

Modern History subject report

2024 cohort

January 2025





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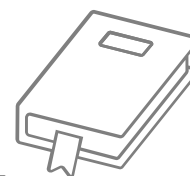
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Introduction



The annual subject reports seek to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement of internal and external assessment processes for all Queensland schools. The 2024 subject report is the culmination of the partnership between schools and the QCAA. It addresses school-based assessment design and judgments, and student responses to external assessment for General and General (Extension) subjects. In acknowledging effective practices and areas for refinement, it offers schools timely and evidence-based guidance to further develop student learning and assessment experiences for 2025.

The report also includes information about:

- how schools have applied syllabus objectives in the design and marking of internal assessments
- how syllabus objectives have been applied in the marking of 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 that demonstrate best practice.

Schools are encouraged to reflect on the effective practices identified for each assessment, consider the recommendations to strengthen assessment design and explore the authentic student work samples 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 internal and 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 senior subjects.

Subject highlights

344

schools offered
Modern History



5.33%

increase in enrolment
since 2023

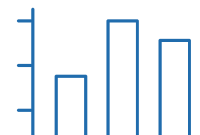


97.99%

of students
received a C or
higher



Subject data summary



Subject completion

The following data includes students who completed the General subject or Alternative Sequence.

Note: All data is correct as at January 2025. Where percentages are provided, these are rounded to two decimal places and, therefore, may not add up to 100%.

Number of schools that offered Modern History: 344.

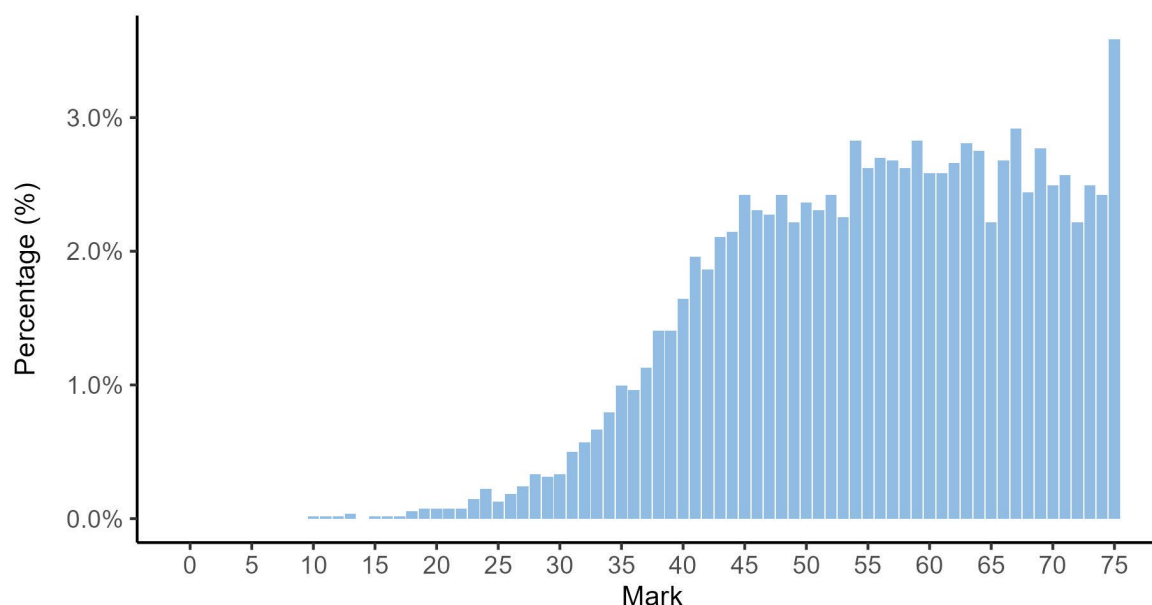
Completion of units	Unit 1	Unit 2	Units 3 and 4
Number of students completed	6,148	5,868	5,377

Units 1 and 2 results

Number of students	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Unit 1	5,654	494
Unit 2	5,495	373

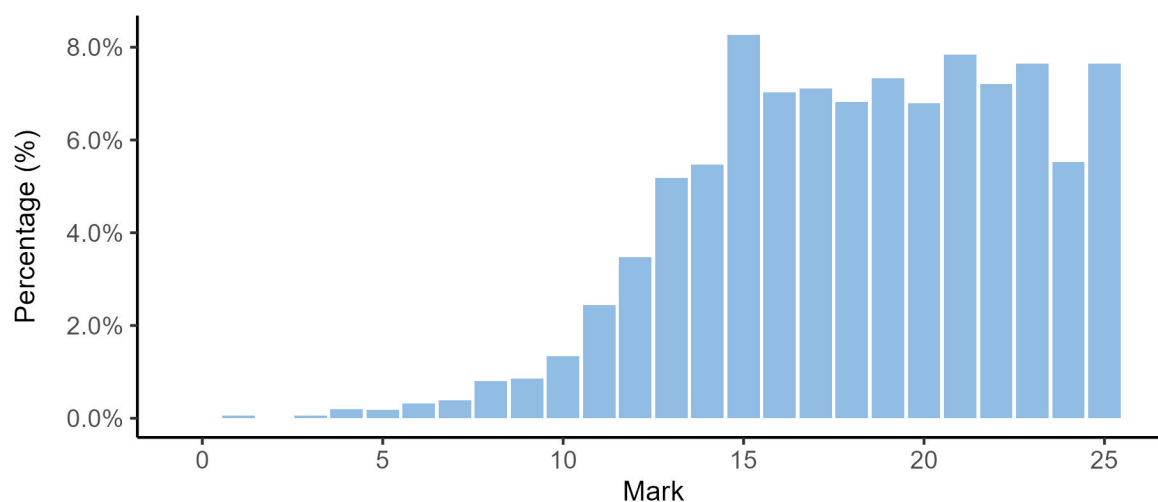
Units 3 and 4 internal assessment (IA) results

