Assessor (confirmation) manual v4.0

March 2025

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1   Introduction

Confirmation is an annual quality assurance process for General and General (Extension) subjects based on the reliability attribute of quality assessment. Confirmation examines the accuracy and consistency of teachers' judgments about students' responses to summative internal assessment instruments to ensure comparability of results across Queensland. The confirmation process aims to ensure fair and reliable results for students. The Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) works in partnership with schools, and each confirmation event follows a set process to ensure comparability. For further information, see *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v6.0,* Section 9.6.

Each year, schools submit provisional marks for summative internal assessment for Units 3 and 4 to the QCAA, as outlined in the Senior Education Profile (SEP) calendar. These marks are provisional until the QCAA confirms them. The QCAA identifies the responses required for confirmation and notifies schools through the QCAA Portal, where schools then submit these sample responses.

Assessors (confirmation) review submissions from each school containing sample student responses to check that the application of the instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG) is accurate and consistent. The outcome of the independent reviews provides the basis for the QCAA to determine the appropriateness of marks and make the final decision about student results. Overall subject results for General and General (Extension) subjects are determined by a student's confirmed results in the summative internal assessment instruments specified by the relevant syllabus, and the summative external assessment.

The relevant online QCAA Assessment literacy modules, in conjunction with assessor training, provide the basis for understanding the confirmation process. The QCAA provides assessors (confirmation) with training and support to make appropriate evidence-based decisions about summative internal assessment judgments. Lead and chief confirmers receive additional role-specific training to support the additional functions that are part of their roles and responsibilities.

The confirmation process set out in the *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook* as implemented by the QCAA, including the review procedures, may change from time to time in response to emerging circumstances. The QCAA will ensure that any change to published processes or timelines is communicated to schools and assessors (confirmation).

1.1   Purpose of this manual

This manual is for assessors appointed as confirmers, lead confirmers and chief confirmers to support their work in relevant confirmation processes. It should be used in conjunction with other QCAA information and resources including:

- the *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook*

- syllabuses for General and General (Extension) senior subjects

- help guides (quick steps) in the QCAA Portal that give step-by-step instructions to complete actions in the Confirmation application (app)

- Confirmation resources for assessors on the QCAA website. (**Note:** This page is only available via the direct URL, www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/quality-assurance/confirmation/resources)

- resources for schools, available on the QCAA website and in the Noticeboard and Syllabuses apps in the QCAA Portal.

2 Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Confirmation community of practice

Quality assuring judgments is a collaborative process. The responsibility is shared by schools, experienced teachers employed as assessors (confirmation), and the QCAA. This creates a community of practice with all participants working toward a common goal to ensure students receive confirmed results. During the scheduled confirmation events, provisional marks are usually reviewed at online meetings, further developing this community of practice.

Figure 1: Confirmation community of practice

Practice
Participants develop a common understanding and language in the domain through their work and participation in a community.

Community of practice

Community
Participants support each other and share information within the domain.

Domain
Participants share an interest and expertise in quality assuring assessment instruments.
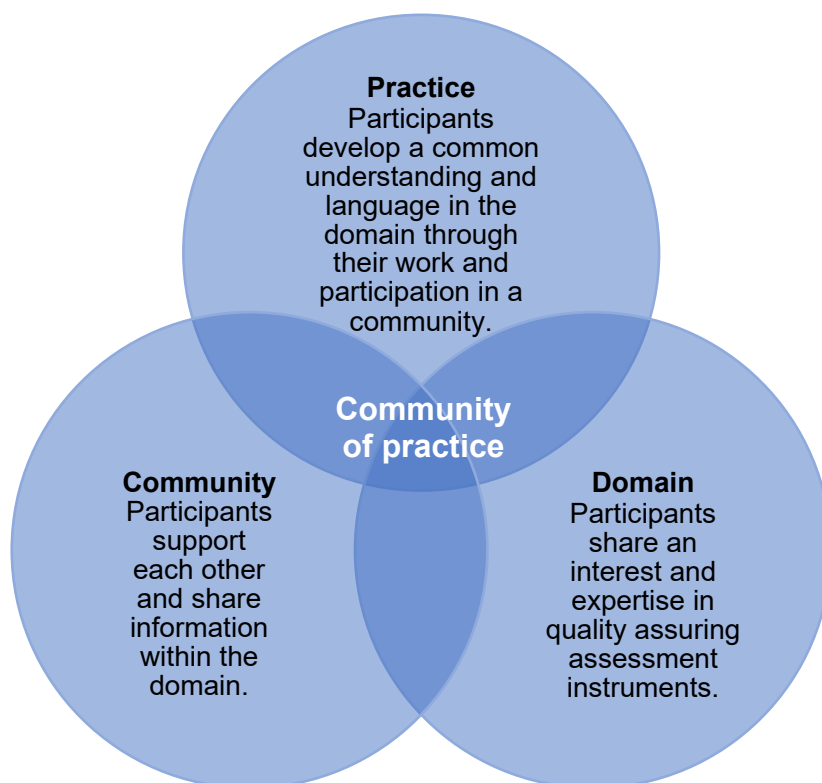
2.2 Confirmation roles

The QCAA employs and trains assessors (confirmation) to review sample student responses to summative internal assessment and make decisions about the accuracy and consistency of school judgments. Assessors include:

- confirmers (see 3.3.1 Confirmer)
- lead confirmers (see 3.3.2 Lead confirmer)
- chief confirmers (see 3.3.3 Chief confirmer).

A range of other roles also contribute to the confirmation process, including:

- principal education officers (PEOs), subject matter experts
- other QCAA staff including learning area managers and Quality Assurance Unit and Program Delivery Branch officers.

The QCAA appoints reserve assessors to fill absences during a confirmation event.

2.3   Performance standards

To be effective in their role, QCAA assessors (confirmation) must have specific characteristics. Assessors attend confirmation training as required to refine the knowledge and skills required in their role.

Characteristics of effective QCAA assessors (confirmation)	
Knowledge	Confirmers, lead confirmers and chief confirmers have a thorough understanding of: • quality assurance processes and procedures • their syllabus, especially its assessment information, syllabus objectives and ISMGs • QCAA subject-specific resources, such as subject reports • their role and responsibilities.
Decision-making skills	Confirmers, lead confirmers and chief confirmers have high-level evaluation and decision-making skills that enable them to: • be flexible in their approach, recognising that school contexts affect how the syllabus and assessment is implemented • identify evidence in sample student responses • apply QCAA confirmation procedures when reviewing sample student responses • make informed decisions and document them.
Communication skills	Confirmers, lead confirmers and chief confirmers are highly effective communicators. They: • use evidence to provide clear, concise decisions and appropriate terminology • conduct professional conversations when required • are approachable and respectful.
Conduct	Confirmers, lead confirmers and chief confirmers observe a high standard of ethical and professional conduct. They: • ensure the confidentiality and security of assessment tasks, sample student responses and review decisions • remove all downloaded files and copies of assessment tasks, sample student responses and review decisions from all devices • communicate only with the relevant people in accordance with their role regarding confirmation-related work • are collaborative • are positive and supportive in their approach when reviewing sample student responses.

2.3.1   Conduct

Assessors (confirmation) are employed to perform a particular role, to a high standard, within the stated timelines.

As casual employees of the QCAA, QCAA assessors (confirmation) must demonstrate the characteristics of effective assessors and comply with the *Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service* while performing their duties, including:

• during confirmation events

• if using social media

• when engaging with stakeholders and in social settings

- when completing their work as an assessor (confirmation) in their approach to reviewing sample student responses, making decisions about school judgments in sample student responses, completing confirmer reviews and making interim mark decisions.

The *Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service* is available via the QCAA website at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/about/corporate-policies/code-of-conduct.

Performance

Confirmers, lead confirmers and chief confirmers who do not demonstrate the characteristics of an effective assessor will have their conduct reviewed and may have their employment terminated. See 4 Assessor appointment.

Examples of performance issues may include:

- not carrying out their responsibilities as an assessor

- inappropriate workplace behaviour and personal conduct

- refusal to realign decision-making in accordance with instructions from QCAA officers or the lead or chief confirmer

- breaches of confidentiality

- conflict of interest

- unethical conduct.

Note: Casual employees engaged by the QCAA to support the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) system are employed under section 41 of the *Education (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority) Act 2014* (Qld) (the Act). They are employed under section 41 of the Act as officers of the QCAA, not as teachers. Section 41 provides that employees engaged under that section are not subject to any industrial instrument or any determination or rule of an industrial tribunal.

2.3.2　Confidentiality

Participation in quality assurance processes provides privileged access to confidential material. Assessors (confirmation) must be mindful of the importance of privacy and confidentiality related to all aspects of their work. For example, confirmers do not use devices to capture any part of a school submission. This would be a serious breach of confidentiality and undermine public confidence in the process.

Assessors complete quality assurance work using their own device or a device provided by their school. When using a device, assessors must ensure privacy is not jeopardised. They should be mindful of:

- the security of their device

- where they complete work that occurs outside a QCAA-organised location, so that others cannot view or read information related to confirmation.

At the conclusion of any confirmation work, assessors must check their desktop and the downloads folder and must delete any relevant files.

Assessors may share their learnings from confirmation as part of a community of practice. However, assessors (confirmation) are not to discuss anything specific to the review work. Communicating about this outside of the workflow is a breach of confidentiality.

This means assessors only discuss student samples, school submissions and decisions with the appropriate person in the required format in the context of their role, e.g. via the messages

function in the Confirmation app with their lead confirmer, or with the chief confirmer if they are a lead confirmer. They do not discuss their review work with another confirmer, lead confirmer or anybody outside the confirmation process, such as personnel from any school or the public. See the *Assessor training: Confidentiality* video, available through the Confirmation resources for assessors on the QCAA website.

