

Literature subject report

2024 cohort

January 2025



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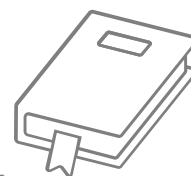
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Introduction



The annual subject reports seek to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement of internal and external assessment processes for all Queensland schools. The 2024 subject report is the culmination of the partnership between schools and the QCAA. It addresses school-based assessment design and judgments, and student responses to external assessment for General and General (Extension) subjects. In acknowledging effective practices and areas for refinement, it offers schools timely and evidence-based guidance to further develop student learning and assessment experiences for 2025.

The report also includes information about:

- how schools have applied syllabus objectives in the design and marking of internal assessments
- how syllabus objectives have been applied in the marking of external assessments
- patterns of student achievement.

The report promotes continuous improvement by:

- identifying effective practices in the design and marking of valid, accessible and reliable assessments
- recommending where and how to enhance the design and marking of valid, accessible and reliable assessment instruments
- providing examples that demonstrate best practice.

Schools are encouraged to reflect on the effective practices identified for each assessment, consider the recommendations to strengthen assessment design and explore the authentic student work samples provided.

Audience and use

This report should be read by school leaders, subject leaders, and teachers to:

- inform teaching and learning and assessment preparation
- assist in assessment design practice
- assist in making assessment decisions
- help prepare students for internal and external assessment.

The report is publicly available to promote transparency and accountability. Students, parents, community members and other education stakeholders can use it to learn about the assessment practices and outcomes for senior subjects.

Subject highlights

210

schools offered
Literature



16.78%

increase in enrolment
since 2023



99.65%

of students
received a
C or higher



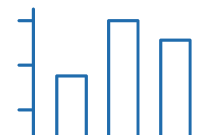


Top 10 text selections by schools for Literature 2024

69	Gwen Harwood	66	<i>King Lear</i> by William Shakespeare
66	Maya Angelou	55	<i>Hamlet</i> by William Shakespeare
53	<i>In Cold Blood</i> by Truman Capote	52	Ellen van Neerven
41	TS Eliot	40	Short stories by Ursula K Le Guin
34	Kae Tempest	33	<i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i> by Oscar Wilde

All text selections made by schools in 2024 for Literature can be found under Resources in the Syllabuses application (app) on the QCAA Portal.

Subject data summary



Subject completion

The following data includes students who completed the General subject.

Note: All data is correct as at January 2025. Where percentages are provided, these are rounded to two decimal places and, therefore, may not add up to 100%.

Number of schools that offered Literature: 210.

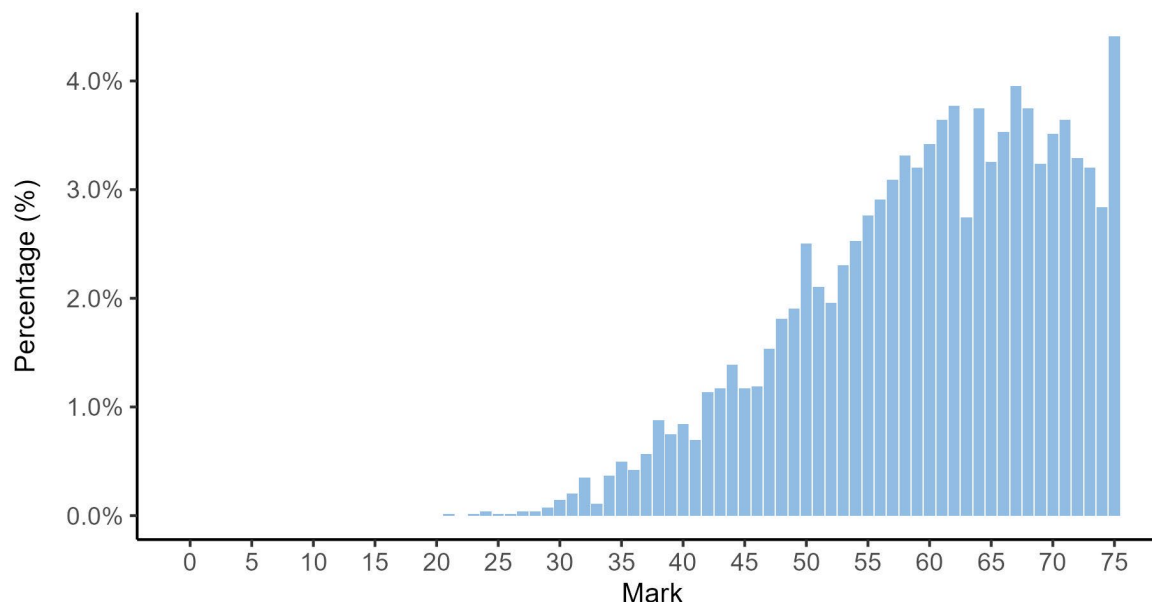
Completion of units	Unit 1	Unit 2	Units 3 and 4
Number of students completed	5,986	5,711	5,443

