

# Subject report: Endorsement

Economics — 2026 cohort

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

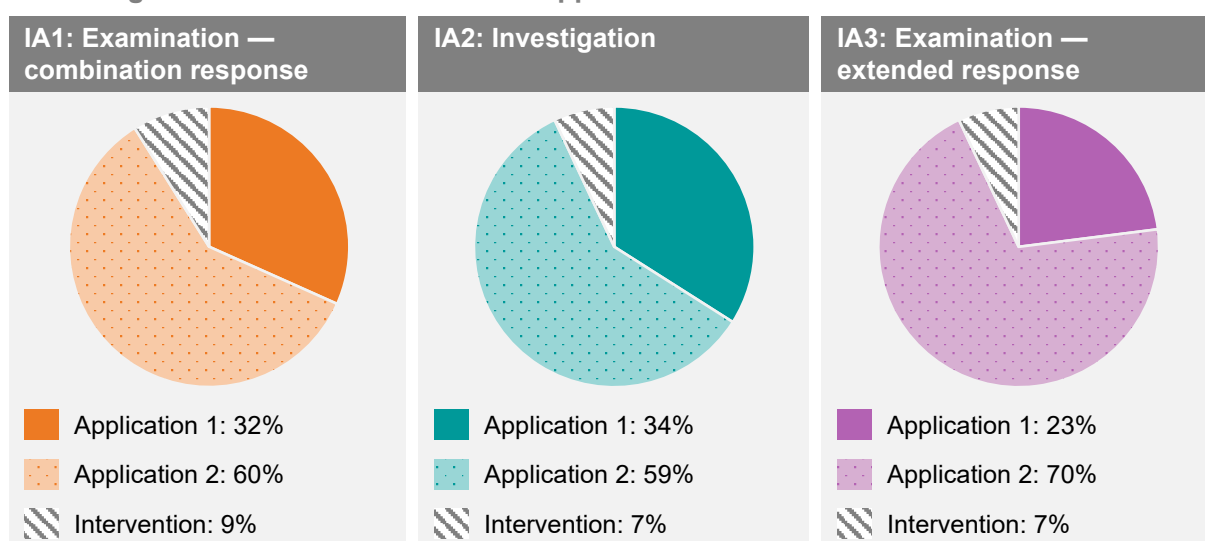
## Summary of endorsement for the 2026 cohort

Number of internal assessment (IA) instruments submitted for endorsement

IA1	IA2	IA3
136	136	136

**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: 80	Alignment: 51	Alignment: 96
Authentication: 0	Authentication: 1	Authentication: 0
Authenticity: 2	Authenticity: 4	Authenticity: 0
Item construction: 17	Item construction: 32	Item construction: 26
Scope and scale: 26	Scope and scale: 31	Scope and scale: 1

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

IA1	IA2	IA3
Bias avoidance: 8	Bias avoidance: 1	Bias avoidance: 1
Language: 7	Language: 3	Language: 1
Layout: 5	Layout: 2	Layout: 22
Transparency: 9	Transparency: 22	Transparency: 15

**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:

- questions appropriately represented the range of subject matter, giving students an opportunity to demonstrate comprehension (**alignment**)
- multiple choice and short response items related to the real world and provided an appropriate level of challenge for the summative stage of the course (**authenticity**)
- short response items included a prompt to provide examples, or gave a clear scenario for students to demonstrate their knowledge to show their
  - comprehension of essential features of exchange rates, international trade patterns and theories, and the balance of payments
  - application of economic concepts, principles and models (**item construction**).

### Practices to strengthen

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

- ensuring instruments assess the subject matter of Topic 1: International trade, and not subject matter from Topic 2: Global economic issues, e.g. trade protection, globalisation, factors that have contributed to globalisation related to multinational corporations and non-government institutions (**alignment**)
- designing the task to focus on one economic issue to be analysed and one economic outcome to be evaluated, to make one decision. The task must clearly state that students need to select one economic criterion when evaluating in the extended response (**alignment**)
- choosing sources so the scope of information in the stimulus does not contain cues and answers that can assist student responses across the examination. If a source contains economic reasoning, economic theory or lists of cause-effects or costs-benefits, remove them from the source or choose an alternative source with a narrower scale of information (**scope and scale**)
- providing stimulus material that
  - fits on one side of an A3 page or two A4 pages
  - consists of a variety of sources including graphs and text
  - adheres to the limit of 100 words of text for each source, to ensure sources are succinct enough for students to engage with during planning time
  - includes a range of evaluation points, so students can choose which connections to make and economic criterion to use when writing the evaluation, allowing for unique responses (**alignment**).