2.3.3 Conflict of interest

All confirmers, lead confirmers and chief confirmers must advise the QCAA through the advised process for the relevant event, in writing, of any potential conflict of interest with any school other than the school at which they are currently employed. Situations that give rise to a potential conflict of interest include where the confirmer has, for a particular school:

- the same community of practice in relation to cross-marking or moderation of summative internal assessment provisional marks

- a close relationship (e.g. spouse, sibling, child, parent) with one or more teachers or students of the summative units for the General or General (Extension) subject for which they are an assessor

- a previous recent teaching relationship with the current Year 12 cohort, e.g. taught at a different school the previous year/s.

If in doubt, please email confirmation@qcaa.qld.edu.au.

The QCAA seeks to ensure confirmers and lead confirmers are not allocated any school submission with a declared conflict of interest. However, if an unforeseen conflict of interest for a submission or sample emerges during a review, the provisions outlined in 3.6 Raise and manage issues: flags must be followed.

Chief confirmers do not sample a confirmation decision from their own school or a school for which they have a conflict of interest.

3   Confirmation processes

The *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook* provides the high-level confirmation process. This process involves the following phases.

Figure 2: Confirmation process overview

Confirmation process

Preparation
- School determines provisional marks
- School collects and stores evidence

Submission
- School submits provisional marks in Student Management app
- QCAA notifies school of samples required
- School submits the samples via the Confirmation app

Confirmation review meeting
- QCAA confirmers review the samples at confirmation review meeting

Confirmation decision process
- QCAA applies analytics to identify whether supplementary samples are required
  - Yes
    - QCAA requests supplementary samples, if required, from schools
    - QCAA confirmers review supplementary samples
    - QCAA may initiate an extraordinary review
  - No
- QCAA provides confirmation decision to school via the Confirmation app

QCAA may initiate an intervention at any time

3.1 Confirmation events

A confirmation event is considered to start from the due date for schools to record provisional marks in the Student Management app in the QCAA Portal. It continues until all confirmation decisions are released to all schools for all subjects.

3.1.1 Review meeting

Confirmation review meetings relate to the initial review of all requested samples in school submissions. Confirmers may be required to continue review work beyond the set meetings in some instances.

The QCAA makes decisions about review meetings based on circumstances and communicates the decision to all schools and assessors in advance of a confirmation event.

Confirmers, lead confirmers and chief confirmers are notified by email or the Confirmation app when they are required to complete reviews for confirmation events.

3.1.2 Timelines

The SEP calendar includes timelines for key communications between the QCAA and schools, and specific dates for confirmation events. The SEP calendar is available on the QCAA website and through the Confirmation app and Student Management app in the QCAA Portal.

The Confirmation resources for assessors on the QCAA website provide more information for assessors about the activities, requirements and timelines for confirmation work: www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/quality-assurance/confirmation/resources.

3.1.3 Confirmation app

The Confirmation app is the online platform in the QCAA Portal where all confirmation processes are completed. Schools submit their sample files via the app, and assessors access relevant files and information to complete the review workflow in the app.

Confirmation

When formally appointed, confirmers, lead confirmers and chief confirmers are assigned the appropriate role in the app. Assessors log in using their username and password for the QCAA Portal. Some assessors may have multiple roles in the QCAA Portal, e.g. QCAA assessor (endorsement), QCAA assessor (confirmation), and editor.

Guides are available from the **Help** link in the Confirmation app, which provide role-specific step-by-step instructions for all stages of the workflow. For any access issues with the app, contact ClientServices@qcaa.qld.edu.au.

3.2 Confirmation review meeting process

Before a confirmation review meeting, schools complete the preparation and submission processes.

During a review meeting, confirmers, lead confirmers and chief confirmers work together to review sample student responses submitted by schools. Two confirmers and a lead confirmer are assigned to each submission for a school subject. Sample sets from submissions are allocated to confirmers via the Confirmation app. Each school is represented by a QCAA-generated code that changes for each event. Samples are represented by the student's learner unique identifier (LUI). Confirmers and lead confirmers do not receive the submission from their own school, or any submissions that are declared as a conflict of interest (see 2.3.3 Conflict of interest).

Each assessor role follows a set workflow during a review meeting (see 3.3.1 Confirmer, 3.3.2 Lead confirmer and 3.3.3 Chief confirmer). At any subsequent confirmation review stage (e.g. supplementary or extraordinary sample review) assessors follow the same workflow.

The QCAA uses the information gathered during review meetings to make decisions about confirmed marks for the whole cohort based on the school's application of the ISMG. The QCAA uses an analytics process to determine whether a pattern of marking exists. If appropriate, the pattern is used to adjust criteria marks for relevant students in the subject cohort (both sample and non-sample students). QCAA subject matter and quality assurance experts consider the outcomes of this process before decisions are finalised (see 3.8 Confirmation decision process and finalising a confirmation event).

The QCAA communicates its findings to each school in a confirmation decision via the Confirmation app. The release of confirmation decisions to schools begins from the date in the SEP calendar.

Students can access their confirmed results after the completion of confirmation activities.

3.3   Assessor review workflow

Assessors (confirmation) use the review, decide, communicate workflow to carry out processes in the Confirmation app in the QCAA Portal. This workflow applies to all samples for review, including supplementary and extraordinary sample reviews (see 3.7.1 Supplementary samples and 3.7.2 Extraordinary review).

| Review | Decide | Communicate |

3.3.1   Confirmer

Confirmers use the review, decide, communicate workflow to review samples in the Confirmation app. This workflow applies to all samples to be reviewed, including supplementary and extraordinary sample reviews.

To start the workflow to review samples, and as each sample set is completed, confirmers go to the relevant screen in the Confirmation app and indicate they are ready for a submission. The number of reviews and time taken to complete will depend on a range of factors including the review meeting schedule, internal assessment type and evidence provided. PEOs provide guidance before each review meeting.

Note: Confirmers engage with a calibration activity before starting the workflow, or as directed by the QCAA.

Confirmer workflow

Refer to the help guides in the QCAA Portal for step-by-step instructions to complete actions relating to the workflow in the Confirmation app.

| Confirmer: | Review | Decide | Communicate |

Process	Steps
Review a sample from a school submission.	Read the endorsed assessment instrument: • Become familiar with the task and context. • Complete this step for any sample with a comparable assessment.
	View the marked ISMG: • Check provisional criterion marks (under the **School mark** in the Confirmation app and on the marked ISMG) to understand school judgments.
	Scan the sample student response: • Access files to view the student response. Be aware that .pptx files may have audiovisual files embedded within the slides that may need to be downloaded to view, which may take some time. • Look for evidence of the characteristics identified by the school's judgment/s for each criterion. • Consider any issue that may require a flag.

Subject support is available from lead confirmers. Confirmers are able to message their lead by using the message function (see 3.4 Calibration and support).

| Confirmer: | Review | Decide | Communicate |

Process	Steps
Decide if the school mark for each criterion can be supported.	Consider if the school's match of evidence to the selected performance level and each school mark by criterion can be supported for the sample student response, or whether the evidence in the sample is more accurately aligned to another performance-level descriptor or mark.
	For each criterion for which the school (provisional) mark can be supported: • select **yes** and continue to the communicate stage.
	If the school mark is not supported in one or more criteria: • select **no** for the relevant criterion or criteria • highlight the on-screen ISMG, and consider the characteristics in the sample student response for each criterion not supported • select the confirmer mark from the dropdown list (ensuring use of best-fit approach) • record the key cited evidence identifying what, why and where evidence supports the confirmer mark (see 3.5 Key cited evidence).
	If an issue is identified that requires a flag to be raised, complete all or as much of the review as possible, then decide the appropriate flag and enter a flag comment for the lead confirmer (see 3.6 Raise and manage issues: flags).

| Confirmer: | Review | Decide | **Communicate** |

Process	Steps
Communicate a decision.	Save the review of a sample: • Check that the mark, ISMG highlight and key cited evidence for each criterion matches the confirmer decision made for the sample. • Select **save** to return to the submission page, and complete all sample reviews.
	Submit the reviewed samples (submission) to the lead confirmer: • Check the marks on the summary page for all sample reviews. • Once all assigned samples have been reviewed (and the status of each sample is **completed** or **escalated**), select **submit to lead confirmer** to progress the submission. **Get new submission** can then be selected to draw the next submission to review.

Confirmers may receive communication about calibration from the lead confirmer, chief confirmer or PEO through the messaging function. Ongoing calibration aims to support confirmers to implement the workflow appropriately as part of the confirmation process (see 3.4 Calibration and support).

3.3.2 Lead confirmer

Lead confirmers use the review, decide, communicate workflow to review confirmer decisions and samples in school submissions, in the Confirmation app. The workflow applies to all review samples, including supplementary and extraordinary sample reviews.

Leads make decisions after submissions have been actioned by the confirmers, so they have all information to make a judgment on the flags, confirmer review validity and decide interim marks. To commence the workflow, lead confirmers go to the relevant screen/s in the Confirmation app to view confirmer work that has been submitted to the lead or other relevant information.

Note: Lead confirmers engage with a calibration activity before starting the workflow, or as directed by the QCAA.

Lead confirmer workflow

A lead confirmer should action a submission only after all the assigned confirmers have completed their reviews and submitted them to the lead confirmer.

Before starting the workflow, check that the status of each confirmer review is **Submitted** or **Escalated**, as shown in the example below for Review 1 and Review 2. If a lead confirmer starts the workflow or progresses any flags before this, the confirmers will no longer have access to the submission and the workflow will be halted.