Units 1 and 2 results

Number of students	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Unit 1	5,873	113
Unit 2	5,608	103

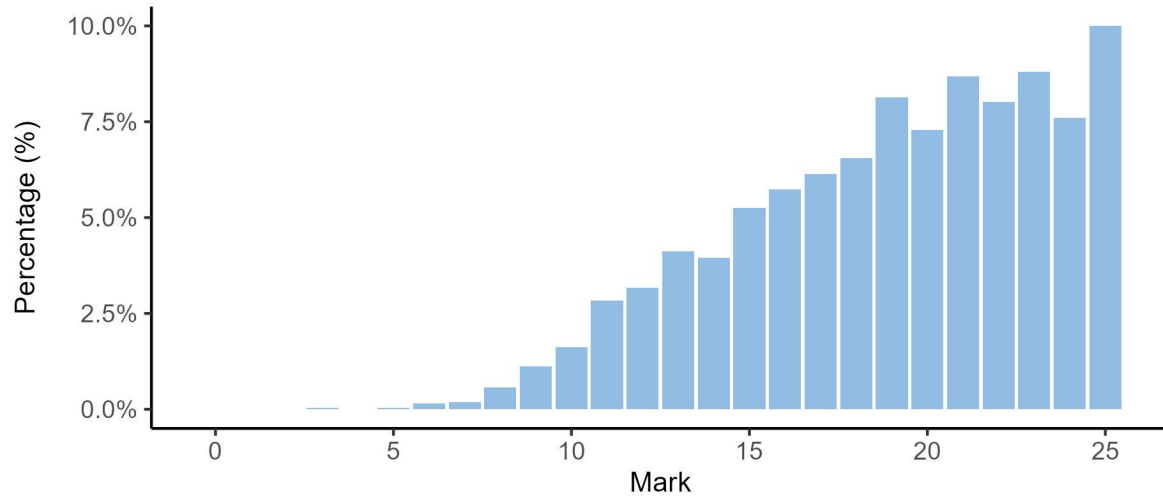
Units 3 and 4 internal assessment (IA) results

