

# Subject report: Endorsement

## Study of Religion — 2026 cohort

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

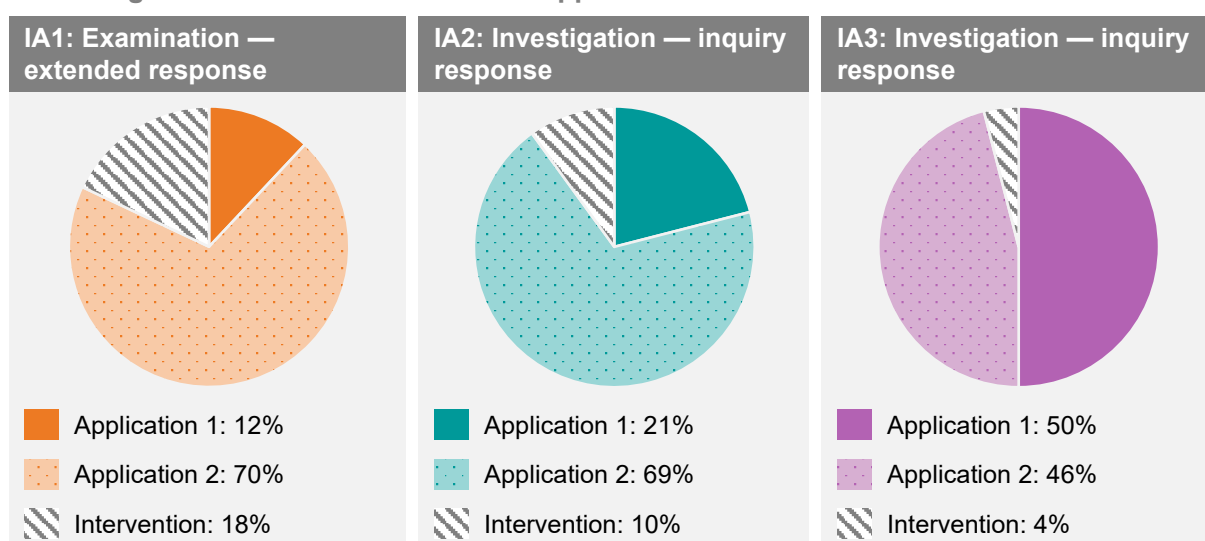
## Summary of endorsement for the 2026 cohort

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

IA1	IA2	IA3
97	97	96

**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: 84	Alignment: 73	Alignment: 42
Authentication: 0	Authentication: 5	Authentication: 1
Authenticity: 3	Authenticity: 6	Authenticity: 4
Item construction: 1	Item construction: 12	Item construction: 3
Scope and scale: 11	Scope and scale: 4	Scope and scale: 13

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

IA1	IA2	IA3
Bias avoidance: 6	Bias avoidance: 0	Bias avoidance: 0
Language: 2	Language: 0	Language: 1
Layout: 6	Layout: 1	Layout: 0
Transparency: 2	Transparency: 3	Transparency: 2

**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 they:

- included stimulus that provided a balance of information related to two of the world religions and the specified social–ethical issue selected from Unit 3 Topic 1 (**scope and scale**)
- included a context and stimulus that was free from bias and therefore did not inform student conclusions or cause offence (**bias avoidance**)
- provided instructions for students that were clear and stimulus that was concise enough for students to engage with in the 15 minutes planning time (**transparency**).

### Practices to strengthen

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

- providing accurate instructions that align with the assessment objectives and specifications in the 2025 syllabus (p. 27), using language that makes it clear students are required to include all aspects of the assessment objectives. Schools can include the assessment objectives in the task paragraph or as standalone points, provided each objective is included in full, e.g. students are required to evaluate the significance and influence of religion on religious–ethical stances on their selected issue (**alignment**)
- ensuring the task does not use language from the previous (2019) version of the syllabus, as this does not align with the assessment objectives of the 2025 syllabus (**alignment**)
- avoiding the inclusion of direct teachings, biases and leading statements in the task or stimulus as this limits students' opportunity to provide a unique response. Additionally, the stimulus must be unfamiliar to students, and not previously seen in class or in texts used in class (**authenticity**)
- providing sufficient stimulus material that addresses the social–ethical issue, rather than simply relating to the two world religions. This may include some contextual information in either written texts and/or visual texts as indicated in the stimulus specifications (syllabus, p. 27) (**layout**).