Subject	School	Assessment	Number of samples	Review 1	Review 2	Lead Review	
							Clear filters
Dance	D43	IA2	3	Submitted	Submitted	In Progress	View

Refer to the relevant help guides in the QCAA Portal for step-by-step instructions to complete actions relating to the workflow in the Confirmation app.

Lead confirmer:	**Review**	Decide	Communicate

Process	Steps
Review the summary information.	Check the status of each confirmer review. Proceed only if the status is **Submitted** or **Escalated**.
	Review the summary information (confirmer marks, key cited evidence, flags) from the confirmer reviews on the submission screen.

Lead confirmer:	Review	**Decide**	Communicate

Process	Steps
Decide if flag/s are appropriate. Lead confirmers must make decisions on all flags raised by confirmers (see 3.6 Raise and manage issues — flags).	Process flag decisions from the flag action screen.
	Record a brief comment in the **Lead response** field before selecting one of the following actions: • **Supported** — select this when the correct flag was appropriately raised • **Change flag** — when a flag is required, but the incorrect flag was selected, change the flag and then select **Supported** • **Escalate to chief** — if a lead confirmer is unsure if the flag is appropriate and requires support • **Reject** — if no flag should have been raised. A flag can be rejected or escalated regardless of the submission status. A flag must only be supported when the submission status is **submitted** or **escalated**.
Decide if confirmer marks are appropriate.	View the summary screen, including confirmer marks, key cited evidence and flags.
	Decide if a lead confirmer review (compulsory or discretionary) is to be completed for one or more samples in the submission. Refer to the Guidelines for deciding to conduct a lead review of one or more samples at the end of this section.
	If no lead confirmer review is required, continue to the next process (decide interim marks).
	If a lead confirmer review of one or more samples is required: • complete the review, decide, communicate workflow for the sample/s (as outlined in the confirmer workflow), while also considering the confirmer criterion marks, key cited evidence and flags • if unable to decide for one or more provisional marks by criterion, access subject support from the chief confirmer using the appropriate processes • conduct calibration of confirmer/s as required via one or more of the options in 3.4 Calibration and support.

Process	Steps
Decide interim marks for samples in a submission.	Consider each sample independently and based on the lead confirmer's expert knowledge of syllabus conditions and the confirmers in the group.
	If the lead confirmer agrees with the confirmer mark decisions, enter the interim marks in line with the confirmer marks. • In a double-reviewed sample, if two confirmers supported the school criterion mark, the lead confirmer will support the school criterion mark.
	If the interim mark for one or more criterion differs from the confirmer mark: • complete a lead review of the sample, entering the relevant comment in the key cited evidence field. Consider if calibration of confirmers is required (see 3.4 Calibration and support and 3.5 Key cited evidence). If a common issue is identified in a submission, the lead confirmer can address this in the lead review key cited evidence and apply across interim mark decisions for the samples in that submission • if there are differences in the review information provided by two confirmers, the lead confirmer conducts a lead review. Look at the review information provided for all other samples and make decisions about criterion marks. It is the lead confirmer's responsibility to make interim mark decisions for all samples and all criterion marks for every submission in the confirmer group. The QCAA uses this information to determine confirmed results.
	Lead confirmers must enter a comment in the **key cited evidence** field (see 3.5 Key cited evidence) whenever they disagree with: • the school (standard key cited evidence requirements) • either confirmer (to outline the reason and calibration action taken) • both confirmers (to outline the reason and calibration action taken) • for every criterion when performing a review of a confirmed result.
	Record and save: • Record a comment in the **key cited evidence** field, if required (see above). • Record the interim marks for each criterion in each sample. Progress can be saved and edited by a lead confirmer until a sample is finalised (see Communicate). • If unable to decide for one or more interim marks by criterion, message the chief confirmer for subject support. The submission status for lead review will be **in progress** until interim marks are recorded for all samples and not yet finalised.

Lead confirmer: Review Decide **Communicate**

Process	Steps
Communicate decisions by finalising each sample in a submission.	Check all saved interim marks for a sample in a submission, then select **finalise sample**. Repeat for all samples in a submission.
	Once all samples in a submission are finalised, the submission status for the lead review will be **Done**.

Process	Steps
	If one or more samples cannot be finalised, the submission status will remain as **in progress**. This is due to an escalated issue that, when addressed, may be returned to the confirmer or lead confirmer workflow (typically related to a flag requiring school action).
	Finalised samples cannot be updated without QCAA action. If a lead confirmer finalises a sample in error or identifies that it requires changes, the chief confirmer or PEO needs to request the sample/s be unfinalised so the appropriate decision can be recorded and finalised.

In addition to the review, decide, communicate workflow, lead confirmers respond to requests for subject support and undertake calibration actions as necessary with confirmers to ensure consistent understanding of the requirements for achievement at a particular performance level and accurate review decisions (see 3.4 Calibration and support).

Guidelines for deciding to conduct a lead review of one or more samples

A lead confirmer review (lead review) is a quality assurance process that contributes to the integrity of the confirmation process. A lead confirmer considers the confirmer review decisions in the lead confirmer submission page to determine if a lead review of one or more samples will be completed.

A lead review of one or more samples in a submission can be compulsory or discretionary. A lead review may also be required when requested by the QCAA for a sample which has not been reviewed by a confirmer.

The following table sets out the guidelines for lead reviews.

Review type	Guidelines
Compulsory lead reviews — double-reviewed samples	Lead confirmers **must** conduct a lead review for a sample if any of these conditions are met: • both confirmer decisions are significantly different from the school's judgment (higher or lower) • the confirmer decisions per criterion are significantly different from each other • either confirmer has received recent significant subject support or calibration action and requires a check for understanding • the QCAA has advised that a lead review is required.
Compulsory lead reviews — single-reviewed samples	Lead confirmers **must** conduct a lead review for a sample if any of these conditions are met: • the confirmer review decision is significantly different from the school's judgment (higher or lower) for at least one criterion • the confirmer has received recent significant subject support or calibration action • the QCAA has advised that a lead review is required.
Discretionary lead reviews	Lead confirmers may undertake a discretionary lead review of one or more samples based on the nature of the submission and the specific sample, e.g. • decisions of the confirmers, including previous key cited evidence comments where school judgments have not been supported • patterns that may have emerged from a particular confirmer's work, e.g. always supporting school judgments for every criterion, or not supporting any school's judgment in a criterion

Review type	Guidelines
	• previous subject support and calibration action • variations in confirmer decisions about the double-reviewed samples.

Note: Lead confirmers decide what is significant, based on their understanding of the syllabus objectives, conditions and ISMG, the nature of the assessment and their knowledge of the confirmer/s. Lead confirmers may seek support from the chief confirmer or PEO in determining whether a compulsory lead confirmer review is required.

3.3.3 Chief confirmer

Chief confirmers monitor the progress of confirmer and lead confirmer workflow during review meetings, and the quality of work across the subject. Chief confirmers complete work via the Confirmation app, and via the provided link for quality assurance and priority checks of reviews.

To commence the workflow, chief confirmers go to the relevant screen/s in the Confirmation app to view confirmer and lead confirmer decisions and all other relevant information, including working with the PEO.

In addition to the review, decide, communicate workflow, chief confirmers respond as necessary to requests for subject support from lead confirmers to ensure consistent understanding of the requirements for achievement at a particular performance level and mark.

Chief confirmers are also responsible for making decisions about any issue flagged for chief confirmer review and maintaining oversight of confirmer and lead confirmer review progress across the state, including calibration activity outcomes. In consultation with QCAA officers, calibration actions may be undertaken with one or more lead confirmers and/or confirmers.

Chief confirmers engage with a calibration activity and work with the PEO to support the confirmers and lead confirmers as required before they start reviews of samples.

Quality assurance checks

Chief confirmers complete quality assurance checks of submissions.

Quality assurance checks **must** be completed for:

- at least one for each lead confirmer

- any submission identified by the PEO.

Chief confirmers prioritise additional checks for submissions where:

- there is significant difference between the school mark/s and interim mark/s

- school marks are not supported for specified criteria or issue, as agreed with the PEO

- the app has identified a chief priority check is required. This is based on the set discrepancy thresholds.

Chief confirmers record quality assurance check information via an online form (using the link provided at the start of review meeting) that follows the chief confirmer review, decide, communicate workflow:

- **review** interim mark decisions for a submission, including confirmer reviews, lead confirmer review and the school-submitted material

- **decide** whether to support each interim mark in the submission

- **communicate** with the QCAA and lead confirmers, as appropriate.

