

# Modern History subject report

2022 cohort

February 2023



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Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority  
PO Box 307 Spring Hill QLD 4004 Australia

Phone: (07) 3864 0299

Email: [office@qcaa.qld.edu.au](mailto:office@qcaa.qld.edu.au)

Website: [www.qcaa.qld.edu.au](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au)

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# Introduction

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Throughout 2022, schools and the QCAA worked hard to further consolidate the new Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) system. The familiar challenges of flood disruption and pandemic restrictions had to be managed, but the system continues 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 make strategic improvements. The subject reports are a good example of what is now 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 designing and marking external assessment. It also gives readers information about:

- applying syllabus objectives in the design and marking of internal and 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 of best practice.

Schools are encouraged to reflect on the effective practices identified for each assessment, heed the recommendations for strengthening assessment design and explore the actual student work samples where provided.

## Audience and use

This report should be read by school leaders, subject leaders and teachers to:

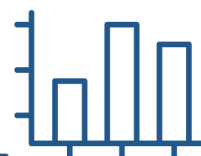
- inform teaching and learning and assessment preparation
- assist in assessment design practice
- assist in making assessment decisions
- help prepare students for external assessment.

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: 323.

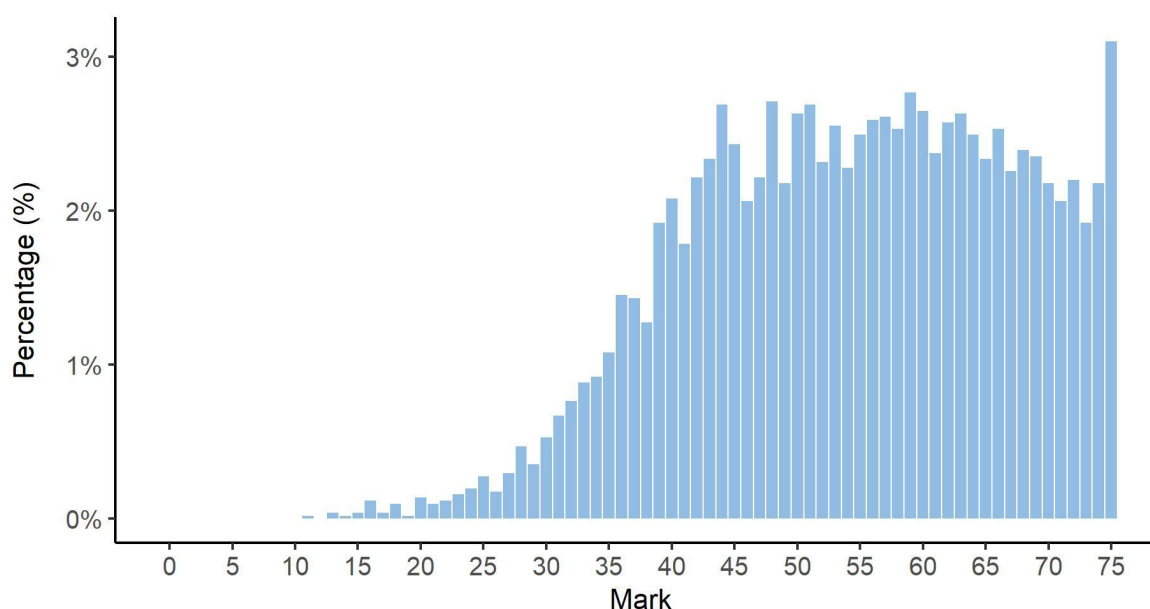
Completion of units	Unit 1	Unit 2	Units 3 and 4
Number of students completed	5820	5573	5056

## Units 1 and 2 results

Number of students	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Unit 1	5336	484
Unit 2	5215	358

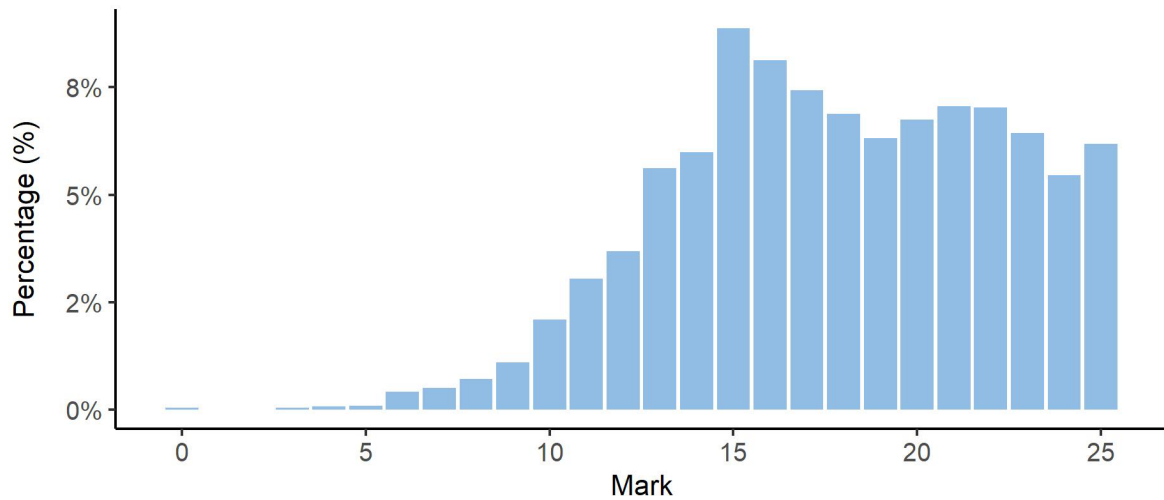
## Units 3 and 4 internal assessment (IA) results

