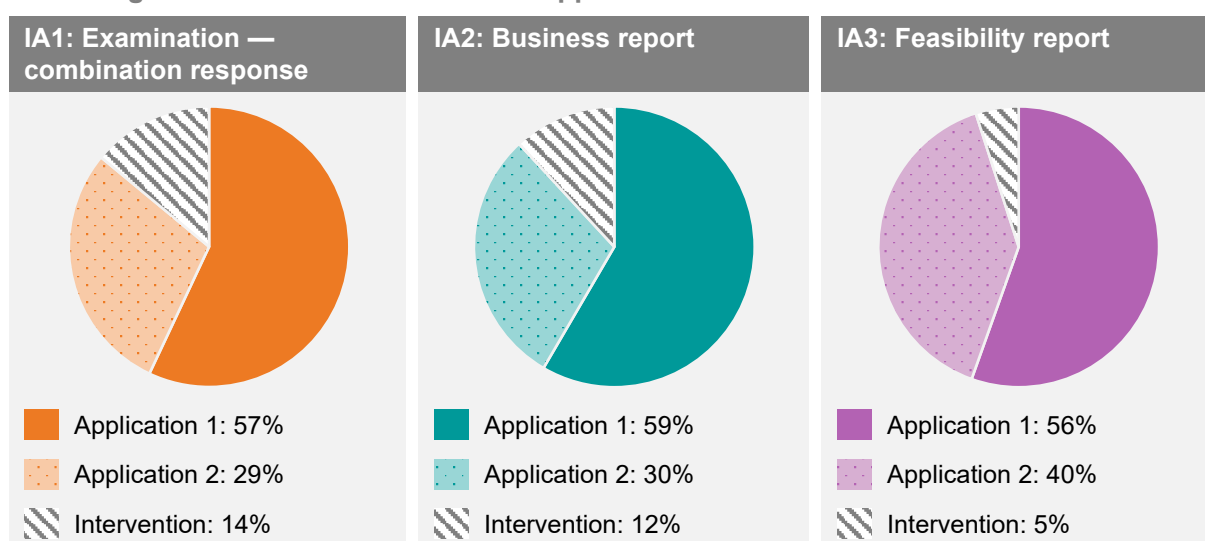
## Summary of endorsement for the 2026 cohort

### Number of internal assessment (IA) instruments submitted for endorsement

IA1	IA2	IA3
266	266	264

**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: 103	Alignment: 98	Alignment: 103
Authentication: 0	Authentication: 2	Authentication: 2
Authenticity: 4	Authenticity: 5	Authenticity: 9
Item construction: 35	Item construction: 29	Item construction: 7
Scope and scale: 29	Scope and scale: 20	Scope and scale: 12

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

IA1	IA2	IA3
Bias avoidance: 2	Bias avoidance: 1	Bias avoidance: 5
Language: 2	Language: 1	Language: 1
Layout: 9	Layout: 1	Layout: 2
Transparency: 15	Transparency: 4	Transparency: 5

**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 — combination response (25%)

### Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- provided one authentic business context that aligned with Unit 3 Topic 1 subject matter (**authenticity**)
- contained questions drawn from across the subject matter and enabled student responses to align with the top performance-level descriptors in the instrument-specific marking guides (ISMGs) (**alignment**)
- included Explain questions that required students to demonstrate explanations of business concepts and strategies, and the use of business terminology and examples (**alignment**)
- featured a range of stimulus materials (e.g. text, graphs, tables, diagrams) accessible to all students with clearly sequenced sources, white space for readability and a reasonable amount of text on each page (**layout**).

### Practices to strengthen

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

- adhering to the 2025 syllabus specifications (p. 31–32), e.g.
  - providing one authentic business context in the maturity stage of the business life cycle
  - requiring the use of one analytical tool, i.e. a SWOT or Power Interest Grid (PIG) (syllabus, p. 24)
  - providing an extended response question that assesses Analyse, Evaluate and Create using the unseen stimulus (**alignment**)
- aligning questions with the performance-level descriptors in the ISMGs, notably for
  - Describing — description of business facts and characteristics and business environment/s that impact on human resources or financing
  - Analysing — selection of data and information using the analytical tool, interpretation of relationship/s and trend/s from the analysis and implications for the business situation
  - Evaluating — use of business criteria to evaluate a business or competitive strategy, a justified decision and insightful recommendation/s for the business situation (**alignment**)
- ensuring questions and stimulus only draw from Unit 3 Topic 1: Competitive markets, e.g.
  - the stimulus package is focused on human resources, financing options and/or modes of entry into another market, not marketing and/or product-related information
  - a breadth of subject matter is included throughout, e.g. if using modes of entering markets for Explain, this should not be the focus of the extended response (**scope and scale**)
- including questions that are clearly worded and use the cognitive verbs applicable to the assessment objective, e.g. in the extended response, for Evaluate, direct students to ‘make a decision’ rather than ‘make judgments’ (**transparency**).