Calibration

Chief confirmers work with the PEO to lead calibration and support activities in their subject (see 3.4 Calibration and support), including:

- the initial calibration activity
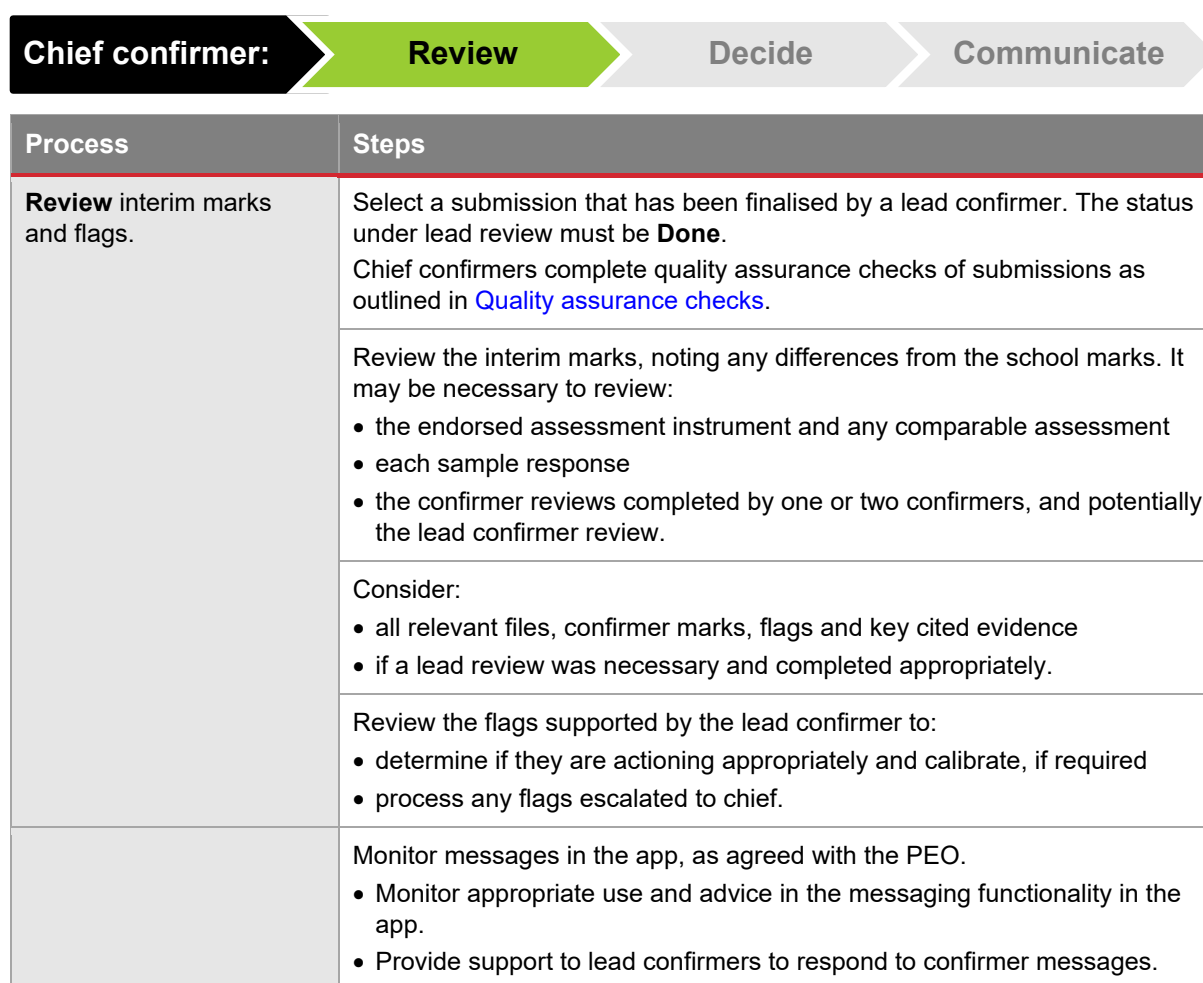- calibration during review meetings.

The initial calibration activity occurs before a review meeting or at the start of the meeting. All assessors complete the calibration sample activity in the Confirmation app. With the PEO, chief confirmers review the outcome and analyse the decisions to determine assessors who may require calibration to review effectively.

Additional calibration can occur at any time during a review meeting. During review meetings:

- if a chief confirmer identifies an assessor who requires calibration or support, they action this in a timely manner
- chief confirmers directly calibrate lead confirmers to ensure understanding
- chief confirmers support lead confirmers as required to calibrate confirmers in their confirmer groups.

Chief confirmer workflow

Refer to the help guides in the QCAA Portal for step-by-step instructions to complete actions relating to the workflow in the Confirmation app.

Chief confirmer:	Review	Decide	Communicate

Process	Steps
Review interim marks and flags.	Select a submission that has been finalised by a lead confirmer. The status under lead review must be **Done**. Chief confirmers complete quality assurance checks of submissions as outlined in Quality assurance checks.
	Review the interim marks, noting any differences from the school marks. It may be necessary to review: • the endorsed assessment instrument and any comparable assessment • each sample response • the confirmer reviews completed by one or two confirmers, and potentially the lead confirmer review.
	Consider: • all relevant files, confirmer marks, flags and key cited evidence • if a lead review was necessary and completed appropriately.
	Review the flags supported by the lead confirmer to: • determine if they are actioning appropriately and calibrate, if required • process any flags escalated to chief.
	Monitor messages in the app, as agreed with the PEO. • Monitor appropriate use and advice in the messaging functionality in the app. • Provide support to lead confirmers to respond to confirmer messages.

Chief confirmer:	Review	**Decide**	Communicate

Process	Steps
Decide if the interim mark by criterion for each sample can be supported.	Consider any discrepancies between the confirmer mark and interim mark entered by the lead confirmer.
	Consider if appropriate calibration or support action has been taken.

Chief confirmer:	Review	Decide	**Communicate**

Process	Steps
Communicate outcomes.	Communicate the outcomes of the checking process: • Record the information on the form provided by the QCAA (external to the app). • In the Confirmation app, on the submission screen, mark the box next to **Chief priority checked?** Completion of this step is recorded and indicated by a tick in the **Chief priority checked** column on the summary screen.
	If appropriate, communicate with the lead confirmer: • when interim mark/s could not be supported • regarding further calibration actions for the confirmer or lead confirmer that have been or may be required.
	If interim marks need to change: • record on the form so the relevant sample/s review can be unfinalised and edited • chief confirmers cannot overwrite interim mark decisions made by a lead confirmer • calibration will need to occur with relevant assessors.

Communicate themes or issues.	Note any consistent themes or issues to be communicated to schools through the annual subject report:
	• Consider instances where schools applied the ISMG accurately and consistently across a submission, and make note of why or how this was effective, e.g.
	  – the type of evidence schools matched to performance-level descriptor/s for a criterion
	  – the way schools differentiated between responses at different performance levels.
	• Consider instances where schools could apply the ISMG more accurately and consistently, and make note of potential practices to strengthen, e.g.
	  – types of evidence schools should match to different performance-level descriptor/s
	  – features of evidence schools should use to differentiate between responses at different performance levels
	  – elements of a performance-level descriptor that schools should consider or interpret in a specific way.
	• Focus on how schools applied the ISMG and how this could be more effective.

Process	Steps
Communicate samples for QCAA use.	Identify and communicate student responses for potential QCAA use in: • illustrating themes or issues for communication to schools in the annual subject report • *Assessment highlights* as examples of outstanding student responses • resource development • training materials • calibration. Record samples that may be useful on the form provided by the QCAA (external to the app). Include information about the characteristics of the response and the reasons for its selection.

3.3.4 Points to note when viewing a submission or sample

Variation to confirmation submission

In some circumstances, the QCAA may approve a variation to confirmation submission if a school is unable to upload a complete response with all the required elements for a sampled student.

These samples are identified by a yellow banner in the Confirmation app, as shown below.

Alternatively, a school may have written a note on the ISMG or in the Confirmation app to explain any missing or unusual evidence.

Assessors demonstrate flexibility in their review and use the evidence provided in the sample to make decisions about the match of evidence to the characteristics identified in the school's ISMG. Where there is no evidence for a criterion, the confirmer mark and interim mark is to be recorded as zero. If there is no evidence of any response, the assessor raises the 'No appropriate review evidence: Not rated' flag (see 3.6 Raise and manage issues: flags).
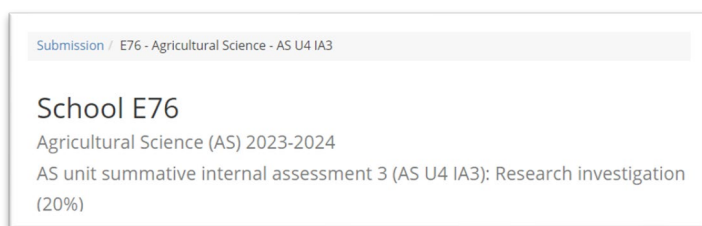
Drafts

If a school has submitted the draft as **part** of the student response, the confirmer does not review it. Confirmers review a draft only where the school has used it to determine provisional marks by criteria for the student.

Alternative sequence (AS)

Some General syllabuses have an AS resource that a school may choose as a subject offering.

An AS has the same objectives, underpinning factors, pedagogical and conceptual frameworks, and subject matter as the related General syllabus. However, the name and sequence of the units may differ, so the endorsed assessment instrument in the AS might differ from other recent submissions reviewed.

An AS submission for review is indicated by (AS) after the subject name, as shown in the example below.

Submission / E76 - Agricultural Science - AS U4 IA3

School E76

Agricultural Science (AS) 2023-2024

AS unit summative internal assessment 3 (AS U4 IA3): Research investigation (20%)

If required, confirmers can seek support from the lead confirmer, chief confirmer or PEO when reviewing AS submissions.

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments (AARA)

Assessors are not required to make decisions about AARA. Assessors use the evidence in sample student responses and the relevant ISMG to make decisions about the accuracy and consistency of the school's application of the ISMG.

3.4 Calibration and support

Calibration ensures the confirmation processes are applied consistently across subjects and submissions based on the syllabus requirements and the *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook*.

3.4.1 Framework for confirmation calibration action

Making confirmation review decisions and engaging in confirmation practices is complex. Review decisions are made for each sample and submission. Therefore, calibration actions cannot be made routinely. In each situation, those involved have agency to determine what is happening (and why) in the assessor's work, what purposes should be pursued through calibration action and how these can best be achieved.

Any calibration action requires assessors and QCAA staff to engage in collaborative discussion[1] that:

- is focused on the problems of practice. Assessors discuss issues and concerns that have been raised in the review process, e.g.
  - understanding of the relevant elements of the ISMG
  - the receiving assessor's actions and decisions in relation to a sample or across samples and submissions
  - challenges in reviewing the evidence in the samples
- is reasoned — uses evidence, explanations and reasons to interpret evidence presented and analyse and justify the confirmation decision
- uses the artefacts that represent the receiving assessor's thinking processes and perspectives (i.e. the question or message, key cited evidence comments, marked ISMG and individual criterion decisions), supported by resources as required

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[1] Based on Lefstein, A, Vedder-Weiss, D & Segal, A 2020, 'Relocating research on teacher learning: Toward pedagogically productive talk', *Educational Researcher*, vol. 49, no. 5, pp. 360–368.