### Total marks for IA

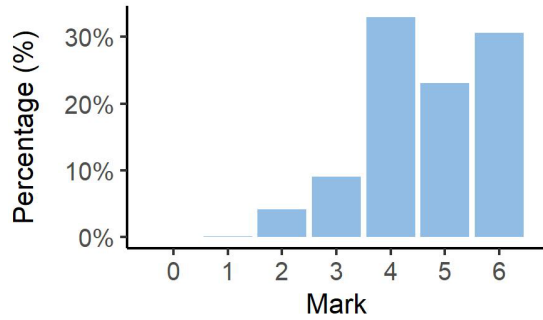


## IA1 marks

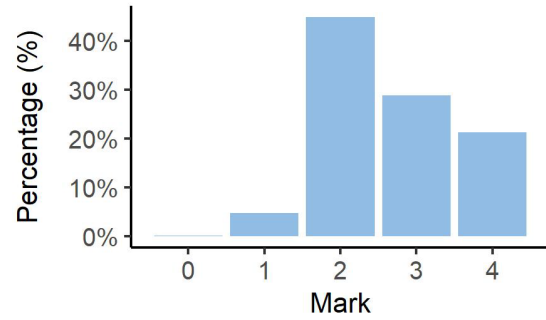
### IA1 total



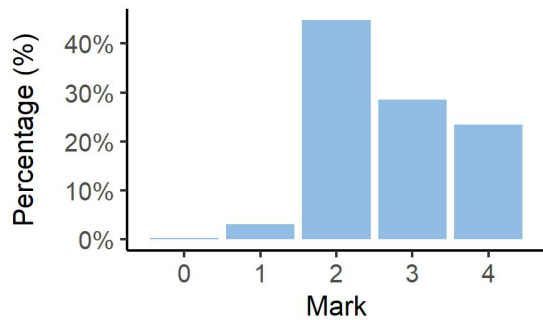
### IA1 Criterion: Comprehending



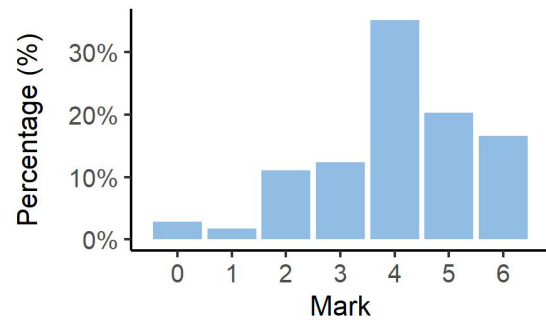
### IA1 Criterion: Analysing



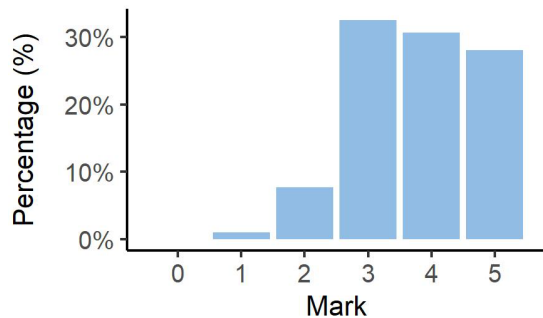
### IA1 Criterion: Synthesising



### IA1 Criterion: Evaluating

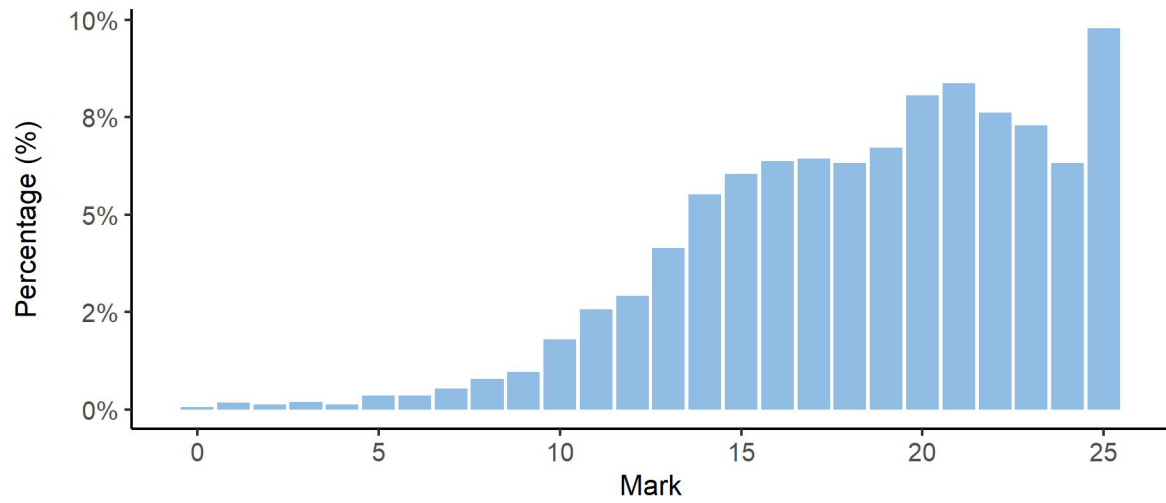


### IA1 Criterion: Creating and communicating

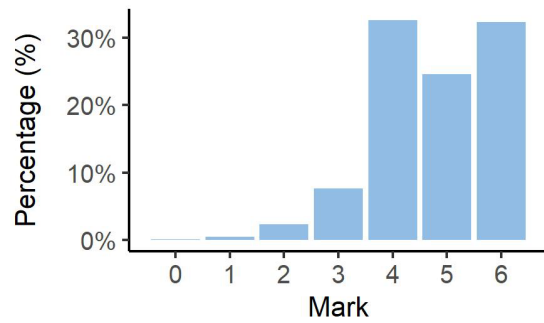


## IA2 marks

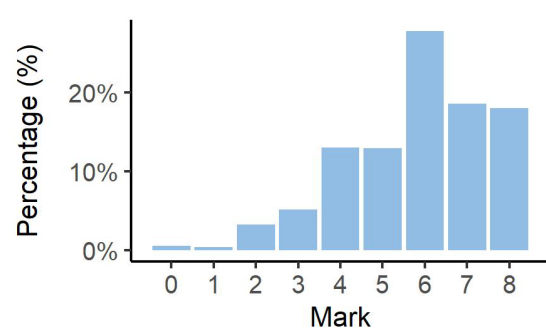
### IA2 total



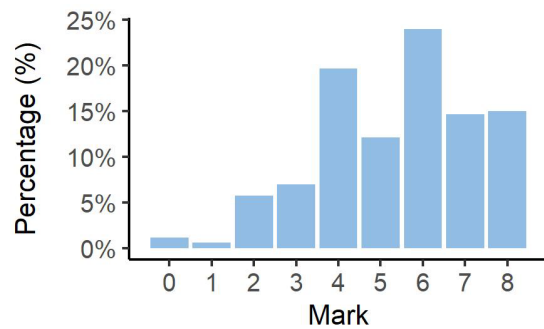
### IA2 Criterion: Devising and conducting



