Subject report: Endorsement

Digital Solutions — 2026 cohort

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

Summary of endorsement for the 2026 cohort

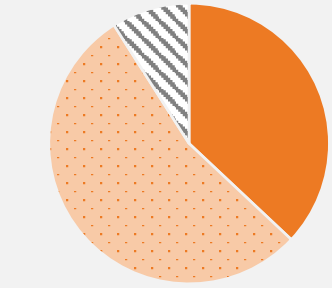
Number of internal assessment (IA) instruments submitted for endorsement

IA1	IA2	IA3
121	121	120

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

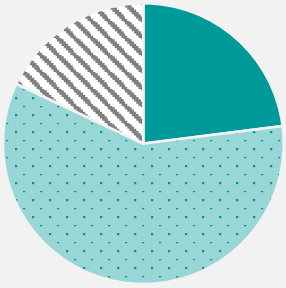
Percentage of instruments endorsed at Applications 1 and 2

IA1: Technical proposal



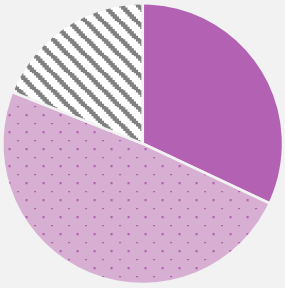
- Application 1: 37%
- Application 2: 54%
- Intervention: 9%

IA2: Digital solution



- Application 1: 23%
- Application 2: 59%
- Intervention: 18%

IA3: Digital solution



- Application 1: 32%
- Application 2: 49%
- Intervention: 19%

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	41	Alignment	68	Alignment	70
Authentication	10	Authentication	9	Authentication	5
Authenticity	25	Authenticity	41	Authenticity	23
Item construction	16	Item construction	6	Item construction	9
Scope and scale	19	Scope and scale	1	Scope and scale	6

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

IA1		IA2		IA3	
Bias avoidance	2	Bias avoidance	3	Bias avoidance	0
Language	3	Language	1	Language	1
Layout	13	Layout	9	Layout	7
Transparency	14	Transparency	17	Transparency	13

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: Technical proposal (25%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- described real-world, non-generic contexts that framed a clear problem and supported students to consider relevant solution needs and possible impacts **(authenticity)**
- included the complete list of task specifications in the task section, reflecting the syllabus hierarchy and intent (syllabus, pp. 34–35) **(alignment)**
- managed the scope and scale of the task by limiting the number of datasets students were required to analyse **(scope and scale)**
- included accessible datasets through working links and/or representative screenshots to future-proof access to stimulus materials if live data sources became unavailable **(layout)**.

Practices to strengthen

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

- specifying a relevant Unit 3 technology context in the task description that matches the technology context selected for IA1 (syllabus, p. 25) **(authenticity)**
- including a task description that clearly states the purpose of the solution so students can determine success criteria related to the quality, appropriateness and effectiveness of the generated solution (syllabus, p. 9) **(scope and scale)**
- ensuring task descriptions provide broad system goals, e.g. ‘provide interfaces for customers, administrators and data management’ as opposed to listing exact features or specifying technical functionality, workflows or schemas **(authenticity)**
- providing an external data source in the stimulus section in a format that allows students to demonstrate their understanding of the subject matter for the unit and topic, including exploring data sources to understand relational and flat file data structures (syllabus, p. 26) and generating program modules that interact with 2D data sources, e.g. CSV (syllabus, p. 28) **(alignment)**.

IA2: Digital solution (25%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- described a digital problem that was sufficiently different from the problem explored in IA1 to provide adequate opportunity for unique responses **(authenticity)**
- described one near-complete draft checkpoint in the same format as the final submission (see *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v7.0*, Section 8.2.5) **(authentication)**.

Practices to strengthen

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

- explicitly stating in the task description a Unit 3 technology context that matches the technology context used in IA1 **(authenticity)**
- including the full list of task specifications, reflecting the syllabus order and intent (syllabus, p. 39) **(alignment)**
- designing the stimulus to align with the 2025 syllabus and include only functional requirements, non-functional requirements (including useability and visual communication), end-user profiles/personas and data (syllabus, p. 40) **(alignment)**
- providing working hyperlinks or high-quality, legible images of an accessible external data source aligned with Unit 3 subject matter, including relational and flat file data structures, so students can demonstrate their understanding of the subject matter for the unit and topic, including the ability to generate program modules that interact with 2D data sources (syllabus, p. 28) **(alignment)**
- specifying functional, non-functional and data requirements as broad system goals rather than exact features, workflows or schemas, allowing adequate opportunity for unique responses **(authenticity)**
- describing accessible end-user profiles that clearly articulate the relevant needs and wants of the intended user category, supporting students to determine success criteria and consider impacts **(authenticity)**.

IA3: Digital solution (25%)

Effective practices

Assessment instruments demonstrated validity and accessibility when they:

- specified clear interactions between digital systems in the functional requirements, providing students with the opportunity to demonstrate and evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency and useability of their digital solution **(alignment)**
- included scaffolding that provided prompts and cues about response requirements without repeating or contradicting instrument conditions or instructions, supporting evidence of possible solutions for secure data and data repositories **(item construction)**.

Practices to strengthen

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

- identifying a real-world problem and stimulus materials that make the data security problem explicit and provide sufficient contextual detail for students to consider risks to data confidentiality, integrity and availability, and evaluate impacts on data security and privacy within the context of the real-world problem and generated digital solution **(alignment)**
- ensuring the full list of task specifications aligns with the syllabus requirements (syllabus, p. 43), including developing possible solutions for secure data and data repositories and evaluating impacts on data security and privacy **(alignment)**
- referring students to the attached stimulus in the stimulus section of the task and including a separate PDF stimulus document with headings and content aligned with the syllabus (p. 43), e.g. functional requirements, non-functional requirements, end-user profiles/proto-personas, information about data repositories **(alignment)**
- specifying broad system goals in the functional requirements of the stimulus without prescribing exact features, workflows or schemas, allowing students to develop possible solutions for secure data and data repositories **(authenticity)**
- including end-user profiles or proto-personas with sufficient contextual information to support the determination of success criteria and consider the implications of data security and privacy for different user groups **(authenticity)**
- including accessible sample datasets in formats aligned with Unit 4 subject matter (e.g. API, JSON, XML), supported by working links and/or representative screenshots, to support endorsement review and future-proof the instrument if the original data source becomes unavailable **(alignment)**.

Additional advice

- Across IA1, IA2 and IA3, scaffolding can guide students in how to present work in progress, such as planning and previous iterations, including guidance about managing response length to support effective communication of the problem-solving process.
- For all assessment tasks, ensure that task instructions are kept separate from the context so the purpose of each section is maintained. The context frames the real-world problem and the task section communicates what students must do with a clear overarching goal or purpose.
- Before submission, ensure all datasets, hyperlinks and attachments are accessible in the Endorsement application (app), and include representative screenshots or local copies where appropriate. Check the original formats of data sources and convert formats such as XLSX, XML or JSON to CSV format for Unit 3 assessment.
- Before reusing elements of a previously endorsed or sample instrument, review task specifications, headings, terminology and scaffolding to ensure they align with the 2025 syllabus and *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v7.0*. This includes removing additional information from a stimulus document so that the task context and instructions are not repeated.
- Before submitting an instrument, check the formatting using the Print preview function in the Endorsement 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, consult 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.