- includes the receiving assessor's perspective and the reason for the calibration action

- builds understanding and future application

- combines support and critique to foster trust, collegiality and critical inquiry, progressing the goal of accurate review decisions to inform fair and reliable results for all Queensland students.

3.4.2   Initial calibration sample review

The QCAA allocates a calibration activity for all assessors to complete using the confirmer workflow before starting reviews or at other designated times.

Assessors must successfully complete the calibration sample/s within this activity before starting reviews for a confirmation event.

The PEO and chief confirmer analyse the calibration sample review decisions to ensure confirmers' and lead confirmers' understanding of the characteristics described in performance levels in the ISMG, and the match to qualities in the student response, are calibrated.

If a confirmer or lead confirmer is identified as requiring support, calibration support will be provided as quickly as possible. This may be actioned via the messaging function or as determined by the QCAA.

3.4.3   Calibration actions

Calibration actions are an important part of the confirmation process as a mechanism for assessor feedback and quality assurance. These actions are undertaken during a confirmation review meeting to enhance the accuracy and consistency of assessor review decisions. Accurate and consistent review decisions assist the QCAA to determine confirmed results for all students in a subject cohort and ensure fair and reliable results for all Queensland students.

Lead confirmers and chief confirmers have primary responsibility for providing subject support and quality assuring the work of their assessor group.

The messages function in the Confirmation app is used for calibration actions including:

- asking and answering questions

- providing feedback on a calibration sample (by chief confirmer or PEO, who may also phone to discuss)

- providing feedback or direct discussion about review decisions (by lead confirmer, chief confirmer or PEO)

- clarifying aspects of the ISMG or syllabus

- discussing workflow.

Other calibration activities to support the quality of review decisions include:

- resetting a sample status. A lead confirmer may reset one or more samples for a confirmer to re-engage with the review in response to clarification request messages sent by a confirmer

- formal performance discussions.

Calibration encompasses a range of actions and may be initiated by any assessor or the PEO.

3.4.4 Support

A PEO and chief confirmer need to initiate communication with assessors to establish two-way messaging in the Confirmation app. Confirmers and lead confirmers have two-way messaging functionality. All messages sent in the app can be viewed by QCAA officers. Chief confirmers can view all messages relating to their subject area.

Assessors can message the appropriate person for specific assistance about their review, decide, communicate workflow. A notification about the message is then visible to the recipient. A confirmer should seek support from the lead confirmer. When a confirmer requests support, they will continue their review. After clarification is provided by the lead, they may reset the affected LUI's status for the confirmer to re-engage if required.

It is important that lead confirmers manage timely responses to support requests to maintain the workflow and seek additional help from the chief confirmer or PEO, if required.

3.5 Key cited evidence

Confirmers and lead confirmers must record key cited evidence in the Confirmation app when they do not support the school mark for a criterion. This information assists with determining the confirmed results for cohorts.

Key cited evidence provides a clear and concise reason why the evidence in the student response did not align to the school mark or performance-level descriptor. If unable to identify the reasons for recommending an alternative mark, the confirmer should reconsider if the school mark can be supported.

Key cited evidence must indicate:

- **what** the issue is. Identify the characteristics from the ISMG the student work matches to and the characteristics the school identified. Confirmers include a brief statement such as 'The student's work is [descriptor] and not [descriptor]', e.g. 'The evidence in the student work identifies significant characteristics rather than appropriate characteristics'

- **why** the provisional mark is not supported and is more accurately aligned to another performance-level descriptor or mark. Confirmers include a statement that may begin with 'This is because …', e.g. 'The student has identified the main significant features of …'

- **where** the evidence is found. The evidence may be found across the response or in specific parts of the response (e.g. in Questions 2 and 4), or there may be no evidence of the characteristic in the student work.

Once recorded, key cited evidence can be viewed using hover text in the Confirmation app. It allows the lead and chief confirmers to see the reason for the confirmer mark/s. Key cited evidence may be viewed by the PEO and other QCAA officers and assists in finalising the confirmation decision.

3.5.1 Key cited evidence field for lead confirmers

Lead confirmers include comments in the key cited evidence field in two situations:

- in line with the above requirements if not supporting a school mark in a criterion

- if the interim mark decisions are different from the confirmer mark/s communicated, the lead uses this field to record a brief comment to explain the decision and calibration activity that has occurred with the confirmer/s related to the mark decision discrepancy, e.g.

    - the interim mark does not support the school and/or confirmer mark

– for each criterion reviewed for a review of a confirmed result.

For more details, see the Lead confirmer workflow (Decide) in 3.3.2 Lead confirmer. Refer to 3.4 Calibration and support for other actions that may be required where there is discrepancy between confirmer and lead confirmer decisions.

3.6 Raise and manage issues: flags

During the review process, a confirmer may communicate to their lead confirmer about a sample or number of samples in a submission. This is done using a 'flag' system in the Confirmation app. The QCAA has determined the criteria for when and why flags should be raised.

When a confirmer raises a flag, it is considered by the lead confirmer. If appropriate, it is supported and progresses through the remaining confirmation processes. In some circumstances, a flag may mean that intervention is required for a subject cohort at a school.

A lead confirmer actions all flags raised by a confirmer. The chief confirmer actions all flags raised by a lead confirmer. The PEO then considers all supported flags. Flags must not be progressed until the confirmers have completed the reviews in the submission and have either submitted to lead or escalated the samples. If a flag status is **with QCAA**, all assessors are locked out of the submission.

The flag process for confirmers and lead confirmers is outlined in the following tables. The process to be followed will depend on the reason for the flag.

3.6.1 Flag categories

Flags are set out in three categories that relate to the action/s that may follow:

- Category 1 — Review, decide, raise flag, communicate. Move to the next sample.
- Category 2 — Review (where possible), decide, raise flag. Move to the next sample.
- Category 3 — Do not complete the review. Flag. Move to the next submission.

Category 1 flags

When raising a category 1 flag, confirmers should:

- complete the review workflow, entering decisions for each criterion. If decisions are not entered, confirmers are unable to progress to the next submission
- raise a flag for any relevant sample in the submission
- continue the review workflow for samples, even if support has been sought via message. Do not wait for a response to continue review workflow
- be aware a calibration message may be received if using a flag inappropriately.

To process category 1 flags, lead confirmers need to consider the specific flag information in the table below as well as the Lead flag action table.

Category 1 flag information

Flag (Category 1)	Reason to raise this flag	Actions and considerations	Next steps
Academic integrity: Authentication concern	The student response is significantly copied. This may be from the QCAA sample or another person's work (including another student). Incorrect reasons to raise this flag include: • incorrect referencing • a strategy has been applied and annotated by the school (see *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v6.0*, section 8.2.8) • an NR should have been recorded. Do not use this flag if there is no evidence for any criteria. Use the 'No appropriate review evidence: Not rated' flag.	• Determine if any evidence in the sample can be identified as the student's own work. • If there is some evidence, complete the review where possible. • If there is no evidence for a criterion, highlight the ISMG and enter **zero** as confirmer mark. **Flag note (label)** • Enter what was or was not reviewed as the student's work. • Include source document/s (if possible) of copied text, image or idea. **Key cited evidence** • Enter a comment where the school mark cannot be supported and refer to this issue, if required.	• Confirmer continues to next sample. • After confirmers complete reviews, the lead confirmer processes flag and makes interim mark decisions. • Lead-supported flags reviewed by the PEO. • Communication may be made to the school via the confirmation decision.
Academic integrity: Exceeds the assessment conditions specified by the syllabus	Evidence indicates the student response exceeds assessment conditions for response length and there is no indication the school has applied a valid strategy when making judgments. Incorrect reasons to raise this flag include: • where a strategy has been applied and annotated by the school (refer to *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook*, section 8.2.6) • if a response does not meet minimum syllabus conditions.	• Estimate what evidence in the response is within syllabus conditions. • Check a strategy has not been applied by the school. View the ISMG and files for notes or annotations by the school about application of the school's assessment policy, in which case the flag is not appropriate. • Complete review based on evidence submitted within syllabus conditions. • Include key cited evidence where the school mark cannot be supported and refer to this issue, if required. **Flag note (label)** • Enter the evidence that was reviewed within the syllabus conditions.	

Flag (Category 1)	Reason to raise this flag	Actions and considerations	Next steps
Academic integrity: Scaffolding concern	Evidence indicates that assessment scaffolding has impeded the student's ability to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the criterion or criteria and provide an authentic response Examples: • an unrehearsed performance appears significantly rehearsed • highly similar responses are produced by different students.	• Complete the review for this sample and other samples in the submission. • In the sample, determine if any evidence can be identified as the student's own work. **Flag note (label)** • Identify the possible scaffolding across samples. Include other LUIs for comparison if possible.	• Confirmer continues to next sample. • After confirmers complete reviews, the lead confirmer processes flag and makes interim mark decisions. • Lead-supported flags reviewed by the PEO. • Communication may be made to the school via the confirmation decision.
Assessment instrument: Non-endorsed assessment instrument	• The school has not administered an endorsed assessment instrument or a comparable assessment instrument. **Note:** An endorsed assessment is considered to be the assessment from the Endorsement app. It must not be changed or edited unless considered a comparable assessment. Examples: • the task has no footer to indicate it was printed from the Endorsement application • variation in question to the endorsed task with no indication it is a comparable assessment.	• Complete the review for this sample and other samples in the submission. • Do not spend an undue amount of time interrogating if this is not the endorsed instrument. Confirmers are to raise the flag if they believe the assessment completed in the sample is not the same as the assessment in the Endorsement app. **Flag note (label)** • Outline the reason this may not be the endorsed assessment.	
Evidence-related: Duplicate evidence	The submitted response file/s are identical for two or more samples. The school has likely uploaded the file/s for more than one sample. Incorrect reasons to raise this flag include: • authentication issue with the sample/s.	• Complete the review for all samples based on the evidence provided. • Raise the flag for the other relevant sample/s. If unable to raise the flag, message the lead confirmer to request they raise it for the other sample/s based on the flag note. **Flag note (label)** • Identify the LUI for other sample/s with duplicate evidence.	