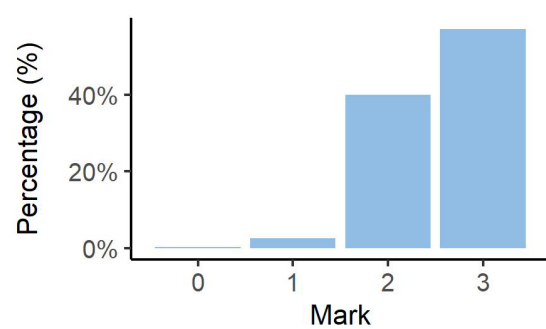
### IA2 Criterion: Analysing



### IA2 Criterion: Evaluating

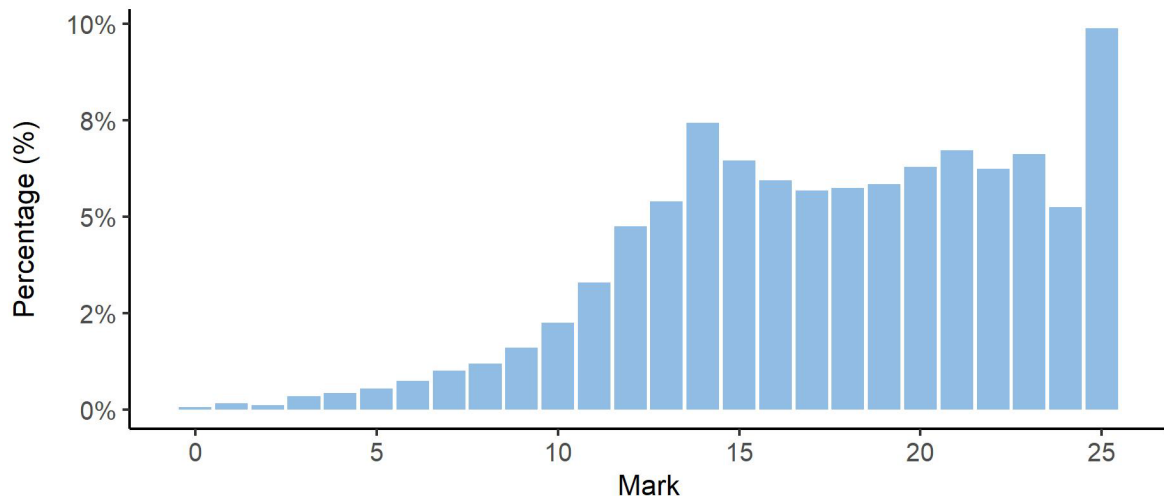


### IA2 Criterion: Creating and communicating

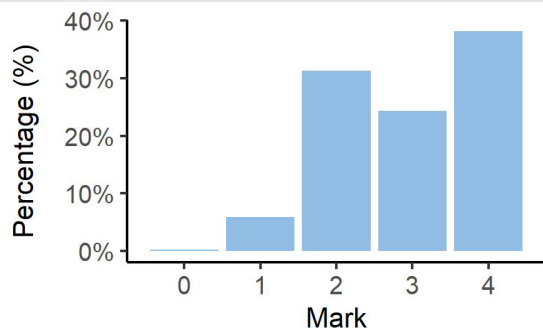


## IA3 marks

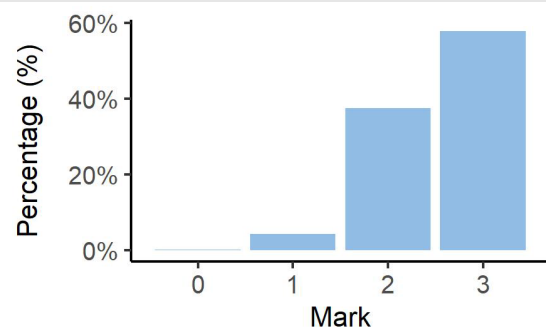
### IA3 total



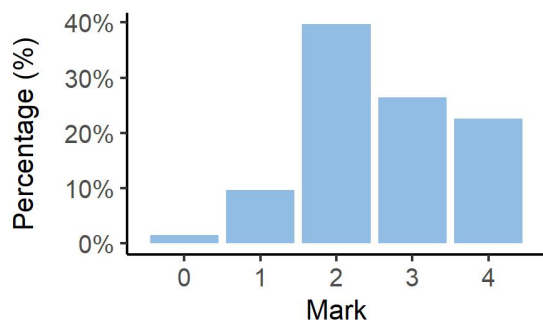
### IA3 Criterion: Comprehending



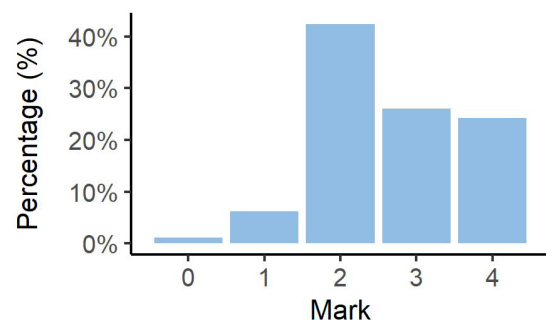
### IA3 Criterion: Devising and conducting