Total marks for IA

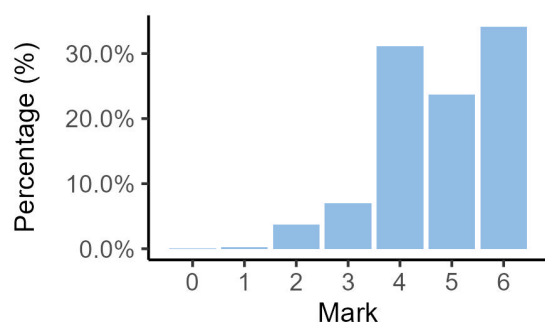


IA1 marks

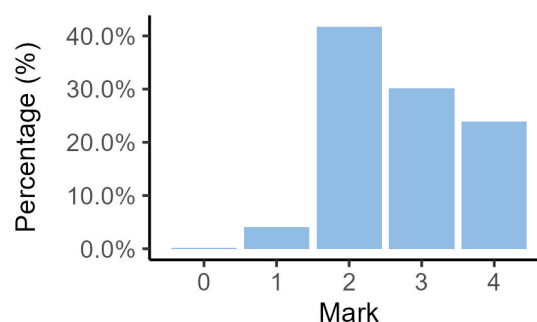
IA1 total



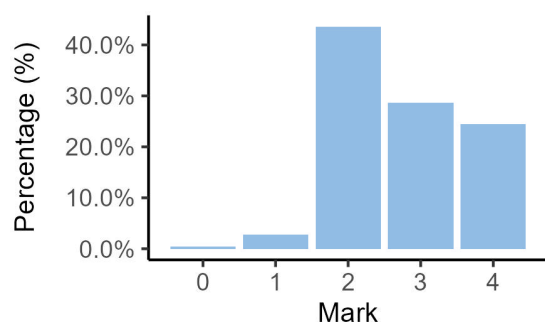
IA1 Criterion: Comprehending



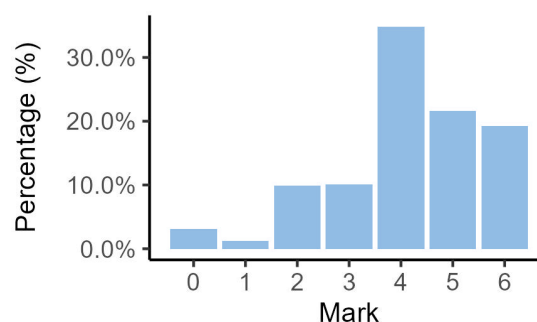
IA1 Criterion: Analysing



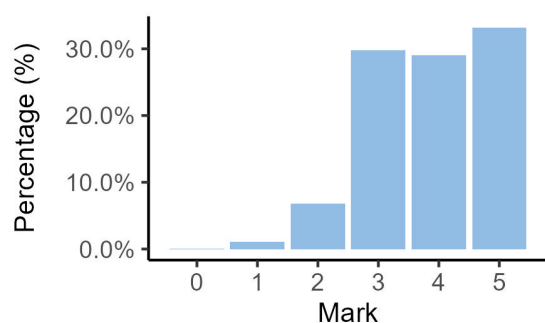
IA1 Criterion: Synthesising



IA1 Criterion: Evaluating

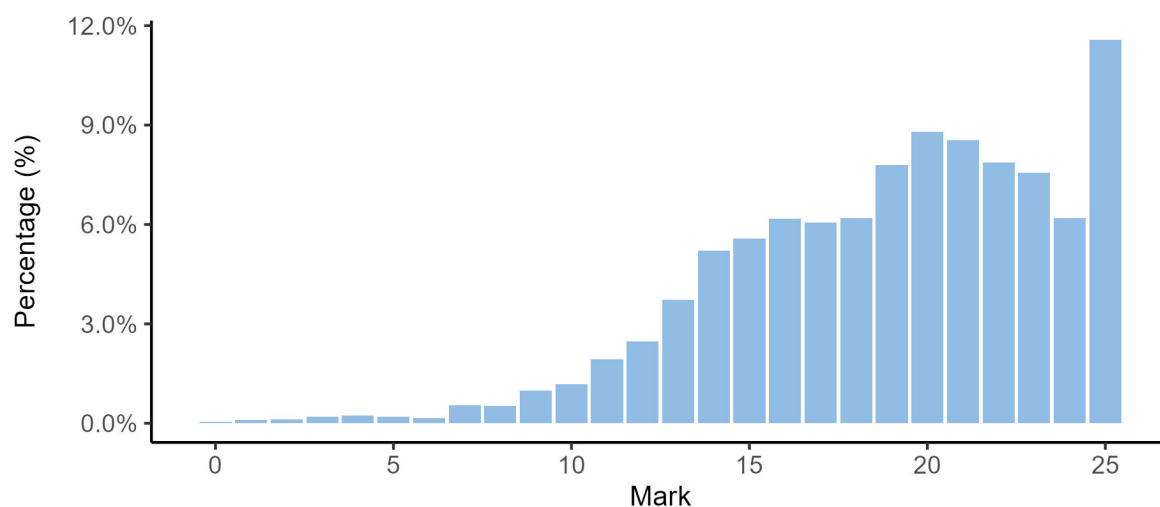


IA1 Criterion: Creating and communicating

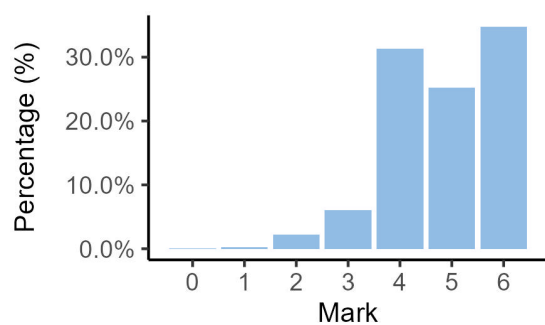


IA2 marks

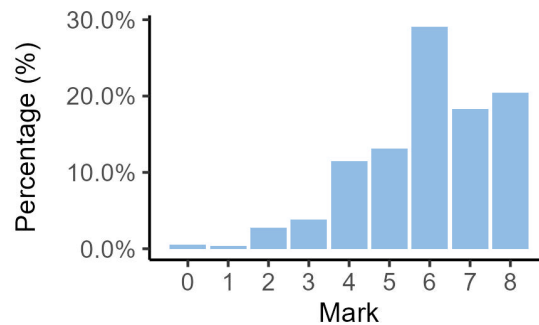
IA2 total



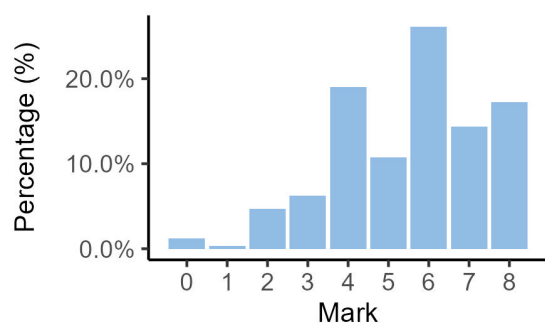
IA2 Criterion: Devising and conducting



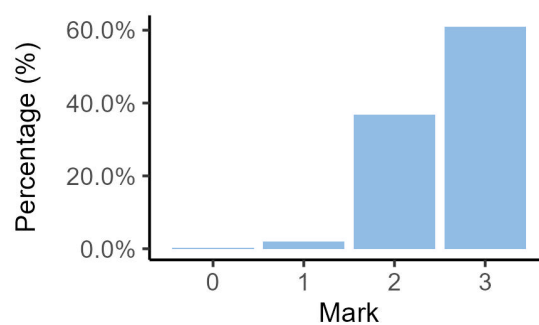
IA2 Criterion: Analysing



IA2 Criterion: Evaluating

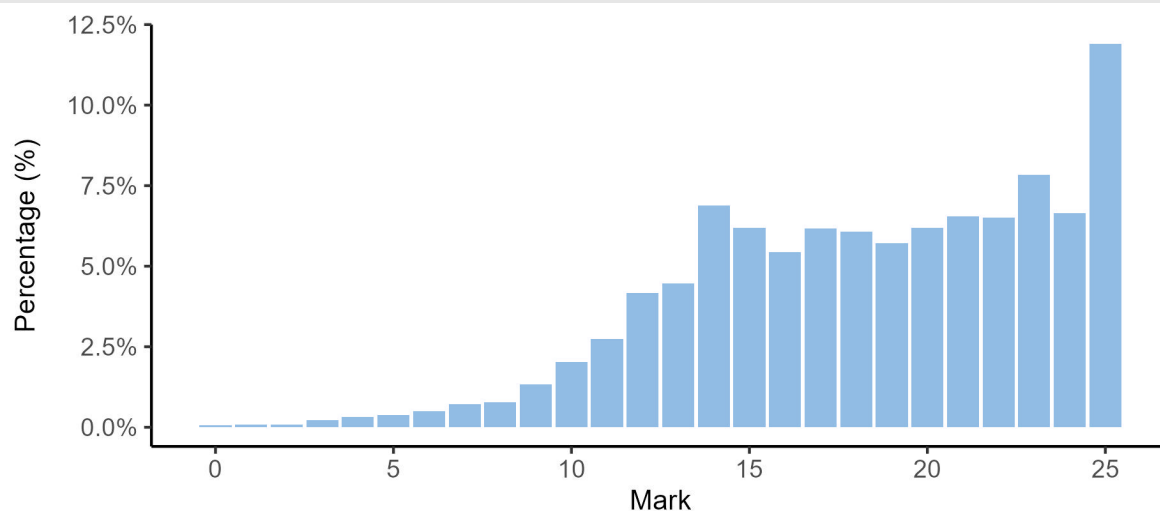


IA2 Criterion: Creating and communicating

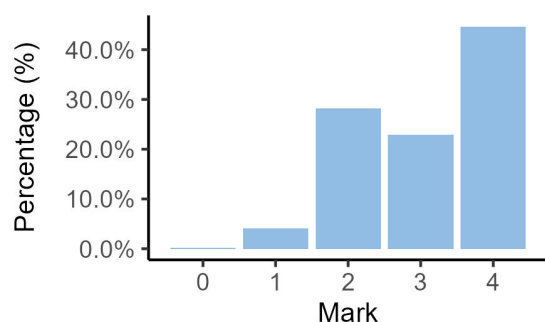


IA3 marks

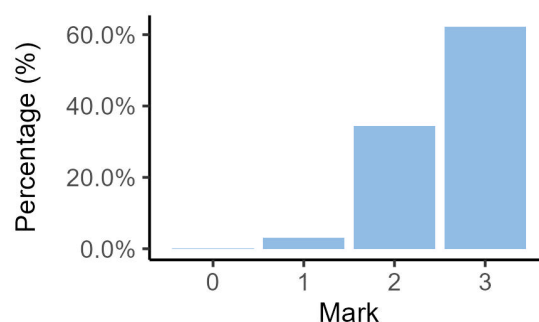
IA3 total



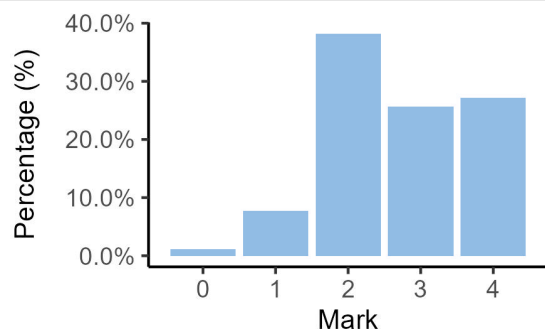
IA3 Criterion: Comprehending



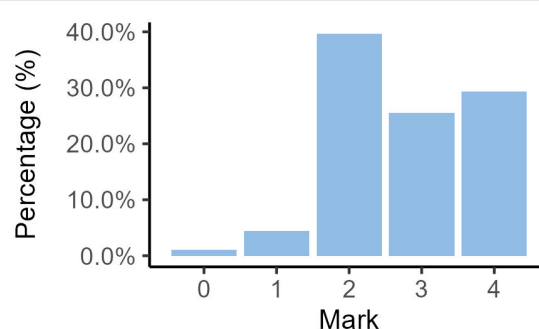
IA3 Criterion: Devising and conducting



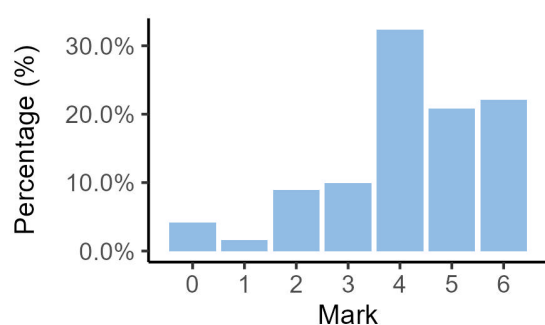
IA3 Criterion: Analysing



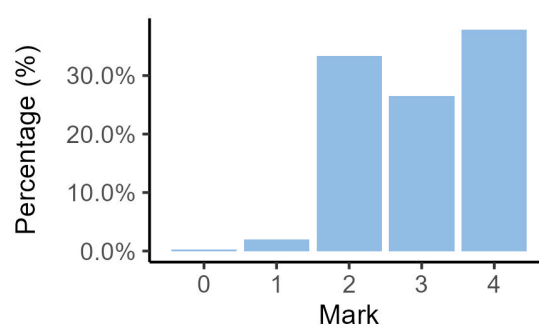
IA3 Criterion: Synthesising



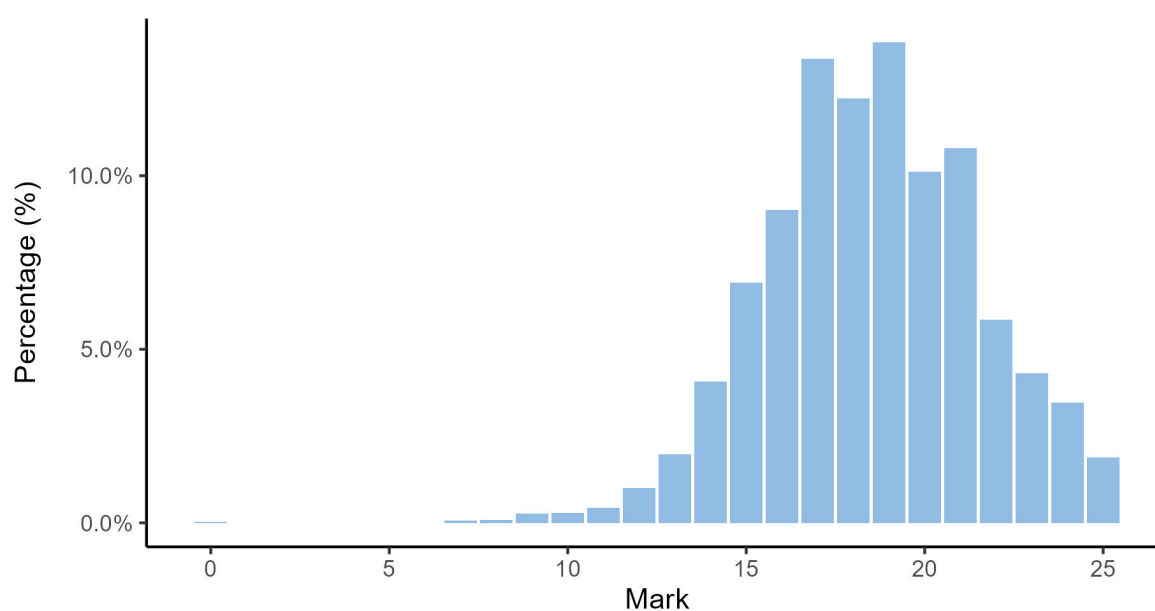
IA3 Criterion: Evaluating



IA3 Criterion: Creating and communicating

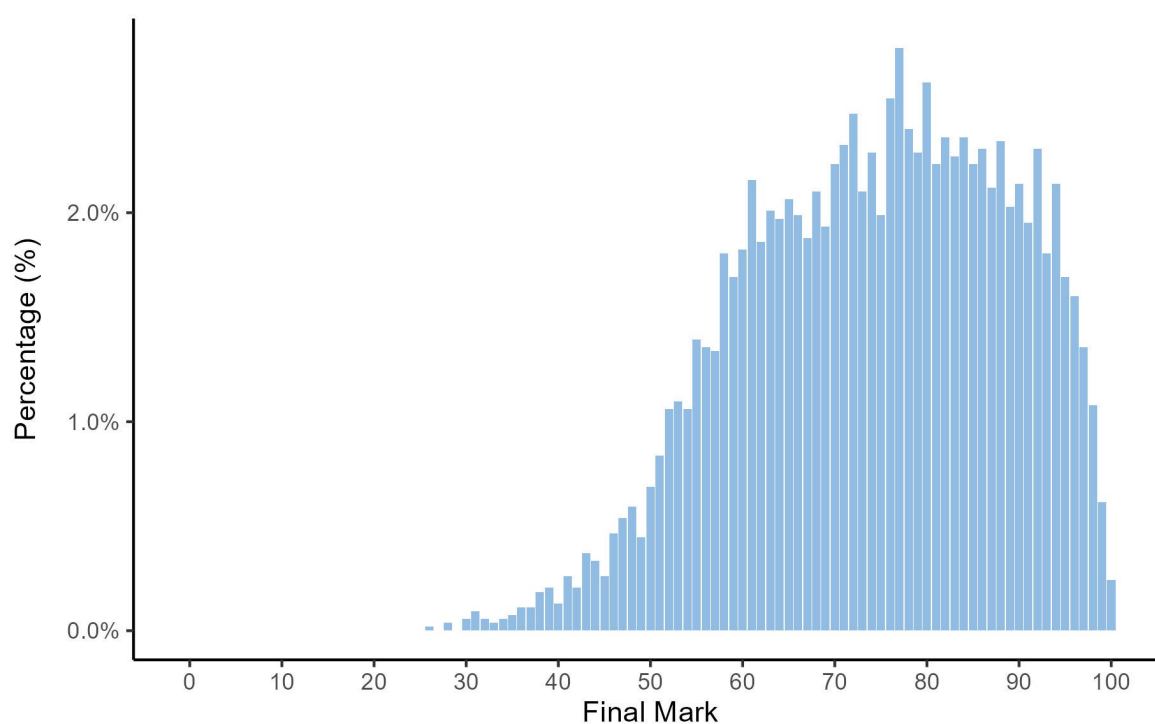


External assessment (EA) marks



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	100–84	83–67	66–44	43–18	17–0

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	1,630	2,088	1,551	108	0

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 assessment. 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 v6.0*, Section 9.5.