Flag (Category 1)	Reason to raise this flag	Actions and considerations	Next steps
Evidence related: Low file quality	The review can be completed for all criteria, but the quality of one or more files is low. Examples: • sections of performance inaudible • shadows on page impede readability • scan too light to be read easily.	• Complete the review for this sample and other samples in the submission. **Flag note (label)** • Outline the issue with the file.	• Confirmer continues to next sample. • After confirmers complete reviews, the lead confirmer processes flag and makes interim mark decisions. • Lead-supported flags reviewed by the PEO. • Communication may be made to the school via the confirmation decision.
Marking guide: Incorrect application of percentage cut-offs This flag is only to be used for: • Aerospace Systems IA2 • Engineering IA2 • Mathematics IA2 and IA3 • Sciences IA1.	The school has incorrectly applied the percentage cut-offs in the ISMG due to: • incorrectly totalling the marks • miscalculating the percentage • aligning the allocated mark to an incorrect percentage cut-off for the performance level.	If possible, determine the correct percentage and percentage cut-off, and complete the review. Flag note (label): • correct mark total • correct percentage • correct percentage cut-off for the performance level (ISMG mark).	
Marking guide: ISMG differs from syllabus	The school has used an incorrect marking guide, i.e. not the ISMG as provided in the syllabus. This could mean the school has marked and submitted: • an edited ISMG • an incorrect ISMG, i.e. an ISMG from a different IA • another marking tool.	• Continue to review this sample, matching the evidence to the correct ISMG. **Flag note (label)** • Identify the reason this may not be the syllabus ISMG.	

Flag (Category 1)	Reason to raise this flag	Actions and considerations	Next steps
Marking guide: Marking scheme error This flag is only to be used for: • Aerospace Systems IA2 • Engineering IA2 • Mathematics IA2 and IA3 • Sciences IA1.	The school-provided marking scheme (not the ISMG) has one or more marking scheme issue: • contains errors • does not match the endorsed assessment instrument • has been applied inconsistently across the submission.	• Complete the review using the school-provided marking scheme. • If possible, determine the incorrect sections of the marking scheme. **Flag note (label)** • Identify the errors in the marking scheme, e.g. half marks applied but not included on marking scheme, incorrect answer/s, question marked inconsistently across different samples.	• Confirmer continues to next sample. • After confirmers complete reviews, the lead confirmer processes flag and makes interim mark decisions. • Lead-supported flags reviewed by the PEO. • Communication may be made to the school via the confirmation decision.
Marking guide: Provisional mark differs from ISMG	The provisional (school) marks in the marks tab differ from the uploaded marked ISMG and the confirmer supports all criterion marks as recorded on the ISMG. This flag indicates a data entry error where judgments on the ISMG have not been entered in the Student Management app correctly. Incorrect reasons to raise this flag include: • the ISMG has not been marked • the ISMG has a different mark from the school mark recorded, but the confirmer does not support one or more marks on the ISMG.	• Complete the review using the school mark in the marks tab. **Flag note (label)** • Identify the criterion. **Key cited evidence** • State agreement with ISMG and include ISMG mark.	
Student Welfare: Welfare concern	Evidence in the response raises a concern for the health and/or wellbeing of the student.	• If possible, complete the review for this sample and other samples in the submission. • Otherwise, select the **cannot continue review** option and the lead confirmer will complete the review for the sample. **Flag note (label)** • Optional to include detail of concern.	• Confirmer continues to next sample. • After confirmers complete reviews, the lead confirmer processes flag and makes interim mark decisions. • Lead-supported flags reviewed by the PEO. • The QCAA contacts the school directly.

Category 2 flags

When a confirmer raises a category 2 flag, the flag will be escalated to the lead confirmer due to the nature of the issue identified.

When raising a category 2 flag, confirmers should:

- enter decisions (confirmer marks and key cited evidence) for all possible criteria before raising the flag. Once a category 2 flag has been raised, a confirmer can no longer access that review

- raise the flag for any relevant sample in the submission

- continue the review workflow for samples, even if support has been sought via message. Do not wait for a response to continue review workflow

- understand that they will not be able to **submit to lead confirmer** when a category 2 flag has been raised. This will show as **escalated**. The lead will check that all reviews have been completed where possible

- be aware that if a lead rejects the flag because it is deemed as not required, the confirmer can then access the sample again to complete the review. Confirmers then finish sample reviews and finalise the submission by selecting **submit to lead confirmer**. Confirmers may receive a calibration message if using a flag inappropriately.

To process category 2 flags, lead confirmers need to consider the specific flag information in the table below as well as the Lead flag action table. When a flag is rejected by a lead, the confirmer will be required to return to the sample and complete the review. The confirmer will not be able to continue reviewing other sample sets until they have returned and completed this review. Due to the reasons for category 2 flags, when supported will mean that a lead will not be able to finalise all interim mark decisions in that submission.

Category 2 flag information

Flag (Category 2)	Reason to raise this flag	Actions and considerations	Next steps
No appropriate review evidence: File error	Significant file issues prevent a review decision in one or more criteria. Examples: • only every second page is scanned • audiovisual files are silent or black • a video file does not open or download.	• Complete as much of the review as possible. This may include the review of one or more criteria before raising the flag. **Flag note (label)** • Specify the problem and affected criterion. • When this flag is saved, confirmers can no longer access this sample and need to continue workflow on the next sample.	• PEO reviews lead-supported flags to check if they are appropriate. • Lead confirmers cannot finalise (for some or all criteria) interim marks for the sample at this stage. • Communication is made to the school to action and return to the QCAA. • Sample may be returned to confirmer or lead confirmer for review when available.
No appropriate review evidence: Incorrect subject response	The submitted file/s do not contain evidence of the student's response to the assessment instrument, e.g. • IA2 response is submitted for IA1 • Physics response is submitted instead of Business response.	• Stop the review for this sample. **Flag note (label)** Optional — may include details about the issue. • When this flag is saved, confirmers can no longer access this sample and need to continue workflow on the next sample.	• PEO reviews lead-supported flags to check if they are appropriate. • Lead confirmers cannot enter interim marks for the sample at this stage. • Communication is made to the school to action and return to the QCAA. • Sample may be returned to confirmer or lead confirmer for review when available.
No appropriate review evidence: Not rated	The submitted file/s for the sample indicate the student did not submit a response to the assessment and should more appropriately be recorded as a 'not rated'. Examples: • only evidence is a teacher comment about the response • the school has provided a letter explaining the lack of a student response • the response is plagiarised and there is no evidence of the student's own work.	• Stop the review for this sample. **Flag note (label)** • Specify the problem, e.g. no evidence of student's own work due to plagiarism. • Include the source document/s (if possible) of the response. • When this flag is saved, confirmers can no longer access this sample and need to continue workflow on the next sample.	• PEO reviews lead-supported flags to check if they are appropriate. • Lead confirmers cannot enter interim marks for the sample at this stage. • Communication is made to the school to action and return to the QCAA.

Category 3 flags

Category 3 flags remove the submission from the assigned confirmer as it has been flagged as a conflict of interest. Confirmers do not complete the review.

Category 3 flag information

Flag (Category 3)	Reason to raise this flag	Actions and considerations	Next steps
Conflict of interest	Reviewing the sample and submission could be perceived as a conflict of interest. Refer to 2.3.3 Conflict of interest.	• Stop the review for this sample and submission. **Flag note (label)** • Optional — may include details of the conflict.	• Move to next submission and continue workflow. • This submission will be reallocated to another confirmer by the QCAA.

3.6.2   Lead confirmer flag action considerations

Before processing a flag, it is important for lead confirmers to understand the implication of flag actions.

Lead confirmers must not progress flags until the confirmers assigned to the submission have selected **submit to lead confirmer**, or until as much as possible of the reviews has been completed with escalations.

If a lead confirmer:

- supports, changes or raises a flag before the submission status is **submitted**, it will prevent the confirmer from continuing sample reviews. When category 2 flags are supported, this means interim mark decisions cannot be finalised for the submission. If supported by the PEO, this submission may require action from the school before it can be finalised

- rejects a flag, it will not prevent the confirmer from completing their review, but calibration should be considered

- raises a flag (not supporting or changing a confirmer-raised flag), the flag status will change to **with chief**. Lead confirmers may receive calibration messages from the chief confirmer or PEO

- processes a flag in error, they need to contact the chief confirmer or PEO to have the submission unlocked for the confirmer to complete reviews of each sample, which delays the workflow.

Note:

- When a flag is saved by a confirmer, the flag status changes to **with lead**. While lead confirmers can reject a flag without stopping the confirmer's access to the submission, other actions impact the workflow. Lead confirmers should wait until the submission status is **submitted** or **escalated** for both confirmers.

- Lead-supported flags are then progressed to the PEO and QCAA officers for school action or communication, as required. Where schools are to resubmit, samples may be allocated to confirmers or lead confirmers for review. The QCAA will advise if any further action is required. If no further action is required, the QCAA will record a QCAA note in the lead response.