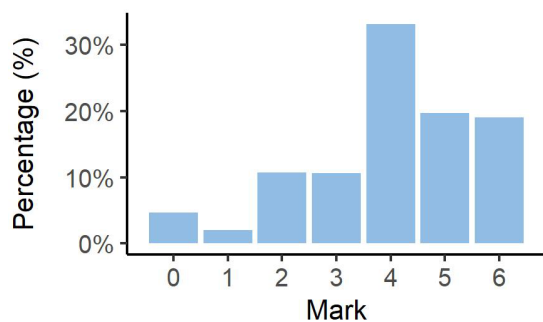
### IA3 Criterion: Analysing



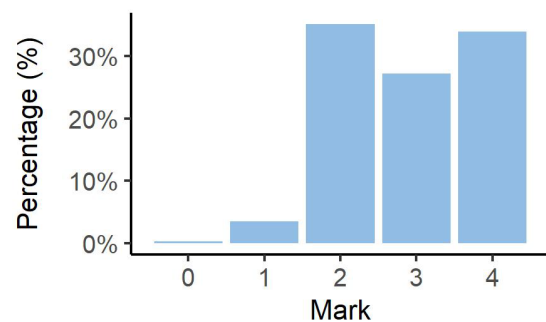
### IA3 Criterion: Synthesising



### IA3 Criterion: Evaluating

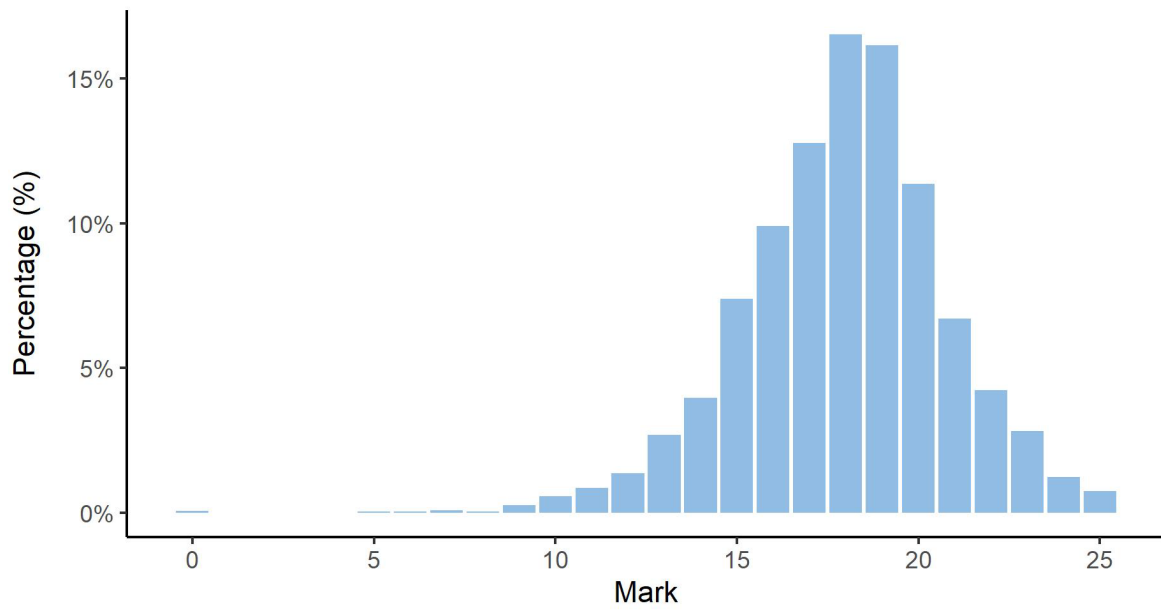


### IA3 Criterion: Creating and communicating



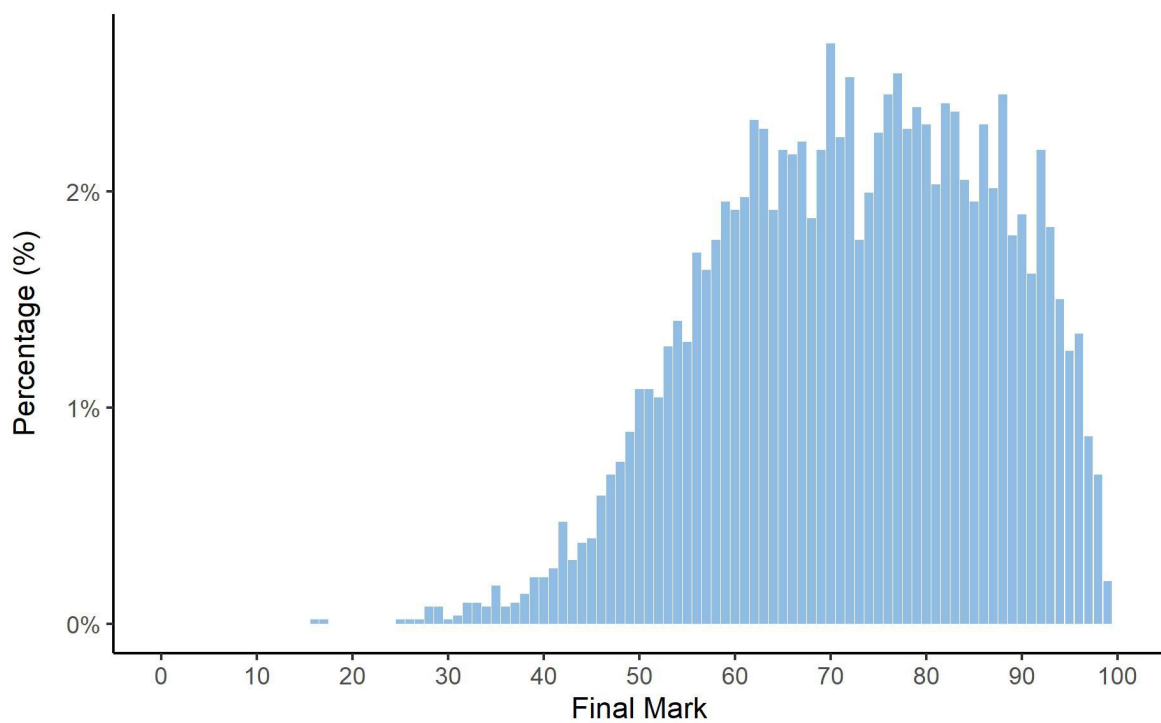


## External assessment (EA) marks



## 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	100–83	82–66	65–44	43–17	16–0

## 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	1441	1941	1546	128	1

# 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	321	321	321
Percentage endorsed in Application 1	75%	73%	88%

## 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	318	1921	243	82.08%
2	318	1915	254	80.19%
3	318	1924	198	81.45%



## 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	176
Authentication	37
Authenticity	12
Item construction	24
Scope and scale	53

\*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 321.

#### Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- addressed all assessment specifications, such as the inclusion of
  - an unseen question based on the selected topic **and** aspect of the topic from Unit 3, e.g. an unseen question focused on the relationship between Nationalist Socialist ideas and the emergence of political repression during the 1930s was based on Topic 5: Germany 1914–1945, with the aspect of the topic being the rise of Nazism in Germany during the 1930s
  - explicit notice about the need for the response to reflect a sustained analysis, synthesis and evaluation of the stimulus material provided to fully support a student-generated hypothesis

- included an unseen question that
  - gave students the opportunity to cover the required assessable objectives and performance-level descriptors in the ISMG, e.g. an unseen question introduced a contestable point about the rise of Japanese imperialism during the 1930s. This, in turn, enabled students to write a response that incorporated intellectual complexity
  - reflected a scale of information, knowledge and skills appropriate for the syllabus conditions. This was often reflected in an unseen question that narrowed its focus to, e.g. a specific: time, place, event, individual and/or group.

### Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- include stimulus that conform to syllabus specifications, ensuring, e.g.
  - the stimulus includes evidence from 6–7 seen sources and 3–5 sources that are not seen
  - a range of sources is evident, e.g. the stimulus consists of evidence from primary and secondary sources, visual and written sources, and/or different perspectives
  - the evidence from each source includes a context statement in the form of a brief description that **may** focus on the author, time of production, and any general details about the circumstances in which a source was produced. While many context statements will include information captured by this description, other information can be included, such as details about historical events that coincided with the creation of a source and public reactions or commentary that followed the publication of the source
  - the evidence from sources is succinct enough for students to engage with during planning time. To do this, a closer examination of the evidence cited in the source and the context statement may be required, with all information unrelated to the unseen question removed.

### 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	14
Language	31
Layout	36
Transparency	23

\*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 321.

### Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- provided clear instructions using cues that align to the specifications, objectives and ISMGs, e.g. the task section made explicit reference to the need for students to develop a historical argument in response to the unseen question.

## Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- include images, diagrams or other visual elements in the stimulus that are legible, clear and accessible. To ensure this, review the visual elements in terms of their:
  - labelling, making sure no two images are listed with the same label; and the labelling method is applied consistently, e.g. Sources A, B and C or Sources 1, 2 and 3; rather than Sources A, 2, C
  - resolution, making sure that objects in the background of images can be seen as clearly as those in the front of the image
  - size, ensuring the image is large enough for students to discern all the features being displayed within an image
  - physical position on the page, making sure that an image does not cross over two or more pages in the stimulus.