Percentage of instruments endorsed in Application 1

Instruments submitted	IA1	IA2	IA3
Total number of instruments	342	342	340
Percentage endorsed in Application 1	81	86	91

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 v6.0*, 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	338	2,242	46	92.01
2	337	2,239	14	90.50
3	337	2,229	10	86.35

Internal assessment 1 (IA1)



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	42
Authentication	0
Authenticity	1
Item construction	10
Scope and scale	5

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- consisted of evidence from relevant sources. Relevance is based on the extent to which evidence from sources helps to address an unseen question. Such help is interpreted broadly and includes source-based evidence that, for instance
 - provides additional details regarding issues associated with the unseen question
 - supports or contradicts historical arguments formed in response to the unseen question
- consisted of evidence from 6–7 seen sources and 3–5 unseen sources. What constitutes evidence from a source (singular) varies but includes
 - words from a text authored solely or mainly by the same individual or group
 - imagery that appears in a cartoon, drawing, picture, painting, meme or a visual snip from a film or television program
 - photos (plural) of the same place, object or person from different positions or at different times
 - a photo (singular) of an object that is accompanied by a verbatim copy of an inscription that appears on the same object.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- include context statements for *each* source included in the stimulus. When two or more sources have been written by the same author, a context statement must still be included for each source. However, it is expected that, where included, the authorship details for each of these context statements will be the same
- include evidence from a range of sources by incorporating information from
 - primary and secondary sources
 - written and visual sources
 - sources conveying different perspectives on the same issue or issues
 - a combination of the above.

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	5
Language	19
Layout	9
Transparency	3

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- clearly identified the unseen question using
 - spacing
 - bold
 - italics
 - a different font
 - a different format
 - colour (if appropriate)
 - a combination of the above
- included stimulus with minimal distractors by ensuring each source excluded unnecessary information. For instance, rather than including four sentences discussing the *economic and political consequences of Stalinism* for the Soviet Union during the 1930s, the source cites the first three sentences as they focus on the *economic consequences of Stalinism* for the Soviet Union during the 1930s — the focus of the unseen question.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- include translations for *all* non-English words appearing in the source
- provide definitions for words that are esoteric and whose meaning cannot be inferred from the other words and/or images included in the source. These definitions can, depending on their size, appear
 - in square brackets following the word
 - at the bottom of the page following a footnote or asterisk
 - in the context statement.