## ■ IA2: Business report (25%)

### Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- provided meaningful, contemporary contexts that allowed for unique student responses, directing students to investigate a specific problem relevant to Unit 3 Topic 2: Strategic development with a marketing or operations focus (**authenticity**)
- directed students to collect data and information from a range of sources, including the supporting evidence of a reference list, and to cite sources using in-text referencing in the body of the response (**item construction**)
- included at least one authentication strategy to guarantee student authorship, e.g. checkpoints at relevant stages, submission of a draft, use of plagiarism-detection software (**authentication**).

### Practices to strengthen

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

- conforming to 2025 syllabus specifications (p. 36) and the characteristics described in the ISMGs (syllabus, pp. 37–39), including for
  - Explaining, e.g. direct students to explain business concepts and strategies relating to marketing or operations for strategic development
  - Analysing, e.g. direct students to
    - select data and information from a range of sources, noting that ‘using primary and secondary research’ has been removed from the specifications
    - use one analytical tool (singular) from the Unit 3 Topic 2 subject matter (syllabus, p. 25)
    - interpret a relationship/s and a trend/s from the analysis
  - Evaluating, e.g. direct students to evaluate a marketing or operational strategy, not one existing and one alternative strategy, to make a decision and propose a recommendation/s (**alignment**)
- aligning the context and task with the subject matter from Unit 3 Topic 2: Strategic development and the assessment specifications, directing students to investigate a marketing or operational problem, not a marketing and operational problem (**scope and scale**)
- providing clear instructions using cues that align with the specifications, objectives and ISMGs, e.g. avoid long contexts that do not align with the task, avoid duplication and contradictory instructions, include task instructions that align with each assessable objective (**transparency**).

## ■ IA3: Feasibility report (25%)

### Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- featured a suitable choice of an authentic business aligned to repositioning in the post-maturity stage in the business life cycle, with appropriately challenging, contemporary contexts for the stage in the course (**authenticity**)
- provided clear instructions about the processes students could use to complete responses, including a clear context statement that did not lead students to a predetermined response (**item construction**)
- featured clearly arranged stimulus material (e.g. text, graphs, tables and diagrams) and labelled sources to ensure readability of data and information (**layout**)
- included at least one authentication strategy to ensure work submitted is the student's own (**authentication**).

### Practices to strengthen

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

- instructing students to address all assessment objectives in a task-specific manner, including for
  - Explaining — explain business concepts and strategies, not processes, relating to repositioning a business
  - Analysing — use one analytical tool to interpret a relationship and a trend, not a pattern, from the analysis
  - Evaluating — use business criteria to evaluate repositioning strategies to make a decision and propose a recommendation/s (**alignment**)
- directing students to use an analytical tool from Unit 4 Topic 1, i.e. Porter's Five Forces or a STEEPLE analysis (syllabus, pp. 28, 40) (**alignment**).
- ensuring stimulus materials
  - provide a sufficient range of authentic data and information relating to the business and its competitors. The data and information should be current to ensure relevance, as a feasibility report is future focused
  - relate to the case study business and its competitors and are based on current market conditions, with up-to-date sources to support the development of the analytical tool
  - align with specifications of up to eight A4 pages (syllabus, p. 40) and are of suitable scope and scale (**alignment**)
- avoiding the inclusion of analytical tools that could lead students to a predetermined response and/or creation of fictionalised sources that do not reflect the current business situation (**scope and scale**)
- using consistent phrasing in instructions, and avoiding repetition or contradiction. Ensure instructions are clear and align with the assessment objectives, specifications and ISMGs (**transparency**).

## Additional advice

- Schools should ensure that all assessment instruments are updated to align with the assessment objectives in the 2025 syllabus, noting that 'processes' has been removed from Explaining and 'patterns' has been removed from Analysing.
- For IA1 and IA3 stimulus, schools should provide an appropriately challenging, authentic context that reflects the appropriate stage in the business life cycle, i.e. for
  - IA1, Unit 3 Topic 1: Competitive markets relates to the maturity stage of the business life cycle. Stimulus must include one authentic business context and include case study material that contains credible data and information aligned with modes of entry, financing and/or human resources
  - IA3, Unit 4 Topic 1: Repositioning a business
    - relates to the post-maturity stage of the business life cycle. The case study should enable students to use an inquiry approach to investigate factors that influence the current repositioning of a business to determine the feasibility of repositioning strategies
    - avoids a fictionalised business as this does not align with syllabus specifications, i.e. authentic business and its competitors
    - provides data and information that enables a student to evaluate repositioning strategies to meet the future-focused purpose of the feasibility report.
- The analytical tools in each topic have changed from the 2019 to 2025 syllabus. Schools should refer to p. 8 of the 2025 syllabus and the subject matter for each topic when preparing assessment instruments to ensure inclusion of the correct analytical tool.



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