

Subject report: Endorsement

Modern History — 2026 cohort

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

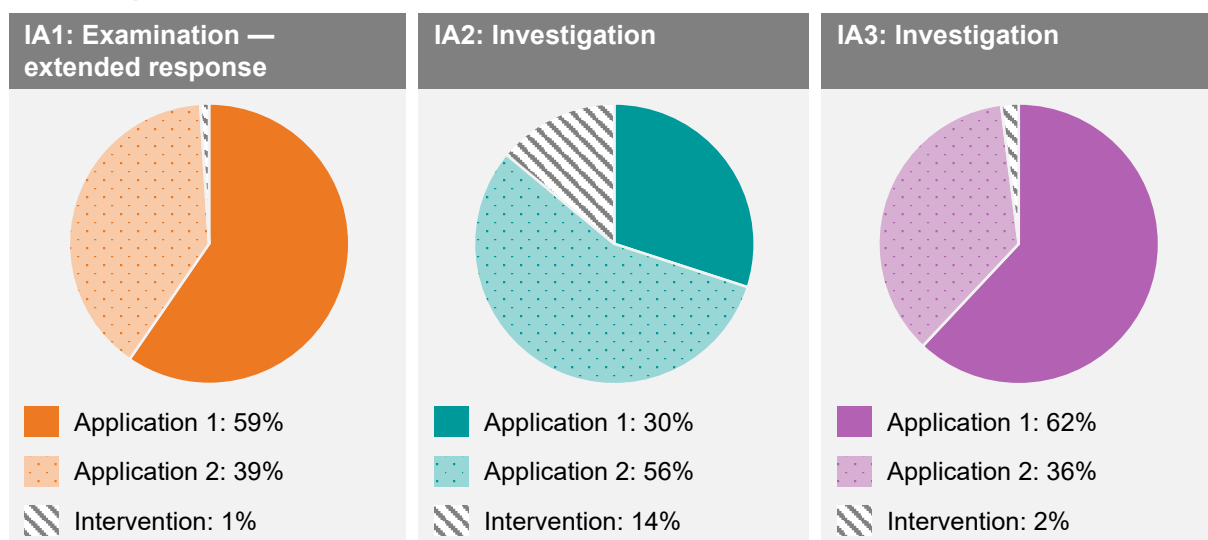
Summary of endorsement for the 2026 cohort

Number of internal assessment (IA) instruments submitted for endorsement

IA1	IA2	IA3
339	338	335

Note: Number of instruments may vary due to changes in schools offering the subject after the endorsement process started.

Percentage of instruments endorsed at Applications 1 and 2



Note: Percentages have been rounded to whole numbers and, therefore, may not add up to 100%.

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

IA1	IA2	IA3
Alignment: 106	Alignment: 208	Alignment: 111
Authentication: 0	Authentication: 124	Authentication: 10
Authenticity: 0	Authenticity: 3	Authenticity: 5
Item construction: 22	Item construction: 28	Item construction: 7
Scope and scale: 11	Scope and scale: 0	Scope and scale: 0

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

IA1	IA2	IA3
Bias avoidance: 11	Bias avoidance: 0	Bias avoidance: 0
Language: 7	Language: 6	Language: 2
Layout: 7	Layout: 0	Layout: 1
Transparency: 6	Transparency: 2	Transparency: 5

Note: A priority may be identified more than once in the endorsement decision for an assessment instrument.

Advice for assessment design

Endorsement is the quality assurance process based on the attributes of validity and accessibility. The following advice is based on the endorsement process for the 2026 completion year. In acknowledging effective practices and areas for refinement, it offers schools timely and evidence-based guidance to further develop valid and accessible assessment.

■ IA1: Examination — extended response (25%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when:

- the unseen question had a narrow focus (e.g. a specific person, group, organisation, timeframe and/or space, typically a geographical location) to ensure it aligned with the syllabus conditions (**scope and scale**)
- instruments acknowledged ethical scholarship, noting how students could address this requirement by citing, e.g. the source number, author and title, and/or a combination of these or similar approaches (**alignment**)
- each source in the stimulus included separate and distinct context statements that allowed students to engage successfully with, e.g. the Analysing and Evaluating criteria in the instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG) (**alignment**)
- all the context statements were clearly identifiable because they were
 - preceded by the words ‘Context statement’ or ‘Context’
 - in the same place for each source, typically above or below the excerpt from a source
 - on the same page as the excerpt from a source (**layout**).

Practices to strengthen

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

- excluding all references to a word length (**alignment**)
- proofreading questions for spelling, grammar and formatting (**language**)
- ensuring evidence from 6–7 seen sources and 3–5 unseen sources is included in the stimulus package (**alignment**)
- ensuring that the same evidence from the same source does *not* appear more than once in the stimulus package (**alignment**).

■ IA2: Investigation (25%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when:

- the Context section
 - referred to the same topic that was selected in the Conditions section (**alignment**)
 - described the topic *and* the aspect of the topic studied in class (**authenticity**)
- students were directed to
 - develop the correct number of sub-questions (3–5)
 - use evidence from the correct number of historical sources (4–6) in the interrogation of evidence section
 - develop a historical argument in the critical summary section
 - base the historical argument on the evidence from the same historical sources that were used in the interrogation of evidence section (**alignment**)
- the sources were classified as primary and secondary, rather than ancient and modern or primary, secondary and tertiary (**alignment**)
- descriptions of the recognised system of referencing and reference list were consistent across the assessment instrument (**language**).

Practices to strengthen

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

- ensuring that references to the word length align with the requirement for a written response of up to 2000 words (**alignment**)
- directing students to write a response that includes all the task features. Refer to the additional advice section for examples about how this can be achieved (**alignment**)
- using correct terms to describe the features of the task including, e.g. interrogation of evidence, critical summary (**alignment**).

■ IA3: Investigation (25%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when:

- the phrase 'historical essay based on research' was used consistently to describe the assessment response (**language**)
- at least one authentication strategy to guarantee student authorship was identified, e.g. the teacher observes students completing work related to the investigation in class (**authentication**).

Practices to strengthen

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

- ensuring that references to the word length align with the requirement for a written response of up to 2000 words (**alignment**)
- ensuring the description of the task features has *not exceeded* the instrument specifications and requirements, e.g. sub-questions are *not* identified as a task feature (**alignment**)
- ensuring task instructions align with the response requirements in the Conditions section, e.g. the key inquiry question and direct quotes are included in the word count (**alignment**).

Additional advice

- Prior to developing an instrument, review the sample assessment instruments in the QCAA Portal syllabus resources.
- Details about task features appear on p. 11 of the 2025 syllabus and alternative sequence.
- Examples of how to direct students to apply all features of the task include:
 - using the phrase ‘all features of the task’ without further elaboration
 - using the phrase ‘all features of the task’ or ‘features of the task’ and then listing all these features
 - listing all task features immediately after using the phrase ‘To complete this task, you must’.



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