Additional advice

- Quotes can form a part of an unseen question, but this is not mandatory.
- When quotes are used to contextualise an unseen question (e.g. quotes appearing in the task section to describe the historiography associated with the unseen question), they should be used judiciously to ensure they do not become distractors.
- When a quote forms an essential part of the unseen question (e.g. the unseen question asks students to determine the historical accuracy of a specific quote), the same quote should also appear as one of the unseen sources in the stimulus. This ensures students can understand the quote in its original historical context.
- The location of context statements can vary, but they are typically situated
 - immediately above the evidence from the source
 - following the reference details for the source.
- The accessibility of context statements can be enhanced by clearly differentiating the context statement from the reference details for the source. To do this, each context statement often includes
 - a clear space between the end of the evidence from the source and the start of the context statement
 - a subtitle, e.g. Context or Context statement
 - words starting underneath this subtitle that constitute the essential details for the context statement.

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	98.82	0.89	0.30	0
2	Analysing	97.93	1.48	0.59	0
3	Synthesising	99.11	0.89	0.00	0
4	Evaluating	92.90	7.10	0.00	0
5	Creating and communicating	99.70	0.30	0.00	0

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 (plural) being correctly placed into historical contexts, for instance
 - the First Australian Imperial Force, Billy Hughes and referendums were linked to the push for conscription in Australia during 1916 and 1917
 - the Wall Street Crash, bank failures and the Great Contraction were linked to the financial origins of the Great Depression in the United States of America (USA) during the late 1920s and 1930s
 - the explanation of issues related to an unseen question, e.g. an unseen question about the *gyaku kōsu* — the reversal in the policies introduced by the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) in Occupied Japan from 1947 until 1951 — was addressed by focusing on issues associated with the emergence of the Cold War in Asia during the late 1940s, including the shift away from demilitarisation and democratisation in favour of economic rehabilitation and remilitarisation
- for the Analysing criterion, judgments recognised
 - that the performance-level descriptors across all the performance levels were linked to sources in the stimulus supplied. Cited details will vary, but are typically associated with, for instance, a source's
 - title
 - excerpt and/or imagery
 - reference details
 - context statement
 - definitions (if provided)

- the identification and examination of features (plural) of evidence at the upper and mid performance levels. This can be achieved by identifying and examining two of the features of evidence. Additional features of evidence can also be identified and examined, but this may come at the expense of demonstrating the application of the remaining criteria being assessed.

Practices to strengthen

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

- when matching evidence in responses to descriptors for the Evaluating criterion, attention be given to
 - distinguishing judgments about usefulness and reliability
 - judgments about usefulness are typically concerned with discussing the relevance of the evidence from sources. For IA1, this often involves explaining how or why the evidence from sources helps to address the unseen question and/or the main point/s raised within body paragraphs
 - judgments about reliability are typically concerned with discussing the extent to which the evidence from sources is trustworthy. For IA1, this is often determined by addressing questions such as Who produced the sources? What did the authors produce? Why did the authors produce the sources? Where do the sources come from? When were the sources presented?
 - ensuring judgments or statement/s are reflected in responses. At the upper and mid performance levels, judgments (plural) about the usefulness and/or reliability of evidence from sources are required. This means responses must consist of one of the following
 - a judgment about usefulness and a judgment about reliability
 - judgments (plural) about usefulness
 - judgments (plural) about reliability

Multiple judgments can be included, but this may come at the expense of demonstrating the remaining criteria that also need to be addressed
- when matching evidence in responses to descriptors for the Creating and communicating criterion, attention should be given to the succinctness of responses at the upper performance level. This descriptor is assessed based on a responses' brevity and clarity
 - brevity is often indicated by, for instance, a response's adherence to the conditions of the task and the absence of repetition
 - clarity is often reflected in responses that convey, for instance, a strong and consistent alignment between what is discussed across all paragraphs, the absence of tautologies, concise paraphrasing and the judicious selection of words from quotes.

Sample

The following excerpts address an unseen question that focuses on how the New Deal helped the USA respond to the challenges precipitated by the Great Depression (1929–1939). The first excerpt demonstrates thorough and mostly accurate use of terms placed into historical context by linking the terms to specific times, places and/or spaces related to the unseen question. The terms include New Deal and Wall Street Stock Exchange Crash. The second excerpt marks the beginning of a detailed examination of a feature of evidence — explicit meanings — as the

relevant comments made by George Dobbin are noted and then linked to a broader discussion about how the New Deal served as a morale booster for the American public during the 1930s.

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

Excerpt 1

During Franklin D. Roosevelt's (FDR) American Presidency from March 4th 1933 - ~~March~~ April 12th 1945, he introduced the New Deal as part of his first 100 days. The New Deal (1933-1938) was implemented with the proposed objective of providing social, economic, and political recovery, relief, and reform. This was offered as a solution to stop the nation's deteriorating state kickstarted by the Wall Street Stock Exchange Crash in 1929.

Excerpt 2

tion. This negative outlook is contrasted by Dobbin, ^{who} when interviewed for the book *"These Are Our Lives"*, ~~he~~ explicitly stated that *"Roosevelt"* "It's the first time... that a President ever got up and said, 'I'm interested in and aim to do somethin' for the workin' man'." Dobbin then goes on to explain how it "made a lot of [Americans] feel a lot better even when there wasn't much to eat" (Source 6). This illustrates that FDR's political approach and intentions ~~was~~ increased confidence in the government, and created an uplifting mood amongst workers. Woodward (1937) is useful in corroborating

Additional advice

- When making annotations on the ISMG, schools must ensure best-fit judgments have been applied. For further advice, refer to *Module 3 — Making reliable judgments* in the Assessment Literacy application in the QCAA Portal.

Internal assessment 2 (IA2)



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	34
Authentication	4
Authenticity	3
Item construction	4
Scope and scale	6

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- directed students to develop responses that aligned with the task specifications, e.g. students were asked to
 - create 3–5 sub-questions
 - refer to evidence from primary and secondary sources, rather than a range of sources or written and visual sources
 - include a reference list, rather than an annotated reference list or a bibliography
- included checkpoints that
 - aligned with the IA2 task specifications, rather than the IA3 task specifications
 - indicated that feedback would be provided on a single draft.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- direct students to demonstrate ethical scholarship via the application of a recognised referencing system and a reference list.

Both these terms can be used verbatim in the task, but equivalent terms are also acceptable, for instance:

- APA 6 referencing style, Harvard referencing system and school-approved referencing style are all synonyms for the acknowledgment of a recognised system of referencing
- list of references and references listed in accordance with [note the referencing style] are both synonyms for the acknowledgment of a reference list.

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	3
Layout	0
Transparency	2

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- provided clear instructions via the use of cues, e.g. the judicious signposting of key words or phrases in
 - bold
 - italics
 - a different colour (if appropriate).

Practices to strengthen

There were no significant issues identified for improvement.