## ■ IA2: Investigation — inquiry response (25%)

### Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- provided students with clear instructions. The options for topics to investigate were informed using the list of personal ethical issues from the syllabus (p. 21) and focused on only one of the five major world religions (**authenticity**)
- adhered to the specifications throughout the task (syllabus, p. 31), including the requirements for an analytical essay and a hypothesis devised to focus the research. The design of the task enabled students to complete it in the recommended 15 hours of class time (**transparency**)
- provided a context that contained information to focus students on their research, without information or ideas promoting specific views or a predetermined response (**authenticity**).

### Practices to strengthen

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

- ensuring task instructions provide opportunity for students to address the required assessment objectives stipulated in the 2025 syllabus. The scaffolding and task instructions should avoid reference to primary and secondary sources, while including the use of religious texts and other authoritative sources (**alignment**)
- avoiding instructions that confuse or contradict. Task instructions should be clear, succinct and avoid using language from the 2019 syllabus and instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG). Scaffolding, if included, should provide guidelines for completing the response (**item construction**).

## IA3: Investigation — inquiry response (25%)

### Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- provided instructions that aligned with the wording of the assessment objectives, particularly the inclusion of both the ‘significance’ and ‘influence’ of the selected religion (syllabus, p. 36) **(alignment)**
- included a context that was free from bias and direct conclusions, providing the opportunity for students to reach their own judgments and express reasoned support for decisions when evaluating (syllabus, p. 36) **(bias avoidance)**
- included one topic for investigation, chosen from the list in the syllabus under the bullet point that begins ‘Analyse perspectives about religious expressions ...’ (syllabus, Unit 4 Topic 1, p. 23) **(scope and scale)**
- considered the scope and scale of the timeframe being investigated, ensuring students would be able to demonstrate their understanding of the subject matter across all performance levels and produce a response in the recommended 15 hours of class time **(scope and scale)**.

### Practices to strengthen

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

- ensuring task instructions align with the assessment objectives in the 2025 syllabus (p. 36), including all their key requirements, e.g. to explain features and expressions of religious traditions (Assessment objective 1) **(alignment)**
- ensuring the task does not direct students to investigate a topic beyond the subject matter specified for investigation for Unit 4 Topic 1 (syllabus, p. 23). For example, the topic of Judaism in Israel post 1948 should focus solely on Judaism, not Islam and/or Christianity, and in the case of Hinduism in India, tasks should not direct students to investigate pre- and post-independence **(alignment)**
- making careful language choices in relation to the topic of Australian Aboriginal spiritualities and their response to the nation–state. Schools are reminded that there are multiple Nations and diverse language groups, each with unique spiritualities, cultures and traditions. Tasks should focus students on a specific Nation or language group within a particular context and timeframe. This will enable the investigation of a specific situation, avoid making generalisations and ensure Aboriginal spiritualities remain foregrounded throughout the investigation — inquiry **(transparency)**.

## Additional advice

- Schools should provide tasks that give students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability in each of the assessment objectives and enable unique responses by providing contexts and instruction free from specific teachings or conclusions. Direct teachings impede the ability of students to perform to the highest level of achievement for each performance-level descriptor in the ISMG.
- Schools should consider feedback from endorsement events and the recommendations in subject reports each year when developing their tasks. Learnings from the endorsement process can support schools to be better informed about producing valid and authentic assessment that is aligned with the 2025 syllabus.
- Assessment tasks should be written in a way that avoids contradictions with the pre-populated specifications, such as the inclusion of word limits in examinations, a range for word length rather than only an upper limit for investigations, or the incorrect technique or genre for the presentation of responses.
- Students are not to be instructed to submit or upload additional written documentation, such as research notes, summaries or a journal, as this is beyond the scope of the task. However, it is within reason for schools to state in their authentication strategies that regular checking of student research will be undertaken to monitor the progress and authentication of student work.



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