

Subject report: Endorsement

Marine Science — 2026 cohort

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

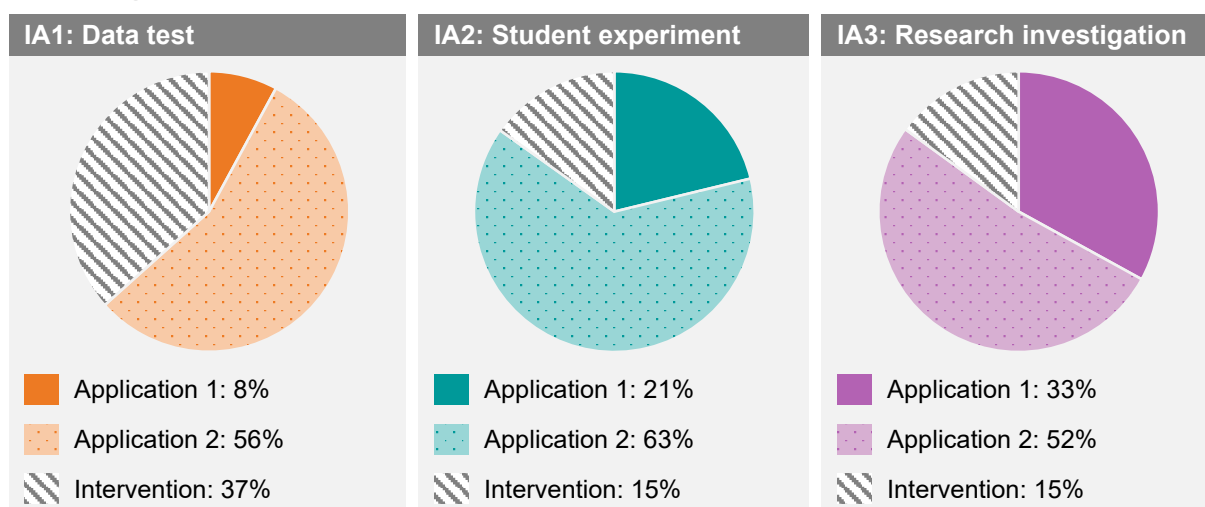
Summary of endorsement for the 2026 cohort

Number of internal assessment (IA) instruments submitted for endorsement

IA1	IA2	IA3
52	52	52

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	38	Alignment	38	Alignment	17
Authentication	0	Authentication	5	Authentication	6
Authenticity	0	Authenticity	3	Authenticity	1
Item construction	6	Item construction	5	Item construction	1
Scope and scale	13	Scope and scale	0	Scope and scale	1

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

IA1		IA2		IA3	
Bias avoidance	4	Bias avoidance	0	Bias avoidance	0
Language	6	Language	1	Language	1
Layout	7	Layout	0	Layout	0
Transparency	17	Transparency	5	Transparency	22

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:

- the dataset included all the data students required for responding to a question (**item construction**)
- the scope and scale of the task allowed students to demonstrate different cognitions across the range of objectives (**scope and scale**)
- instruments modelled appropriate scientific conventions and textual features, e.g. use of italics for scientific names (**language**).

Practices to strengthen

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

- providing two to four datasets that are concise, based on data relevant to Unit 3 subject matter and free from extraneous information, to allow students to focus on analysing the provided evidence (**alignment**)
- aligning the cognitive verb with the nature of the student response, e.g. questions categorised as Objective 2 using the cognition *contrast* require students to identify differences between trends, patterns, relationships, limitations or uncertainty in datasets rather than to identify unknown scientific quantities or features (syllabus, p. 38, Questions specifications table) (**alignment**)
- ensuring all questions require analysis of datasets to develop a response, rather than a description or explanation of subject-specific knowledge (**alignment**)
- using a single cognitive verb in each question to cue students toward the cognition they are required to demonstrate (**transparency**).

■ IA2: Student experiment (20%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- clearly identified authentication strategies to address how individual students would be monitored during group work (**authentication**)
- 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:

- ensuring the task provides 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. 41) (**alignment**)
- providing clear information about appropriate scientific genres, e.g. removing references to a conference presentation from the task specifications when the task only allows for written responses (**transparency**)
- clearly indicating which aspects of the task may be completed in groups (**transparency**).

■ IA3: Research investigation (20%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- provided claims that clearly aligned with Unit 4 subject matter and were of suitable scope and scale to allow student responses within the task conditions, e.g. Climate change is altering thermal regimes affecting the distribution of fish populations (**scope and scale**)
- clearly identified aspects of the task that could be completed in groups (**item construction**).

Practices to strengthen

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

- ensuring the task includes all specifications from the syllabus (pp. 45–46) (**alignment**)
- providing clear information about appropriate scientific genres, e.g. removing references to a conference presentation from the task specifications when the task only allows for written responses (**transparency**).

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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