Additional advice

- Students should be made aware that the key inquiry questions and sub-questions are included in the task word count.

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	97.63	2.37	0.00	0
2	Analysing	95.25	4.15	0.59	0
3	Evaluating	93.47	6.23	0.30	0
4	Creating and communicating	99.11	0.30	0.59	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 use of evidence from primary and secondary sources at the upper performance level. This means responses consisted of evidence from
 - one or more primary sources, with the remainder of the sources being secondary
 - one or more secondary sources, with the remainder of the sources being primary
 - a balance or near balance of primary and secondary sources
- for the Creating and communicating criterion, responses were considered in terms of
 - the consistent demonstration of the features of an independent source investigation at the upper performance level. This required all features of the independent source investigation, including all the qualities associated with each of these features, to be reflected in the response, for instance the
 - rationale explained the thinking behind the student's topic selection
 - critical summary of evidence reflected on decisions, judgments and/or conclusions.

Practices to strengthen

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

- when matching evidence to descriptors for the Analysing criterion, attention be given to the discerning identification of the features of evidence from primary and secondary sources at the upper performance level. The features of evidence are characterised as discerning when they are clearly linked with one or more of the historical questions — key inquiry question and/or sub-questions — included in the response. For instance, a discussion in the source analysis about the intended audience for a political cartoon produced by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) during the Cultural Revolution could be considered discerning if the key inquiry question was focused on how the CCP sought to maintain control of the general populace during the Cultural Revolution

- when matching evidence to descriptors for the Evaluating criterion, attention should be given to corroborating judgments about usefulness and reliability. Here, the words selected do not require explicit mention of, for instance, corroborate or corroborated by. However, the students need to say how evidence from two or more sources relate to each other. For instance, the response suggests that the evidence from Source A is
 - very useful or reliable because it aligns with what was conveyed in the evidence from Source B (or Sources B and C)
 - not especially useful or reliable because it does not match the comments reflected in Source B (or Sources B and C).

Sample

The following excerpts address a key inquiry question that focuses on how Joseph Stalin's strategic methods and policies contributed to the consolidation and maintenance of his political power within the Soviet Union from 1928 until 1938. The first excerpt — located at the start of the response — reflects the consistent demonstration of two of the features of the independent source investigation, namely, the key inquiry question and sub-questions. The second excerpt — located in the critical summary of evidence — reflects the detailed use of evidence from primary and secondary sources that demonstrate the application of the key inquiry question and sub-questions.

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

Excerpt 1

Key Inquiry Question: To what extent did Joseph Stalin's strategic methods and policies contribute to the consolidation and maintenance of his political power in the Soviet Union from 1928-1938?

Sub-Questions:

- What specific political policies did Stalin employ to solidify his control over the Soviet government?
- How did Stalin ensure the allegiance of the people of the Soviet Union to himself and the Party?
- How did Stalin's methods impact the daily lives of the people of the Soviet Union?

Excerpt 2

The evidence investigated across the source analysis produced very useful information in constructing answers to the key inquiry and three sub-questions. Evidence from sources one and two directly respond to sub-question 1. The evidence from an extract of Stalin's speech in 1932 and Robert Conquest's book "The Great Terror" published in 1968, both clearly emphasise explicitly and implicitly that the turmoil and devastation of Stalin's political methods were implemented to predominantly serve his personal motives of consolidating and maintaining his political power in the Soviet Union, rather than serving the public. The emphasis on 'victories' and the triumphant nature of Stalin's 1932 speech corroborates the sentiments expressed in Conquest's book, in so far as Stalin viewed the turmoil of the 1930s as a "personal achievement". Stalin (1932) and Conquest, R. (1968) highlight Stalin's focus on using political policies as his main method of achieving his motives of strengthening his control of the Soviet Union, indicating very strong corroboration between the two sources.

Sub-question 2 uses sources 3 and 4, to accentuate how Stalin ensured his allegiance of the people of the Soviet Union to himself. Hosford, D., Kachurin, P and Lamont, T. (2015) conveyed how the creation of an environment of tension and fear ensured allegiance, as people felt forced to show full, unreserved support for Stalin due to the public's widespread fear of the Gulags. Whereas Toidze, I. (1935) corroborates this idea of the public feeling compelled to show support, through the influence of propaganda, which shaped the people of the Soviet Union's view of Stalin. This is pertinent to the key inquiry question, as it describes how Stalin was able to maintain his power in the Soviet Union. *good.*

Perspectives given by Morley (1938), a British civilian, and Anonymous (1935), an unknown protestor, are extremely useful in answering the third sub-question. Both sources corroborate the public's experience of poor quality of life and harsh living conditions. Morley (1938) is useful in displaying living conditions with regard to the availability and pricing of food within the Soviet Union, whilst conveying Stalin's neglect of the issue, with his main focus on industrialising the Soviet Union. Anonymous (1935) corroborates the display of poor living conditions and Stalin failing to act on the issue. This source additionally speaks of the use of propaganda which Stalin implemented to shape the public's view of him and detract from the harsh living conditions in order to consolidate his power. *✓*

Additional advice

- If student response reflects academic misconduct, annotate clearly how the school policy for academic integrity has been applied. For instance, if a student has plagiarised
 - annotate the response to indicate the section/s that have been authenticated as the student's own work and for which judgments have been made (*QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v6.0, Section 11.1.5*)
 - make the annotations on the ISMG for the affected criterion or criteria.
- IA2 templates, if provided, should be designed to align with all relevant criteria.

Internal assessment 3 (IA3)



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	15
Authentication	8
Authenticity	3
Item construction	4
Scope and scale	1

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- described all the features of the task, including the need for a student-generated key inquiry question. Various phrases can be used to signify that the key inquiry question is student-generated, for instance
 - Student-generated key inquiry question
 - You must create your own key inquiry question
 - To create this task, you must develop a key inquiry question
- directed students to demonstrate ethical scholarship via the application of a recognised system of referencing *and* a reference list.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- include checkpoints that align with the IA3 task specifications, rather than the IA2 task specifications. For instance, reference is made to

- a key inquiry question, rather than a key inquiry question and sub-questions
- an introduction, body and concluding paragraphs, rather than a rationale, source analysis and critical summary of evidence.

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	2
Layout	0
Transparency	1

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that modelled accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation by:

- using consistent tenses
- starting proper nouns with a capitalised letter
- using apostrophes to signify ownership
- ending sentences with a full stop.

Practices to strengthen

There were no significant issues identified for improvement.

Additional advice

- When devising the IA3, schools must ensure that they do not select a topic that the QCAA has nominated for the external assessment.
- Ensure the key inquiry question and quotes used within the response are included in the word count.
- The key inquiry question should appear by itself at the start of the response.

