

Subject report: Endorsement

Earth & Environmental Science — 2026 cohort

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

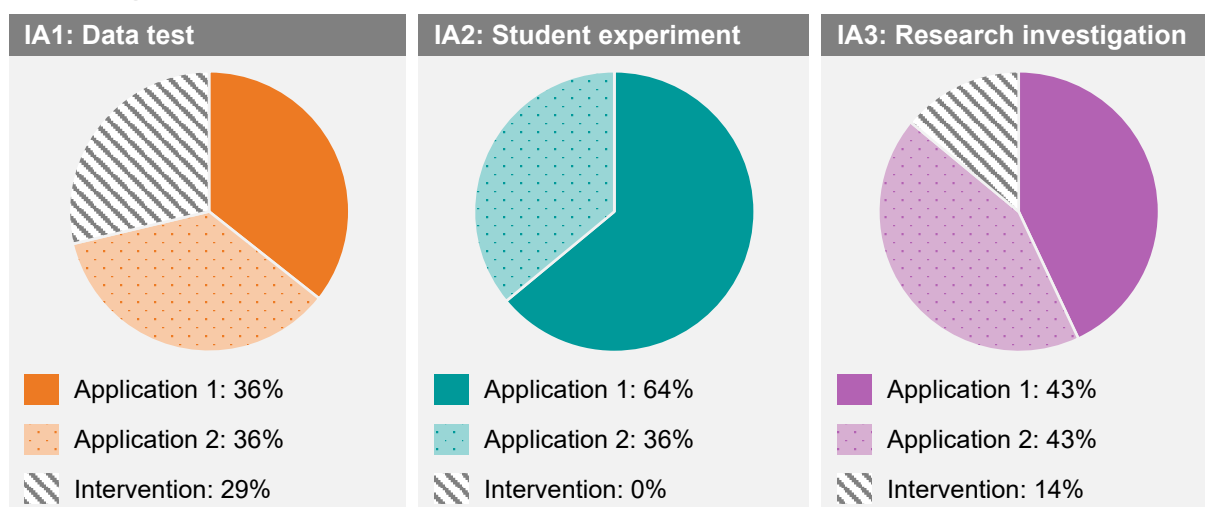
Summary of endorsement for the 2026 cohort

Number of internal assessment (IA) instruments submitted for endorsement

IA1	IA2	IA3
14	14	14

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	5	4
Authentication	0	0
Authenticity	0	0
Item construction	3	0
Scope and scale	4	2

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

IA1	IA2	IA3
Bias avoidance	1	0
Language	1	1
Layout	2	0
Transparency	0	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: Data test (10%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- used clear cues to indicate to students what was required for each mark allocated to a question (**transparency**)
- contained between two and four datasets that were of suitable scope and scale to allow demonstration of different cognitions across the range of objectives (**scope and scale**).

Practices to strengthen

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

- using datasets that are concise, relevant to Unit 3 subject matter and free from extraneous information, allowing students to focus on analysing the provided evidence, e.g. including trendlines only if they will be analysed (**alignment**)
- classifying questions under the objective that aligns with the cognition required for a full and correct response (**alignment**)
- ensuring the objective and cognitive verb for each question align with the expected nature of response, e.g. objective 4 questions require students to draw a conclusion based on analysis of datasets (syllabus, p. 46) (**alignment**).

■ IA2: Student experiment (20%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- contained a range of authentication strategies that were appropriate for the conditions of the task (**authenticity**)
- provided scaffolding consistent with Section 8.2.3 of the *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v7.0*, e.g. a statement indicating that sample research questions cannot be used (**item construction**).

Practices to strengthen

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

- providing opportunities for students to collect primary data that aligns with Unit 3 subject matter (**alignment**)
- ensuring the task includes all specifications from the syllabus (p. 49) (**alignment**).

■ IA3: Research investigation (20%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- provided claims with a single idea, allowing students to focus on an area of research that could be addressed within the word limit of the task (**scope and scale**)
- accurately listed topics that related to the provided claims, including those that could be negotiated between the teacher and student, under task conditions (**transparency**)
- included authentication strategies for group work, if allowed in the task (**authenticity**).

Practices to strengthen

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

- providing students with a variety of scientifically credible claims aligned with Unit 4 subject matter (**alignment**)
- ensuring the task includes all specifications from the syllabus (pp. 53–54) (**alignment**).

Additional advice

- Before submitting an instrument, check the formatting using the Print preview function in the Endorsement application (app). This helps ensure assessment instruments are well presented with appropriate page breaks and other formatting features.
- If an instrument is not endorsed at Application 1, consider consulting with the lead endorser before submitting the revised instrument at Application 2. These consultations are supportive and provide feedback to school communities to strengthen the endorsement process.



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