## 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	94.65	2.2	3.14	0
2	Analysing	94.03	3.77	1.26	0.94
3	Synthesising	94.03	4.09	1.89	0
4	Evaluating	85.22	11.32	2.2	1.26
5	Creating and communicating	95.6	2.52	1.57	0.31

## Effective practices

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

- for the Comprehending criterion, judgments recognised
  - the use of terms being placed into historical contexts, e.g. linking terms to specific times, places, and/or spaces related to the focus of the unseen question
  - the explanation of issues related to an unseen question, e.g. an unseen question about the reasons for the end of Syngman Rhee’s Presidency of South Korea in 1960 might hinge on an understanding of the issues that contributed to the April Revolution
  - an understanding of the relationship between concepts and ideas developed in response to an unseen question, e.g. a response to an unseen question about Sukarno’s involvement in the Indonesian War of Independence (1945—1949) connects the historical concepts of evidence and significance with ideas about anti-imperialism and the Non-Aligned Movement
- for the Analysing criterion, judgments were made about
  - whether a feature of evidence or features of evidence were addressed across a response, with the former being considered at the lower performance level and the latter being considered at the mid and upper performance levels. In the case of the latter, not all features of evidence were required to be addressed across a response
  - the identification of features of evidence, with student responses being characterised as discerning at the upper performance level when, e.g. the features of evidence purposefully selected clearly advanced the development of the focus of a paragraph and/or the hypothesis
- for the Creating and communicating criterion, judgments recognised
  - succinct communication — i.e. brevity and clarity — at the upper performance level
  - the logical organisation of the ideas related to the unseen question and hypothesis at the upper performance level
  - the consistent application of the features of an essay in response to historical sources and ethical scholarship at the upper performance level
  - the frequent errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation that impeded the communication of ideas at the lower performance level.

### Samples of effective practices

The following excerpts demonstrate evidence of the thorough and mostly accurate use of terms placed into historical context. Terms used in Excerpt 1 include ‘Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution’ and ‘Red Guards’. The term ‘May Circular’ is used in Excerpt 2. These terms are placed into historical context by linking them to specific times, places, and/or spaces related to the focus of the unseen question, i.e. the nature of Mao Zedong’s influence over the Cultural Revolution.

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

## Excerpt 1

Initiated by Chinese Communist Party (CCP) member and Chairman, Mao Zedong<sup>in 1966</sup>, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was a movement ~~intended~~ aimed at eradicating capitalist and bourgeois attitudes and ideology from all spheres of life, ~~the~~ particularly, cultural spheres. The movement encouraged <sup>the use of</sup> violence, propaganda, and rebellion in order to expose, criticise, and ultimately remove such ideologies. A group of students<sup>activists</sup>, called the Red Guard were actively involved in the revolution and were passionate supporters of the movement. ~~During~~ The early stages of the revolution, despite the ~~start~~ Red Guard being instrumental in ~~the~~ bringing it to fruition, it was ultimately <sup>Mao who</sup> manipulated ~~it~~ <sup>it</sup> from above by ~~Mao~~. Such manipulation is apparent through his personal plans and intentions for the revolution, as well the clear response to and idolatry of Mao by the Red Guards. ~~the~~

## Excerpt 2

Mao's strategic ~~initiation~~ and intentional initiation of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution ~~the~~ ~~meant that he~~ demonstrates <sup>the</sup> manipulation and control of the movement from above. ~~the first~~ What is widely recognised as the 'starting point' of the revolution, the May Circular was a document issued by the CCP containing the first public instruction and direction of the cultural revolution. The document states that "the whole party must follow Comrade Mao Zedong's instructions" (source 1) which are later listed to include ~~the~~ "[to] expose the reactionary bourgeois... who oppose socialism... in the sphere of academic work, education, [etc.]". As the 'founding' document of the revolution, the May Circular provides a highly useful demonstration of Mao's goals and ideologies



## 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. Judgments explain why and/or how evidence from sources may be useful or reliable, whereas statements express an opinion only
  - judgments about the usefulness and/or reliability of evidence from sources are distinguished from other judgments included in responses, e.g. judgments about the effectiveness of a governmental policy implemented during a historical event
  - judgments about the usefulness of evidence from sources are distinguished from the analysis of evidence from sources, i.e. the former considers the relevance of evidence from sources for a particular investigation; the latter considers the unpacking of evidence from sources.

## Additional advice

- Align assessment expectations with the task conditions, including the word count of between 800–1000 words only.
- When making judgments about the Analysing criterion, recall that the examples listed in the glossary for features of evidence are not definitive or exhaustive.
- Ethical scholarship can be demonstrated for this task by listing, e.g. source numbers, names of the authors of sources (surnames or full names), titles of sources or a combination of these approaches.



## 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 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	69
Authentication	6
Authenticity	29
Item construction	11
Scope and scale	7

\*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 321.

#### Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- followed the conventions for item construction, e.g. checkpoints were included in the task
- included details in the Context section that related to the subject matter for the topic and aspect of the topic, e.g. the task referred to how students had been studying Topic 5 in Unit 3 (Germany, 1914 – 1945), with the aspect of the topic being the rise and fall of the Weimar Republic (1918–1933)
- applied authentication strategies that reflected QCAA guidelines for assuring student authorship, e.g. in the checkpoints, the task required students to submit a plan or a draft for authentication purposes only

- deftly used scaffolding, if required, by ensuring it did not repeat or redefine information that had already been provided in the assessment instrument, e.g. the task
  - identified the need for a reference list only, rather than the use of a reference list in one place and then a bibliography elsewhere
  - referred to the features of the task in one place only, rather than repeating this same information in multiple places.

### Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- address all assessment specifications, including, e.g.
  - a student-driven key inquiry question
  - 3–5 sub-questions
  - 4–6 sources (both primary and secondary)
  - a recognised system of referencing
  - a reference list
- avoid mandating task requirements that **exceed** assessment specifications, e.g. the task requirements should not prescribe the inclusion of evidence from sources authored by specific individuals.

### 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	4
Layout	0
Transparency	0

\*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 321.

### Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- used bold, italics and other formatting features only where relevant, e.g. the task only used bold text to emphasise the need for students to apply a recognised system of referencing, including a reference list.

### 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	Devising and conducting	91.82%	4.09%	3.46%	0.63%
2	Analysing	88.05%	6.6%	4.4%	0.94%
3	Evaluating	85.53%	10.06%	3.14%	1.26%
4	Creating and communicating	96.23%	1.26%	2.52%	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, judgments recognised
  - the discerning use of historical questions by creating a nuanced key inquiry question and relevant sub-questions at the upper performance level. A nuanced key inquiry question demonstrates specificity and is finely differentiated to focus the inquiry. This is often achieved by specifying, e.g. a particular time, issue, event, place and/or space associated with the investigation. Relevant sub-questions are connected to the key inquiry question, rather than merely being related to the topic. These historical questions are being used discerningly when they are clearly and fully being used to develop the investigation
  - the quality of the historical research evident in the response, i.e. detailed, adequate or rudimentary at the upper, mid or lower performance levels, respectively
  - the type of sources selected for the investigation. At the upper performance level, the historical research is based on evidence from primary and secondary sources that offer different perspectives
- for the Creating and communicating criterion, responses were considered in terms of
  - alignment with the features of an independent source investigation, as described in the syllabus specifications
  - ethical scholarship, i.e. using a recognised referencing system to acknowledge sources, including a reference list.