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	98.52	0.59	0.89	0.00
2	Devising and conducting	99.11	0.59	0.30	0.00
3	Analysing	97.03	2.97	0.00	0.00
4	Synthesising	95.55	2.97	1.19	0.30
5	Evaluating	90.50	8.01	1.19	0.30
6	Creating and communicating	97.33	1.48	1.19	0.00

Effective practices

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

- for the Synthesising criterion, judgments recognised how combinations of information from the stimulus were applied to a sophisticated historical argument at the upper performance level. What constitutes a sophisticated historical argument varies, but its defining feature is intellectual complexity. This may involve
 - developing a multifaceted historical argument
 - refuting, reconciling with or otherwise addressing evidence from sources that challenge a hypothesis
 - addressing the historical, methodological and/or philosophical assumptions underscoring evidence from sources
 - a combination of the above
- for the Creating and communicating criterion, judgments recognised the consistent demonstration of the features of a historical essay based on research and ethical scholarship at the upper performance level. The consistent demonstration of these features requires the inclusion of, for instance, a student-generated key inquiry question. Typically, students fulfill this requirement by presenting their key inquiry question above the first paragraph in their response.

The consistent demonstration of ethical scholarship requires acknowledgement — via a recognised system of referencing and a reference list — of *all* the sources used in the response, whether directly quoted *or* indirectly cited. The latter includes the ideas conveyed by others that have been paraphrased.

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.

Sample

The following excerpts address a key inquiry question that focuses on how Cold War tensions between the USA and the Soviet Union during the Truman administration (1945–1953) contributed to the demise of race-based segregation and African American civil rights reform in the USA during the 1950s. The first excerpt — located at the start of the response — reflects the creation of a nuanced key inquiry question. The second excerpt — located within body paragraphs of the response — reflects the selection of evidence principally from primary sources that convey different perspectives in relation to *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954). In this case, the Supreme Court of the USA ruled that state laws establishing racial segregation in public schools were unconstitutional, even if the segregated schools were otherwise equal in quality.

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

Excerpt 1

Dismantling Race-Based Segregation: The Cold War and the Civil Rights Movement

KEY INQUIRY QUESTION

How did the geopolitical aspirations of global superpowers during the Cold War (1945-1991) dismantle race-based segregation and create opportunities for African American Civil Rights reform against domestically conceived racial ideology?

The Soviet Union and the United States of America entered a Cold War period from 1945 to 1991, where the two global superpowers recorded a nuclear stalemate following a discovery with the potential to change the discourse of history. Whilst focus has been placed heavily on the negative outcomes of the Cold War, historians, philosophers and academics corroborate that the geopolitical aspirations of global superpowers during the Cold War helped dismantle race-based segregation and created opportunities for African American Civil Rights reform against domestically conceived racial ideology. Prior to the Cold War, America was hostile in their treatment of African Americans through racial discrimination, segregation and inequality. However, America's moral legitimacy came to depend on its human rights record during the Truman presidency and thus encouraged the reformation of such attitudes. Foreign tension, particularly from Soviet pressure to live according to the ideological rhetoric it was espousing, the Truman Administration was forced to take action. The initiation of Federal engagement with race discrimination ultimately helped dismantle institutions of racial oppression.

Excerpt 2

A headline in West African newspaper 'Afrique Nouvelle' read, "At last! Whites and Blacks in the United States on the Same School Benches." British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan referred to the Brown case as the "wind of change" for the continent of Africa. A Newsweek magazine asserted that, "[S]egregation in the public schools has become a symbol of inequality . . . It has also been a weapon of world Communism. Now that symbol lies shattered." Countries like Brazil and Sweden praised the Brown case as a symbol of importance and being 'essential for universal harmony and peace.' It has been explicitly established by the global reception of the Brown Case that the significance of this movement resonated internationally. The useful, and equally reliable assertions of both First and Third world countries help establish the cruciality of international perceptions during the Cold War battle. Additionally, groups like The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP) started receiving government support and funding, allowing black plaintiffs to overturn restrictive housing legislation (Supreme Court, 1948). Despite rampant segregation and disenfranchisement, fundamentally, the basis of civil rights was secured by the insurmountable pressure of the Cold War. Changes in attitudes towards African Americans did not necessarily result; historically they continued to face race-based hatred from individuals, groups, communities and societies that still harboured deeply rooted racist sentiment for many years to come. However, both the Brown Case and NAACP traction created a level of opportunity-based equality that would set the tone for subsequent uprisings, activism and constitutional change (Lawson, n.d.). Lawson's assertion is a useful perspective in establishing the level of equality that resulted from Cold War pressures and proactivity. As a result, international perceptions shifted and so did Soviet propaganda and attack style. America was no longer required to defend their ideology to the world and thus, could focus on establishing democracy over communism in the Third World countries requiring direction. Their active engagement in deploying strategies to combat racism showcased a level of integrity and care for citizen wellbeing that was appealing to nations that previously had no voice.

Additional advice

- Marks should not be allocated for the inclusion of sub-questions in this response as this feature is not mandated.
- Students should be made aware that the word count for responses includes the key inquiry question and all direct quotes (*QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v6.0*, Section 8.2.6 Table: Determining word length and page count of a written response).
- Students should take extra care to ensure they are referencing ideas from others that are paraphrased in their responses.
- Reference lists can be organised into categories, e.g. primary and secondary sources.
- An appendix should be clearly labelled as the work included in the appendix will not count towards the students' results for this assessment.

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 relevant syllabus. The examination consisted of one paper (48 marks), and students were required to provide paragraph-length answers to four short response items using evidence from the historical sources provided in the stimulus book.

This 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 stimulus book included excerpts from primary and secondary sources that conveyed information in words and/or imagery about a range of issues related to Australia and the Vietnam War, including

- reactions of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and Singapore to Australian military participation in the Vietnam War
- differing views on the relationship between Australia and the USA during the war in Vietnam
- public responses to Australian troops returning from the Vietnam War
- the role played by Vietnamisation in Australia's withdrawal of troops from the Vietnam War during the 1970s.

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 requirements of the Comprehending criterion in Questions 1–4, including the use of relevant terms from sources that are placed into historical context
- the requirements of the Analysing criterion in Question 1, including
 - an explanation of a difference in how the representatives of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and Singapore understood the announcement regarding the deployment of Australian military forces in the Vietnam War
 - using well-chosen evidence from Sources 1 and 2 to develop this explanation

- the requirements of the Creating and communicating criterion in Questions 3 and 4, including the organisation of paragraph/s purposefully to succinctly and fluently convey ideas related to the questions.