- If any flag status in the submission is **with QCAA**, all confirmers and lead confirmers are locked out of the submission.

Lead confirmer actions

Before selecting any action, a lead confirmer needs to check the submission status and flag status are as required to progress.

The submission status must be **submitted** or **escalated** to progress a flag.

Action to reject a flag can be completed regardless of submission status to allow flag action and calibration of the confirmer.

Lead confirmer actions for confirmer-raised flags

Should this sample have a flag?	Lead action in flag screen	Considerations
Yes, and the correct flag has already been raised	• Select **Supported**. **Lead response flag note:** • Outline why the flag is appropriate.	For Category 2 flags: • interim mark decisions cannot be finalised for the submission.
Yes, but it should have a different flag	• Select the correct flag from the drop-down menu. • Select **Supported**. **Lead response flag note:** • Outline why the flag was changed, e.g. Lead change from [flag name]. Flag supported as [reason flag is valid for PEO/chief confirmer consideration].	Consider if: • confirmer needs calibration for future flag use/selection • lead review is required. Note common reasons this flag was raised inappropriately for future training and feedback.
No, it should not have a flag	• Select **Reject**. Lead response flag note: • Outline why flag is not appropriate.	Consider if: • confirmer needs calibration for future flag use/selection • lead review is required. Note common reasons this flag was raised inappropriately for future training and feedback. For Category 2 flags: • rejecting removes the escalation and will require the confirmer to return to the submission and complete the review/s before submitting to lead confirmer. The confirmer will be unable to draw further submissions until actioned.
Unsure if a flag is required and/or correct	• Check all support resources before escalating to chief. • If still unsure, select **Escalate to chief**. This changes the flag status to **with chief** and the lead confirmer will not be able to finalise the submission until actioned. Status of the submission will show as **escalated** until processed by the chief. **Lead response flag note:** • Outline support required relating to flag.	The chief confirmer must only action flags where the status is **with chief**. If the chief confirmer rejects the flag, the confirmer will then need to go back and complete the review to submit to lead confirmer if this was not done previously. The chief confirmer must only support when the confirmer has submitted to lead.

3.6.3 Chief confirmer flag action considerations

Chief confirmers only process flags that have the status **with chief**. These include:

- flags a lead confirmer escalated because they were not sure of the correct action

- flags a lead confirmer raised.

Before processing a flag, it is important for chief confirmers to understand the implication of flag actions. Chief confirmers should be familiar with the flag actions for each role to ensure their actions are appropriate.

Chief confirmers must not progress flags until the lead confirmer assigned to the submission has finalised the submission or until as much as possible of the submission has been completed with escalations.

If a chief confirmer:

- supports a flag, the status will change to **with PEO** for further consideration. The submission will be locked, and no further action can be taken by an assessor. When Category 2 flags are supported, this means interim mark decisions cannot be finalised for the submission. If supported by the PEO, this submission may require action from the school before it can be finalised

- rejects a flag, it will not prevent the lead confirmer from finalising the submission, but calibration of the lead confirmer should be considered

- processes a flag in error, they must contact the PEO.

Note:

- When a confirmer saves a flag, the flag status changes to **with lead**. Lead confirmers can reject a flag without stopping the confirmer's access to the submission, but other actions affect the workflow. Lead confirmers should wait until the submission status is **submitted**.

- Chief-supported flags are progressed to the PEO and QCAA officers for school action or communication, as required. Where schools are to resubmit, samples may be allocated to confirmers or lead confirmers for review. The QCAA advises if any further action is required. If no further action is required, the QCAA records a QCAA note in the lead response.

- If any flag status in the submission is **with QCAA**, all confirmers and lead confirmers are locked out of the submission.

Chief confirmer actions

Before selecting any action, a chief confirmer needs to check the submission status and flag status are as required to progress.

Chief confirmer actions for flags raised or escalated by lead confirmers

Should this sample have a flag?	Chief action in flag screen	Considerations
Yes, and the correct flag has already been raised	• Select **Supported**. **Chief response flag note:** • Outline reason for agreeing that the flag is appropriate.	For Category 2 flags: • interim mark decisions cannot be finalised for the submission.
Yes, but it should have a different flag	• Select the correct flag from the drop-down menu. • Select **Supported**. **Chief response flag note:** • Outline why the flag was changed, e.g. Chief change from [flag name]. Flag supported as [reason flag is valid for PEO/chief confirmer consideration].	Consider if: • lead confirmer needs calibration for future flag use/selection • lead review is required. Note common reasons this flag was raised inappropriately for future training and feedback. The chief confirmer must only support when the confirmer has submitted to lead.
No, it should not have a flag	• Select **Reject**. **Chief response flag note:** • Outline why flag is not appropriate.	Consider if: • lead confirmer needs calibration for future flag use/selection • lead review is required. Note common reasons this flag was raised inappropriately for future training and feedback. For Category 2 flags: • rejecting removes the escalation and will require the confirmer to return to the submission and complete the review/s before submitting to lead confirmer. The confirmer will be unable to draw further submissions until actioned. If the chief confirmer rejects the flag, the confirmer will then need to go back and complete the review to submit to lead confirmer if this was not done previously.

3.6.4 File errors and intervention processes

Throughout the confirmation process, in the review of initial samples, supplementary samples or extraordinary review samples, a submission may be identified for further action by the QCAA before a confirmation decision can be finalised. These issues are usually identified by confirmers and lead confirmers through the flag process.

If a submission has one or more significant issues impacting a review decision in one or more criteria, the QCAA may contact the school and request further information or a resubmission of the relevant sample/s.

The QCAA may determine that an intervention is required for a school subject cohort where there are:

- errors in the application of a marking scheme for percentage cut-off examinations for one or more samples

- significant authentication issues across samples

- responses that exceed syllabus conditions for length, and the school has not annotated the responses to show the application of the school's assessment policy

- divergent application of the ISMG that impedes the determination of a cohort pattern (see 3.8.1 Determining a cohort pattern).

In these situations, schools may be provided with the opportunity to consider the issue identified and may be required to re-mark an aspect of, or the whole of, a student response/s to assessment for the subject cohort.

The process is as follows:

1. The QCAA notifies the school in writing of an intervention to re-mark the assessment responses of the entire cohort, marking an ISMG and the student responses as appropriate.

2. The school submits updated provisional marks and, if requested, uploads additional or replacement samples and supporting information.

3. The confirmation review process resumes with the review of samples in accordance with the processes outlined in 3.3 Assessor review workflow.

3.7 Post review meeting assessor responsibilities

Confirmers, lead confirmers and chief confirmers may be required to complete review work outside the scheduled review meeting to support the confirmation event. This includes review of additional samples (supplementary or extraordinary) and for some roles, to assist with review of a confirmed result.

Assessors are notified when samples or submissions are assigned for review.

3.7.1 Supplementary samples

If further information about the school's application of the ISMG is required to finalise a confirmation decision, supplementary samples may be requested. Typically, these samples are reviewed by the same assessors as the initial samples in the submission. The information from supplementary sample reviews is used, together with the information from the initial review, to determine confirmed results (see 3.8.1 Determining a cohort pattern).

Supplementary samples are reviewed using the confirmer and lead confirmer review workflow (see 3.3 Assessor review workflow). However, these samples are typically only reviewed by a single confirmer before progressing to the lead confirmer. Confirmers do not have access to the

previously reviewed samples and confirmer review information, only to the endorsed instrument and the additional sample files.

Reviews of supplementary samples may occur after the date specified in the SEP calendar for the publication of confirmation decisions. For further information about supplementary samples see *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook*, section 9.7.5.

3.7.2 Extraordinary review

The QCAA uses information from all reviewed samples, including supplementary samples, to make decisions about the confirmed results for all students in the cohort. If a confirmation decision cannot be determined after the review of supplementary samples, the school is asked to submit additional samples for extraordinary review. Typically, these samples are reviewed by the same assessors as the rest of the submission. The information from the extraordinary review is used together with the information from the earlier reviews to determine confirmed results (see 3.8.1 Determining a cohort pattern).

Extraordinary samples are reviewed using the confirmer and lead confirmer review workflow (see 3.3 Assessor review workflow). However, these samples are typically only reviewed by a single confirmer before progressing to the lead confirmer. Confirmers do not have access to the previously reviewed samples and confirmer review information, only to the endorsed instrument and the additional sample files.

Reviews of extraordinary samples may occur after the date specified in the SEP calendar for the publication of confirmation decisions. For further information about supplementary samples see *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook*, section 9.7.5.

3.7.3 Review of a confirmed result

The QCAA communicates confirmed results to schools via the Confirmation app. Schools consider the confirmation decision and if an anomaly or exception (as a result of the confirmation process) is identified for a student, they may request a review of the confirmed result. Requests are to be made within the timelines specified by the QCAA (typically no more than five days following the release of the confirmation decision) and may be made for one or more students.

For further information about review of a confirmed result, see *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook*, Section 9.7.6.

Lead confirmers and chief confirmers may be assigned samples to review relating to an approved request to review a confirmed result. The assigned assessor will be different from the lead confirmer who completed the previous samples in the school submission. In completing this review, the lead or chief confirmer follows the confirmer review workflow.

The QCAA then determines the outcome of a school-requested review of a confirmed result. This may be a change to the student's mark (higher or lower than the confirmed result), or that the confirmed mark stands.

3.8 Confirmation decision process and finalising a confirmation event

3.8.1 Determining a cohort pattern

Confirmation is focused on the accuracy and consistency of schools' application of the ISMG at a cohort level. Cohort patterns are applied to all students in the cohort (sample and non-sample students).