## Samples of effective practices

The following excerpts demonstrate evidence of the discerning use of historical questions by creating a nuanced key inquiry question and relevant sub-questions.

In Excerpt 1:

- the key inquiry question reflects nuance because it demonstrates specificity and is finely differentiated to focus the inquiry. This is achieved by, e.g. narrowing the focus of the investigation to a specific organisation (the 'Nazi regime'), group of people ('German people') and a period of time ('the peacetime years [of] 1933–1939')
- the sub-questions are relevant because they are connected to the key inquiry question. This is achieved because each of the sub-questions refers to the German people's support for the Nazi Party — a central feature of the key inquiry question.

In Excerpt 2, the historical questions have been used discerningly because they are clearly and fully being used to develop the investigation. The first paragraph in the critical summary of evidence begins to address the key inquiry question; the second paragraph begins to show direct engagement with the first and second sub-questions.

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

### Excerpt 1

#### Questions

#### Key question

To what extent did the Nazi regime have the support of the German people during the peacetime years 1933-1939?

#### Sub-questions

1. How did primary sources from the years 1933 to 1939 depict the German peoples support for the Nazi regime?
2. How do secondary sources generally assess the German people's support for the Nazi party from 1933 to 1939?
3. Do these primary and secondary sources contest or support each other? If so, how and to what extent?
4. In the historical record, are there any discernible changes in the way they represent the German publics support for the Nazi Party during peacetime?
5. What problems, if any, are associated with the availability of primary and secondary sources related to the German publics support for the Nazi Party during peacetime?

**Excerpt 2****Critical Summary of Evidence**

In light of historical evidence provided in the four selected sources, it can be tentatively concluded that the Nazi Regime during the peacetime years 1933-1939 had significant support from the German public. Throughout the historical investigation, it has become apparent that over time historical opinion has changed in regard to the representation of the German public's support for the Nazi Party. In relation to sub-question four, historian Catherine Epstein provides a highly relevant account stating "Historians used to [assert]... Germans lived as atomized, submissive individuals during the Nazi Reign of terror. In recent decades, historians... emphasise the popularity of the regime." Whilst more evidence would have to be collated to fully answer the discernible changes in the historical record, Epstein provides a tentative and reliable answer.

In regard to sub-question one, it is concluded that the primary sources provide contradicting accounts regarding the German public support for the Nazi regime during peacetime. George Lloyd, authored by former British Prime Minister George Lloyd, details his 1936 trip to Nazi Germany. Lloyd perceived Hitler's authority as "unchallenged" by the public due to his positive socio-economic transformation of Germany after World War 1, asserting that he had "never seen a happier Germany". In comparison, a Sopade report released in 1937, argues that the German people were unhappy under the Nazi regime suggesting that whilst they appeared to support the regime, in private the German people heavily "criticised everything that was going on". The Sopade report is published and written in Prague by German resistance members limiting its ability to gauge public support. Furthermore, due to the authors political leaning, it is difficult for them to provide a detached assessment of popular opinion as they are already strongly opposed to the regime. In comparison, Lloyd's usefulness is inhibited by his international role, lacking the perspective of a German citizen. Due to the authoritative nature of the Nazi Regime, it is difficult to conclude the extent of the German people's support as primary sources authored by the German public may be swayed out of fear of the Nazi's, providing a provisional answer to sub-question five in respect to primary sources.

In comparison to the primary source's comparative accounts, the secondary sources corroborate to a larger extent. In regard to sub-question two, Ian Kershaw an internationally acclaimed historian, asserts that "the National Socialist regime... enjoyed a high degree of popularity until deep into the war", providing a direct answer to the key question. Despite this assertion, Kershaw still concedes that there were levels of dissent quashed by the authoritative nature of the regime. Epstein to some extent supports Kershaw's conclusion

Attributions for sources quoted in Excerpt 2:

Epstein, C. (2015). *Nazi Germany*. John Wiley & sons, Incorporated.

Kershaw, I. (2008). *Hitler, the Germans, and the Final Solutions*. Yale University Press.

Lloyd, G. (1936, September 17). I talked to Hitler. *The Daily Express*, 12-17. Gale database.

SOPADE report. (1937). In Layton, G. (2019). *Access to History: Democracy and Nazism: Germany 1918-45 for AQA Third Edition*. Hodder Education Group. P.225.

### Practices to strengthen

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

- for the Analysing criterion, explanations about how evidence from sources contributes to the development of the key inquiry question are characterised as informed or reasonable at the upper and mid performance levels respectively
- for the Evaluating criterion, appropriate judgments are distinguished from reasoned judgments.

### Additional advice

- When considering the length of responses for the purposes of the Creating and communicating criterion, be aware of the
  - task conditions, including the statement that ‘direct quotes are included in the word length unless cited for authentication purposes (e.g. direct quotes presented alongside the source analysis)’
  - guidelines for word length provided in the *QCE and QCIA Policy and Procedures Handbook v4.0*, Section 8.2.6, e.g. ‘Determining word length and page count of a written response’.



## 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	122
Authentication	8
Authenticity	18
Item construction	23
Scope and scale	16

\*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 321.

#### Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- contained an appropriate scale of information, knowledge and skills, allowing students to demonstrate their understanding of the subject matter for the unit and topic, e.g. the Task section required students to write a historical essay based on research that was focused on an area from within the selected topic **and** aspect of the topic.

#### Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- avoid mandating task requirements that exceed assessment specifications, e.g. mandating a specific number of body paragraphs be included in the response



- allow students to develop their own unique responses by not requiring them to use a specific key inquiry question and/or hypothesis.

## 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	6
Language	14
Layout	32
Transparency	122

\*Each priority might contain up to four assessment practices.

Total number of submissions: 321.

### Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- used appropriate language and avoided unnecessary jargon, specialist language and colloquial language, e.g. syllabus language was used in the task section when describing the assessment specifications.

### Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- use clear instructions and cues that align to the specifications, objectives and ISMGs, e.g. the task section explicitly directs students to generate their own key inquiry question and conduct their own investigation based on the school-selected topic and aspect of the topic.

### Additional advice

- Schools must ensure that they do not select a topic for the IA that is nominated by QCAA as the basis for the external assessment.