Practices to strengthen

When preparing students for external assessment, it is recommended that teachers consider:

- implementing learning experiences that support students to effectively respond to short response questions, for instance
 - deconstructing questions, paying close attention to how the syllabus objectives, nominated sources, instructions and/or proposed investigations relate to each other
 - identifying the features that typically appear in sources and discussing how they may help students to answer questions. These features include the source title, written excerpt, visual imagery, reference details, context statement and footnotes
 - identifying words and literary/stylistic devices that are typically evident in sources and discussing how they may help students to form meanings. These words and literary/stylistic devices include ellipses, square brackets, sic and circa
 - examining a range of relevant visual images in forms such as cartoons, photos, graphs, tables, memes and posters
 - building visual literacy skills associated with the deconstruction of cartoons by focusing on how objects are configured in terms of shading, texture, absolute and relative size, position, juxtaposition, labelling, symbols, angles and facial expressions (if applicable)
 - writing sample responses to questions where emphasis is given to demonstrating the use of well-chosen evidence and (when applicable) creating a sophisticated historical argument
- conducting time management activities, where the focus is on
 - understanding what can be done during planning time
 - making choices about what to give priority to during planning time
 - developing a strategy that prioritises the answering of questions during the writing time.

Samples

Short responses

The following excerpt is from Question 1. It required students to analyse evidence from Sources 1 and 2 to explain a difference in how the representatives of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and Singapore understood an announcement conveyed by the then Prime Minister of Australia Robert Menzies on 29 April 1965. In this announcement, Menzies said Australian troops would be sent to fight in the Vietnam War.

Effective student responses:

- explained a difference in how Menzies's announcement was understood by representatives of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and Singapore
- used well-chosen evidence from Sources 1 and 2 to develop this explanation
- included term/s from Sources 1 and 2
- used relevant terms from Sources 1 and/or 2 that were placed in historical context.

This excerpt has been included:

- to illustrate how a difference in the views expressed by the representatives of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and Singapore regarding Menzies's announcement could be interpreted in terms of its probable impact within Southeast Asia
- to demonstrate how evidence from Sources 1 and 2 can be clearly and closely aligned with the difference that has been identified; reflecting that the evidence used is well chosen.

Robert Menzies' announcement of Australian military action in the Vietnam war was regarded by both the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) and the Prime Minister of Singapore, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, as a significant step in the development of conflict, however this decision was understood differently. The DRV interpreted the announcement as "extremely serious" (S.1), increasing the "threat of war expansion in Indochina and south east Asia" (S.1) and violating the Geneva Agreements of 1954. The DRV also viewed this announcement as a potential "push" (S.1) of the Australian people into committing to the United States (US) "imperialist sinking boat" (S.1), meaning that Australia would be becoming involved in a situation that was developing poorly; the US' actions were viewed as a "sinking boat" (S.1) because their situation was getting worse, and would continue to, so aligning with the US was a mistake.

The following excerpt is from Question 2. It required students to analyse evidence from Sources 3 and 4 to explain how cartoonists depicted Australia's relationship with the USA during the Vietnam War.

Effective student responses:

- explained the cartoonists' depictions of Australia's relationship with the USA during the Vietnam War using well-chosen evidence from Sources 3 and 4
- included term/s from Sources 3 and 4

- used relevant terms from Sources 3 and/or 4 that were placed in historical context.

This excerpt has been included:

- to illustrate how political cartoons can be deconstructed with reference to the symbolic meanings associated with
 - physical actions such as the pushing of Robert Menzies down a road (Source 3) and Richard Nixon and John Gorton waltzing together (Source 4)
 - the relative height of people such as Richard Nixon and John Gorton (Source 4).

Both cartoons depict the relationship between Australia and the USA similarly, despite being released five years apart. Each source implies that the USA was the dominant force of the two countries, with Australia essentially following their influence and instruction. Source 3 depicts PM Menzies and PM Holt as being physically pushed by a US military representative. This implies that Australia's involvement with the Vietnam War was significantly influenced by the USA's actions and policies. The inclusion of PM Holt, the New Zealand Prime Minister, likely references the SEATO agreement and how the resulting involvement by Australia and New Zealand was favourable to the US. This depiction of the US as the driving force behind Australia's actions in the war is corroborated by source 4 which shows the US President and Australian Prime Minister waltzing. President Nixon is positioned as the leader of the waltz, a metaphor for the Vietnam War, with PM Gorton following his lead. The size difference of how the two are drawn further solidifies this relationship's power imbalance, showing Nixon as much larger than

The following excerpt is from Question 3. It required students to evaluate evidence from Sources 5 and 6 to determine their reliability for investigating how the public responded to Australian troops returning home from the Vietnam War.

Effective student responses:

- explained discerning judgments (plural) about reliability, using well-chosen evidence from Sources 5 and 6
- used relevant terms from Sources 5 and 6 that were placed in historical context

- demonstrated an understanding of issues (plural) included in Source/s 5 and/or 6
- organised paragraph/s purposefully to succinctly and fluently convey ideas relating to the question.

This excerpt has been included:

- to illustrate how judgments about reliability can be determined on a relative basis
- to demonstrate how judgments concerning the reliability of evidence from a source may be based on
 - an author's credentials, including their professional employment history, publication history and/or awards record
 - the evidence selected from sources that are used to develop a historical argument
 - the words selected by an author to contextualise the cited evidence from sources and/or convey their historical argument
 - historiographical commentary offered by others, including historians with similar fields of research interest
- the extent to which other authors corroborate or contradict a historical argument.

Despite his credentials as an Author, evidence provided in Paul Ham's book *Vietnam: The Australian War* (2008) is decidedly unreliable, particularly in comparison to the reliable evidence provided by Richard Trembath in *Aftermath: Vietnam veterans and their historians* (2021) regarding the public response to the return of Australian troops home from the Vietnam War. Ham is an internationally accomplished historian and author, with a distinct specialty in war, conflicts, and politics, having received several literary awards and commendations for his work, increasing the reliability of his assertions. Moreover, throughout the excerpt from his book, he relies on first person witnesses Vietnam soldiers, such as that of John Skinner, and bystanders such as Bob Salliard to depict that "people were only curious" of the soldiers, and that the crowds weren't "doing any cheering or anything" to reasonably conclude that the "men felt like curiosities" (Source 5).

However, Trembath contests the reliability of the source, condemning Ham's "intemperate and shallow description", which are evident in the the dramatic language Ham employed assuming that the soldiers were viewed as "emblems of a great mistake", and that the atmosphere of the public was one of "joy amid a deep sense of unease" harming the credibility of Ham's assertions (Source 6)(Source 5). Trembath reinforces this interpretation, believing that Ham discusses "broad concept[s] which he does not explore thoroughly" (Source 6). Meanwhile the credibility of Trembath's provided evidence is improved as he references other contemporary historians with similar interpretations of Ham, such as the acclaimed Mark Dapin, and Tom Richardson who questions the reliability of Ham's primary witnesses with factual evidence describing that the nature of this recollections "happened in different contexts, than is remembered" (Source 6). Finally, the nature of Trembath's to assert the real histroy which Ham has misconstrued strengthens the credibility of his argument further as it seeks to convey truth.