## ■ IA2: Investigation (25%)

### Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when:

- the task gave students choices of countries, industries and/or agreements, where possible, to allow for unique responses and enhance the integrity of the investigation and research component (**authenticity**)
- checkpoints were suitable and did not restrict the timeframe of the assessment to four weeks. Syllabus specifications allow students approximately 15 hours of class time to develop a response (**alignment**)
- task instructions were clear. Any bullet points in the section titled 'The response must' added new information and did not restate the task in different words, e.g. tasks did not include multiple instructions to analyse or evaluate. In addition, the instruction to evaluate included the instruction to make a decision, as these activities are not separate or distinct (**transparency**).

### Practices to strengthen

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

- ensuring scaffolding does not interfere with students' independent selection of reliable sources. Students must also be able to present their own report structure and determine the headings, subheadings and word length in sections so that their report can be validly assessed in the Creating a response criterion (**item construction**)
- managing the breadth of the task so that the scale is achievable. For example, focusing the task on two main industries, commodities or trading relationships allows students to show depth in their analysis and evaluation (**scope and scale**)
- removing curated lists of economic criteria and clearly identifying the number of economic criteria that students should use in the evaluation. Students should use different economic criteria based on the topic they have chosen and their own research (**alignment**)
- designing the task to focus on one economic issue to be analysed and one economic outcome to be evaluated, to make one decision using two or three economic criteria. A recommendation is not required, unless it is the single decision made. Note that the Economics syllabus does not refer to a recommendation (**alignment**).

## IA3: Examination — extended response (25%)

### Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when:

- the task clearly identified one economic issue to be analysed and one economic outcome to be evaluated, to make one decision. Due to the wider variety of analysis and evaluation subject matter in the 2025 syllabus, the focus of the task does not have to be limited to Australia's economic performance (**alignment**)
- stimulus contained data and economic information on federal budget stances to align with the assessment objectives, e.g. federal budget outcome graphs and budget analysis text sources. Stimulus may include monetary policy references, as this provides information about the economic environment, but monetary policy is not the focus of the task (**alignment**)
- stimulus contained a variety of sources (e.g. graphs, media commentary, cartoons) to elicit both analysis and evaluation, and to allow for unique responses. This provided opportunity for students to choose their own criteria from the sources, and to synthesise relevant economic ideas and perspectives that were drawn from their own analysis (**alignment**)
- the scope and scale of the task was managed to ensure students could complete the task within the assessment conditions. This included specifying a relevant timeframe for the analysis, e.g. specific years or a time period such as the last three years (**scope and scale**).

### Practices to strengthen

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

- providing seen stimulus that covers six single-sided A4 pages or three single-sided A3 pages, and unseen stimulus that covers two single-sided A4 pages or one single-sided A3 page. This aligns with the stimulus specifications and supports students to develop unique responses using sources in a variety of ways. Too little stimulus can limit opportunities for students to achieve across the upper performance levels of the instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG) (**alignment**)
- ensuring the unseen stimulus contains
  - information that is critical to the task so students cannot predict the focus of the unseen question or write preprepared responses
  - a variety of succinct sources, including both graphs and text-based sources, so students can engage with them during planning time (**alignment**)
- ensuring the seen and unseen stimulus does not provide leading cues or economic reasoning that scaffold students to a predetermined response. For example, avoid sources that explain economic theory, flowcharts of economic cause and effects, chains of reasoning and lists of costs or benefits (**item construction**)
- providing stimulus that is legible, clear, relevant and accessible to students, with minimal distractors. Consecutive numbering for the seen and unseen stimulus encourages students to use unseen sources in their responses. This is critical, as the ISMG requires data and information from both seen and unseen sources (**layout**).

## Additional advice

- It is important that assessment tasks focus on authentic, contemporary, real-world economic issues to engage students. This matches the overview of each unit in the Economics syllabus.
- Students should know how to acknowledge data that is outside a typical pattern due to an external shock, e.g. periods affected by a pandemic or supply chain disruptions resulting from geopolitical tensions.
- Consider asking a trusted colleague in your community of practice to write a sample answer to any extended response questions using the proposed stimulus. This will assist in identifying if the proposed stimulus and question will support students to provide responses that match the top performance-level descriptors in the ISMG.
- 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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