## 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	97.17%	2.2%	0.63%	0%
2	Devising and conducting	96.54%	1.57%	1.26%	0.63%
3	Analysing	92.77%	5.35%	1.57%	0.31%
4	Synthesising	93.4%	5.03%	1.57%	0%
5	Evaluating	84.28%	13.84%	1.89%	0%
6	Creating and communicating	96.54%	2.52%	0.94%	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, judgments recognised
  - the quality of the historical research evident in the response, i.e. detailed, adequate or rudimentary at the upper, mid or lower performance levels, respectively
  - the type of sources selected for the investigation. At the upper performance level, the historical research is based on evidence from primary and secondary sources that offer different perspectives
- for the Synthesising criterion, judgments recognised how combinations of information from the stimulus were applied to
  - the historical argument, e.g. to support a sophisticated historical argument at the upper performance level or a basic historical argument at the mid performance level, recognising that the historical argument is developed throughout the response
  - decisions, e.g. to justify insightful decisions at the upper performance level, reasonable decisions at the mid performance level or related to a partial or fragmented decision at the lower performance level.

## Samples of effective practices

The following excerpts demonstrate evidence of combining information from sources to support a sophisticated historical argument that is applied throughout the response. Excerpt 1 introduces readers to a sophisticated historical argument (identified by the author in italics). Excerpt 2 reflects the clear application of a part of the sophisticated historical argument, namely, a focus on Nikita Khrushchev's desire to increase his popularity within the Soviet Union by installing missiles in Cuba.

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

**Excerpt 1**

**Key Question:** During the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962), Soviet Union Premier Nikita Khrushchev insisted that he sent missiles to Cuba to "restrain the United States from precipitous military action against Castro's government." To what extent is this statement an accurate reflection of Khrushchev's motives? ✓

Following World War II, the United States (US) and the Soviet Union (USSR) engaged in a period of geopolitical tension, alongside their respective allies, the Western Bloc and Eastern Bloc. This conflict is referred to as The Cold War (1947-1991) (Blakemore, 2022). Although, it did not involve direct military operations, it was pursued through economic and political actions, propaganda, acts of espionage and proxy wars waged by surrogates (JFK Library, 2019). The superpowers were threatened by one another because of their different ideologies. The USSR was a communist nation run by dictators, whereas the US was a capitalist nation with a democratic government. This ideological tension climaxed during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis which was the closest the world ever came to nuclear war (Dobbs, 2008, p.4). Cuba's new leader, Fidel Castro, and Nikita Khrushchev engaged in a 13-day political and military standoff with John F Kennedy (JFK) and the US leaders over the installation of Soviet nuclear armed missiles in Cuba, just 90 miles from the US shores (Nehring, 2012, p.931). *In part, although Khrushchev sought to protect Castro and his people from the threat of a US invasion, the Soviet Premier's primary motives for installing the missiles in Cuba were to increase his popularity within Russia, and to improve his global standing as a leader and the international perception of communism.* Believing it would be a strong military decision, Khrushchev installed the missiles with the expectation that it would give him, and the communist world, the power and respect he sought. ✓✓

**Excerpt 2**

Although the US threat contributed to Khrushchev's decision, one of his primary motives was to increase his popularity in Russia. Before he rose to power, the USSR was led by dictator Joseph Stalin from 1919-1953 (BBC, 2022). He had the support of majority of the Russian population as he transformed the USSR from a feudal economy to an industrial power and played a crucial role in defeating Hitler. However, almost 200 million people died under his oppressive regime, which resulted in Khrushchev criticising his leadership and embarking on a policy of 'destalinisation' to make the communist regime less oppressive (Wettig, 2007, p.217). Khrushchev lost the support and respect of communists throughout the world, who had been taught to admire Stalin. Therefore, in order to redeem his reputation and prove himself worthy, Khrushchev took the aggressive action of placing missiles in Cuba. He believed this would be effective as Latin America was seen by some in the communist world, as the new communist frontier. Khrushchev hoped that if he could spread communism in Russia, as rapidly as China was spreading it throughout Asia, then he would gain stature. Emilio Aragonés, a Cuban diplomat and one of Castro's associates, highlights that Khrushchev's motives stemmed far beyond providing defence for their nation. He acknowledged that, *"...the Central Committee was unanimous in its decision to accept the missiles but we six, and specula Fidel Castro, were sure that we were doing this... not so much to defend Cuba but to help Khrushchev in the eyes of the Soviets...Cuba could have been defended more effectively using conventional weapons,"* (Lebow, 1994, p.34). This primary source is useful in reflecting Khrushchev's true intentions, but also the viewpoint held by Cubans during the crisis. Aragonés suggests both Castro and the committee understood that Khrushchev's decision had clear ulterior motives, and that installing the missiles was an inappropriate mode of defence. Nevertheless, they accepted the missiles, indicating they condoned his behaviour and supported him in his quest to gaining his nation's support. Aragonés worked closely with both Castro and Khrushchev at the time of the crisis, so his account can be considered reliable. Janice Stein, Canadian political scientist and international relations expert presented a Post-Revisionist historiographical perspective when she explained, *"After Khrushchev's denouncement of Stalin, people in the USSR heavily criticised him. This motivated him to strengthen his reputation amongst the people and believed that placing missiles in Cuba would enable him to gain prestige,"* (Stein, 2011, p.301).

Attributions for sources quoted in Excerpt 2:

- Lebow, R. (1994). 'We All Lost The Cold War.' United States of America; Princeton University Press.  
Stein, J. (2011). 'Deterrence: The Elusive Dependent Variable.' United States of America; JSTOR.

**Practices to strengthen**

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

- for the Analysing criterion, examinations of features of evidence from primary and secondary sources are characterised as detailed or adequate at the upper and mid performance levels respectively
- for the Evaluating criterion, ensure the judgments about the usefulness and reliability of evidence from sources are corroborated. Examples of corroborating can appear within or across paragraphs, but the former is more typical.

**Additional advice**

- Marks are not allocated for the inclusion of sub-questions in this response as this feature is not mandated.
- It is recommended that the key inquiry question be included at the top of the first page of the response.

# 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 (54 marks).

The examination assessed subject matter from Unit 4. Questions were derived from Topic 1: Australian engagement with Asia since 1945 (World War II in the Pacific ends) and the aspect of the topic: Australia and the Vietnam War.

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

The stimulus book included excerpts from primary and secondary sources that conveyed information in words and imagery about a range of issues related to Australia and the Vietnam War, including: the wartime experiences of First Nations Australians during the Vietnam War; the nature and purpose of the Australian branch of Save Our Sons; and the way Australians perceived the Vietnam War. 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:

- Comprehending criterion, with terms often used aptly and placed into historical context for Questions 1, 2b and 3
- Analysing criterion, by explaining a similarity and two differences in the wartime experiences of Australian Vietnam War veterans for Question 1
- Evaluating criterion, with discerning judgments about the reliability of evidence from two sources for a proposed investigation for Question 2b
- Creating and communicating criterion, with responses conveyed fluently for Question 3.



## Samples of effective practices

### Short response

Question 1 required students to analyse evidence from two sources to explain one similarity and two differences in the wartime experiences of two Australian war veterans during the Vietnam War.