After the review workflow is completed by assessors, the QCAA uses this data to determine whether a pattern of marking exists. If evident, the pattern is used to adjust marks in the identified criterion and mark or mark range for each student in the subject cohort (both sample and non-sample students). Patterns that indicate movement of marks are considered by QCAA subject matter and quality assurance experts and a confirmation decision panel.

3.8.2 The confirmation decision

The confirmation decision is the official record of the confirmation outcome for each student (sampled and non-sampled) in the cohort for each summative internal assessment finalised by the QCAA.

The confirmation decision provides schools with:

- confirmed results for all students in the subject cohort

- a summary of the decisions across criteria for the subject cohort

- criterion comments where movement was applied or information indicated there were inconsistencies in the application of the ISMG in some samples

- submission comments about academic integrity issues or file quality, to improve future school assessment practice, as relevant.

The QCAA uses information from reviewed samples to make decisions about the confirmed results for all students in the cohort, including non-sampled students. The QCAA identifies and adjusts marks by criteria for all students in the cohort where evidence indicates that the school has not applied the ISMG accurately and consistently.

4 Assessor appointment

The number of QCAA assessors (confirmation) required for each subject is based on student enrolments in the subject and sampling patterns and requirements. The QCAA monitors and manages the maintenance of adequate staffing levels. Assessors remain appointed to their position until advised otherwise. They do not need to reapply prior to each event or when a vacancy is open.

For each subject, reserve lead confirmers are identified after participating in the appropriate training. Reserve lead confirmers, when required, work as an acting lead confirmer or fill vacant lead confirmer positions.

Recruitment processes occur throughout the year to ensure the confirmation process is adequately staffed. The *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook* (Section 12.5.2) outlines the eligibility and appointment requirements for assessors.

The Confirmation resources for assessors on the QCAA website (www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/assessment/quality-assurance/confirmation/resources) contain more information about assessor appointment, including:

- remuneration including assessor and Teacher Relief Scheme (TRS) payment

- leave, transfers and resignation processes

- training for new and continuing assessors

- event information including RSVP process and requirements for confirmation review meetings

- eligibility to continue in appointed position.

Assessors (confirmation) also receive information through emails from confirmation_assessors@qcaa.qld.edu.au, such as:

- event information including RSVP process and requirements for confirmation review meetings

- training requirements for continuing assessors

- vacancies in subjects for lead and chief confirmer positions.

5 Terminology

As a community of practice, it is important that all QCAA assessors (confirmation) use consistent language when communicating within the confirmation workflow. The following terms are drawn from QCAA senior syllabuses, the *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook* and professional learning courses.

Term	Definition
assessor	collective term that includes all roles associated with the quality assurance process for which they are employed, e.g. assessors (confirmation) includes the roles of confirmer, lead confirmer and chief confirmer see confirmer, lead confirmer, chief confirmer
chief confirmer	the person appointed by the QCAA for each General and General (Extension) subject, for a set period, to: • sample the work of confirmers and lead confirmers during a confirmation event and to quality assure decisions • consult with lead confirmers to advise the QCAA on the effectiveness of the confirmation process after each confirmation event • take responsibility for subject-specific information for the subject report, published by the QCAA annually see confirmer, lead confirmer
community of practice	a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and who learn how to do it better as they interact regularly; for confirmation, the community of practice includes the confirmers, lead confirmers and chief confirmer who share the responsibility of reviewing confirmation submissions
comparable assessment instrument	an alternative assessment instrument that is developed and used at a school when the relevant endorsed assessment instrument cannot be used for an individual student or small groups of students within the cohort see endorsed assessment instrument
confirmation	a quality assurance process that examines the accuracy and consistency of teachers' judgments about students' responses to summative internal assessment instruments for General and General (Extension) subjects, to ensure comparability across Queensland; confirmation aims to ensure fair and reliable results for students; the confirmation process is based on the reliability attribute of quality assessment
Confirmation application (app)	the online platform in the QCAA Portal where all confirmation processes are completed see 3.1.3 Confirmation app
confirmation decision	an electronic summary issued to schools in the Confirmation app for each subject, which provides: • confirmed results (marks by criteria) for each student (identified by LUI) • a statement by criterion about the accuracy and consistency of the school's application of the ISMG • criterion comments, where relevant • a submission comment, where relevant

Term	Definition
confirmation event	the activities and processes from the entry of school provisional marks, and in the lead-up to, during and after a confirmation review meeting; a confirmation event is complete when the confirmation decision is issued to schools, and students receive their confirmed result in their learning account in the Student Portal, accessed via the myQCE website
confirmation review meeting	the period designated by QCAA in the SEP calendar when initial reviews of school samples for a subject for specified internal assessments are independently reviewed by assessors (confirmation)
confirmed result	the result awarded to each student via their learning account after the completion of the confirmation event
confirmer	an eligible person appointed by the QCAA to review evidence in samples and finalise confirmer reviews for the purposes of confirmation; also known as a QCAA assessor (confirmation) see lead confirmer, chief confirmer
confirmer group	a collection of confirmers assigned to one lead confirmer for the purposes of a confirmation event
confirmer mark	the mark recorded by criterion where a confirmer does not support the school mark, for each sample in the sample set before communicating to the lead confirmer; recorded in the Confirmation app
confirmer position	an assessor vacancy required to be filled for a confirmation event; the number of confirmer positions required for each confirmation event for each subject is variable depending on the number of student enrolments, the pattern of internal assessment delivery chosen by schools in a particular subject, and the timeframe in which the confirmation event occurs
confirmer review	independent completion of the review, decide, communicate workflow in the Confirmation app that records the confirmer decisions about school judgments made on sample responses
conflict of interest	occurs where there is an actual or perceived conflict between an assessor's personal interests and their role as an assessor (confirmation), e.g. a confirmer would be deemed to have a conflict of interest if they were to review a submission from their school or a school that they have a familial connection with
criterion comment	a comment provided to the school in the confirmation decision for a relevant criterion where provisional mark/s were not supported or where marks were supported but inconsistencies may have been observed in the confirmation process
double-review sample	a sample in a school submission that is independently reviewed by two confirmers before it is submitted to the lead confirmer see sample, single-review sample
endorsed assessment instrument	an assessment instrument for the relevant internal assessment that has been endorsed by the QCAA for the school to use, and to which the sample responses have been completed; the assessment instrument as it is accessed in the Endorsement app in the QCAA Portal

Term	Definition
extraordinary review	occurs when the QCAA cannot finalise a confirmation decision after the review of supplementary materials; an extraordinary review involves the review of one or more student responses not previously reviewed during the confirmation event
interim mark	the mark recorded by criterion by the lead confirmer, for each sample in a submission following the confirmer review/s; recorded in the Confirmation app
intervention	if a submission has one or more significant issues identified as a result of flags that may impact a review decision, the QCAA contacts the school and may request a resubmission of the relevant sample/s
lead confirmer	an eligible person appointed by the QCAA to review and, if required, quality assure the decisions of confirmers to make final decisions about a school's use of the ISMG for a specified internal assessment see confirmer, chief confirmer
list of samples	a list of LUIs (learner unique identifiers) selected by the QCAA from the school's submitted provisional mark data (by criterion) for a designated summative internal assessment; a list of samples is prepared for each confirmation event for each school and for each subject with assessment responses to internal assessments to be confirmed during that event
marked instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG)	an ISMG for a particular student response where the characteristics evident in the student response and individual marks are identified by the school, for each criterion
not rated (NR)	the result given to any student who has not submitted a response to a summative internal assessment, and/or where the school has not gathered evidence of progress of the preparation of the student's response before the due date
plagiarism	a student completely or partially copies or alters another person's work without attribution; another person's work may include text, audio or audiovisual material, figures, tables, design, images, information or ideas
post-meeting reviews	reviews of samples by confirmers and lead confirmers in addition to a school's initial submission, generally occurring outside of school hours
provisional marks	the numerical mark by criterion recorded by a school in the Student Management app in the QCAA Portal; are recorded for each criterion for a student response for summative internal assessments by the due date on the SEP calendar (before the relevant confirmation event); all enrolled students must have provisional marks or an overall assessment grade (DNA, NR, NYA) recorded by the school for each summative internal assessment shown in the Confirmation app as the **school mark**
reliability	a judgment about the measurement of assessment; it refers to the extent to which the results of assessments are consistent, replicable and free from error
request for review of a decision	requests made by a school for the QCAA to review the school's confirmation decision following a confirmation event

Term	Definition
response	the evidence of student achievement in response to a designated assessment planned and used by a school to determine a provisional mark for a summative internal assessment
review	the process used by confirmers and lead confirmers when considering student work to make decisions about the accuracy and consistency of the school's use of the ISMG
sample	the student response to a summative internal assessment identified by the QCAA and provided by a school for the purpose of confirmation at a particular confirmation event

see single-review sample, double-review sample |
| **sample set** | the samples in a submission allocated to a confirmer for review |
| **school mark** | the provisional mark/s recorded by the school, shown as the school mark in the Confirmation app

see provisional marks |
| **single-review sample** | a sample in a school submission that is reviewed by one confirmer before it is submitted to the lead confirmer

see sample, double-review sample |
subjects	implemented courses of study, including assessment, based on QCAA syllabuses
subject offering completion year	the year a student is enrolled to complete the Unit 3 and 4 pair (summative) and achieve a subject result
submission	comprises all the samples requested from a school for a subject
submission comment	the overall comment in the confirmation decision that provides feedback to the school about issues identified via the relevant flags in the process
supplementary samples	additional samples requested by the QCAA and submitted in the Confirmation app by schools that may be required to finalise a confirmation decision
syllabus	the curriculum-organising document developed by the QCAA for implementation in Queensland secondary schooling