Effective student responses:

- explained a valid similarity, using well-chosen evidence from both sources
- explained two valid differences, using well-chosen evidence from both sources
- aptly used relevant terms from both sources placed in historical context.

This excerpt has been included:

- to show a valid similarity. The similarity focused on the importance two Australian war veterans attributed to their 'ethnicity as Indigenous Australians' during their involvement in the Vietnam War. This was a valid similarity because it aligned with ideas conveyed in both sources
- to illustrate the use of well-chosen evidence from both sources to explain the valid similarity. The evidence was well-chosen because it clearly and closely supported the valid similarity
- as it demonstrates the use of direct quotes as one method for demonstrating the use of evidence from sources
- to demonstrate effective signposting as one method for ensuring that key elements of the question were readily identifiable in a response, e.g. using the words 'similarly' 'opposite' and 'contrasting'. Other appropriate synonyms were also used within effective responses.

Both Sources 1 and 2 detail the experiences of Indigenous Australians, Victor Bartley and Graham Atkinson respectively, who served in ~~Vietnam~~ the Australian army during the Vietnam War. Their ~~past~~ perspectives are similar in that they both attribute significance to their ethnicity as Indigenous Australians serving in a predominantly white Australian army; Bartley was "one of five Indigenous blokes in [his] regiment" (Source 1), while Atkinson ~~too~~ similarly recalls "a few other Aboriginal recruits" although he was the only one in his unit (Source 2). However, their experiences were different in various ways. Firstly, while Bartley enjoyed the lack of racism he experienced ~~fit~~ in the army, recalling "it wasn't black and white", but rather the only colour in the army was "green" (Source 1), Atkinson "encountered a great deal of racism in the army, including ~~to~~ "snide remarks and racist undertones" (Source 2). Thus, while Bartley found the army to be a refuge from racism, Atkinson found it the opposite.

Question 2b required students to evaluate the usefulness and reliability of evidence from two sources for an investigation about the extent to which Save Our Sons was mostly focused on opposing Australian involvement in the Vietnam War. One judgment for usefulness and one for reliability was required.

Effective student responses:

- explained discerning judgments about the usefulness and reliability of evidence from both sources, with the use of well-chosen evidence from both sources being applied throughout
- aptly used relevant terms — from one source or both sources — that were placed in historical context
- demonstrated an understanding of a relevant issue or issues that appeared in one source or both sources
- organised paragraph/s purposefully to succinctly and fluently convey ideas relating to the question.

This excerpt has been included to illustrate:

- that a judgment about the usefulness of evidence from a source can be qualified. In this excerpt, the qualification of the judgment about the usefulness of evidence from Source 4 is first signalled by the words 'somewhat useful'
- how the student allowed sufficient time to revise their response to sharpen its clarity and overall effectiveness. One example is the inclusion of 'only' to add depth to the judgment about the usefulness of evidence from Source 4. Another example is the addition of the phrase: 'and rather demonstrates the movement's focus on conscription'.

Source 4 is <sup>only</sup> somewhat useful <sup>whereas</sup> ~~and~~ ~~st~~ source 5 is useful for investigating whether ~~the~~ Save Our Sons was mostly focused on opposing Australian involvement in the Vietnam War. Source 4, a Save Our Sons flyer, explicitly states for its readers to "oppose conscripts for overseas", <sup>referring to</sup> ~~implying~~ conscription of Australian men in the Vietnam War (source 4). ~~the~~ whilst this flyer demonstrates the Save Our Sons <sup>movement</sup> ~~campaign~~ was opposed to <sup>Australian</sup> conscription, it does not directly state opposition to ~~the~~ involvement in the Vietnam War. <sup>and rather demonstrates the movement's focus on</sup> Hence this limitation <sup>conscriptio-</sup> decreases

## Synthesising criterion

Question 3 required students to synthesise evidence from four sources to form a historical argument regarding the extent to which Australians saw the Vietnam War as a conflict between people living in a single nation. Students were also required to include a judgment about the extent to which evidence from two of these sources corroborated each other.

Effective student responses:

- developed a sophisticated historical argument that responded to the entire question
- skilfully combined relevant evidence from all four sources to develop the historical argument
- made a plausible judgment about the extent to which evidence from two of the sources corroborated each other
- aptly used relevant terms from the sources placed in historical context
- demonstrated an understanding of a relevant issue or issues from one or more sources
- organised paragraph/s purposefully to succinctly and fluently convey ideas relating to the question

This excerpt has been included to illustrate the skilful combination of relevant evidence from Source 6 to develop the historical argument.

As the war progressed, the Australian public's understanding of <sup>the conflict in</sup> Vietnam and Australia's motivations for involvement varied, therefore influencing the extent to which Australians viewed the Vietnam War as a civil conflict. In 1965, at the beginning of Australia's involvement, Paul Hasluck gave a speech in support of the Menzies' government's reasons for entering the conflict. His perspective was vastly popular among Australians and <sup>contributed</sup> ~~contributed~~ to what was, at first, a largely popular war. Hasluck argued that discontent in <sup>South</sup> ~~South~~ Vietnam was not the result of "internal <sup>discontent</sup> ~~discontent~~" and increasing tensions were not due to "local rebellion" (source 6). The External Affairs Minister continues by stating that the evolving war is a result of <sup>the</sup> "instability" of newly established countries "being exploited by <sup>the</sup> communist doctrines of already established communist regimes in Asia <sup>in order</sup> to wage war against the established social order" (source 6).



## Practices to strengthen

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

- learning experiences that facilitate the independent recall of key elements included in the descriptions of the syllabus objectives and key words included in the elaborations and glossary, e.g. corroboration, implicit meanings, motive, perspectives, reliability and usefulness
- multiple exposures to deconstructing different questions, with particular emphasis given to identifying
  - the main cognition/s and sources being targeted
  - the main purpose to which the above is being applied, e.g. in Question 2a, the nominated cognition and sources are linked to an investigation about ‘...how Save Our Sons was depicted during the Vietnam War’
  - all instructional elements within the question, e.g. in Question 3, students are directed to, among other things, include a judgment about the extent to which evidence from two of these sources corroborate each other’
- providing opportunities to master visual literacy, with particular emphasis given to creating mental toolkits for engaging with, e.g. photographs, political cartoons, drawings and other imagery
- promote the use of one or more of the source features when developing a response, including but not limited to reference details, context statements and footnotes, if applicable.

## Additional advice

- Whenever possible, assist students to manage their time successfully during an external assessment by, e.g. practising the prioritisation of response writing in accordance with marks attached to questions; the number of response lines included in a question; the weighting of assessment objectives; or some other methodology.

# Senior External Examination



The Modern 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 Modern 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 Modern History Senior External Examination: 12.

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

This subject was retired at the end of 2022. See Memo [058/22](#), 'Retirement of low-candidature Senior External Examination (SEE) syllabuses', 14 October 2022.