Total marks for IA

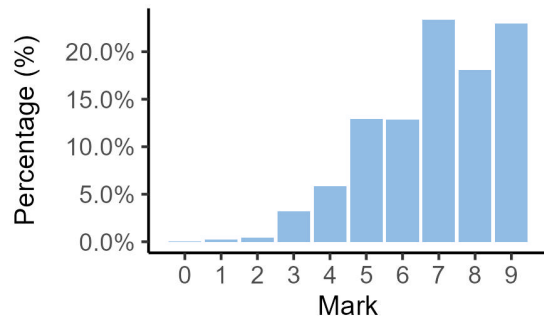


IA1 marks

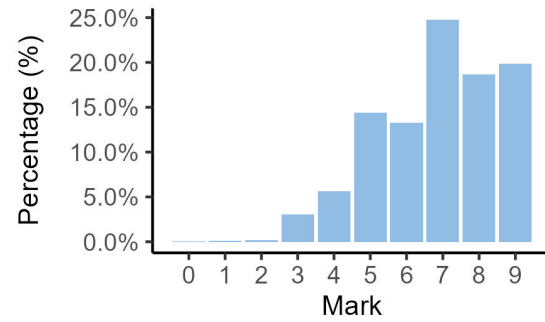
IA1 total



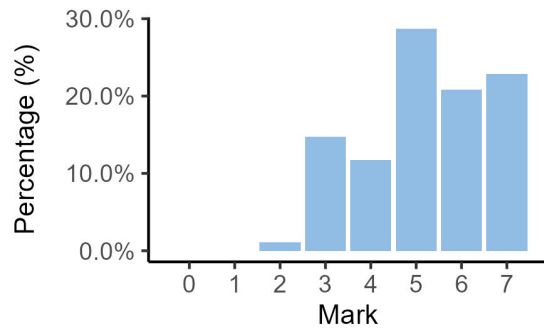
IA1 Criterion: Knowledge application



IA1 Criterion: Organisation and development

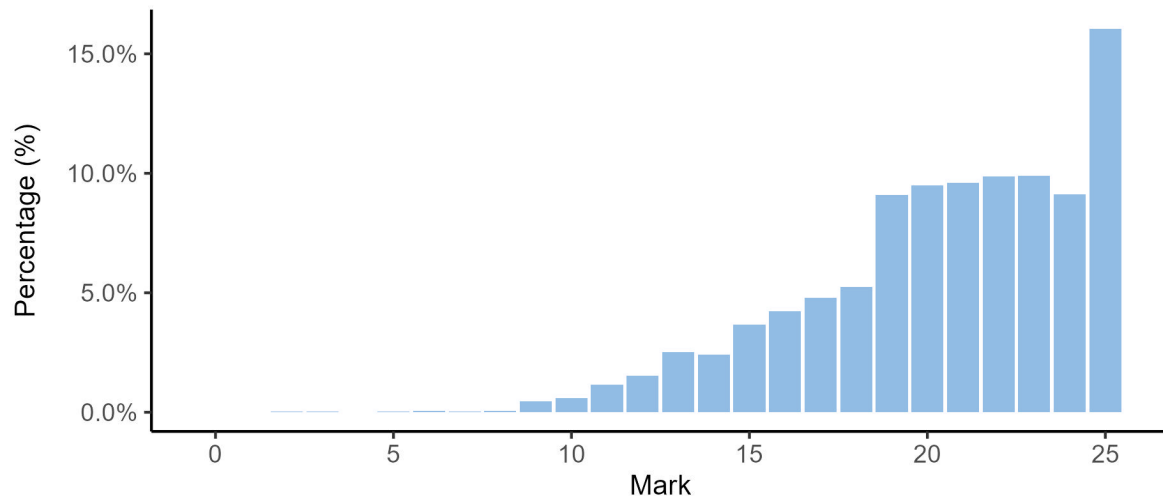


IA1 Criterion: Textual features

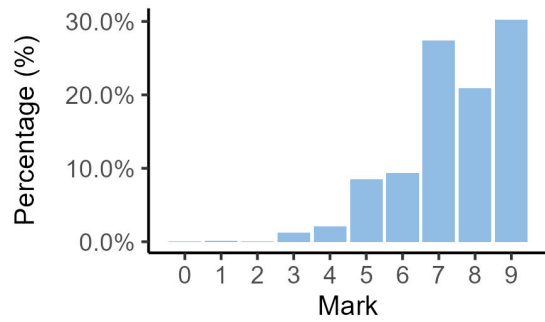


IA2 marks

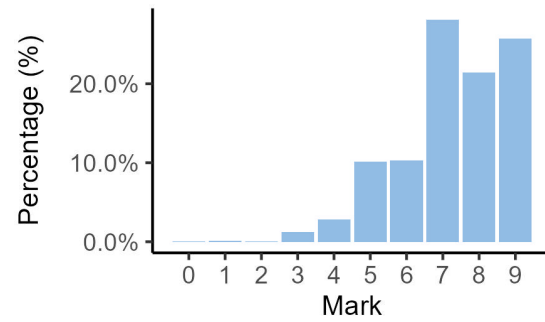
IA2 total



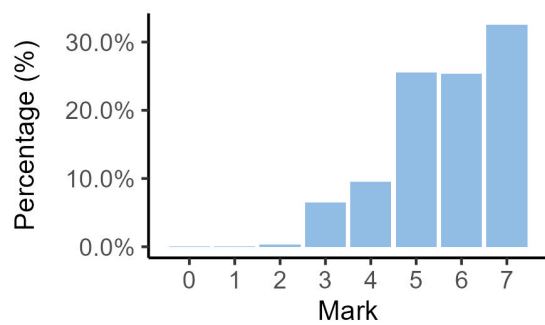
IA2 Criterion: Knowledge application



IA2 Criterion: Organisation and development

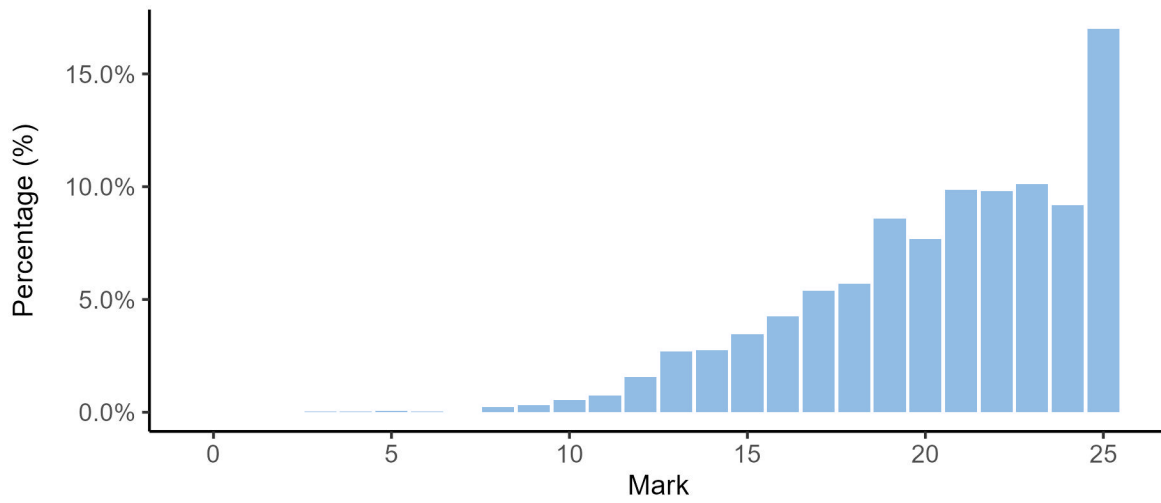


IA2 Criterion: Textual features

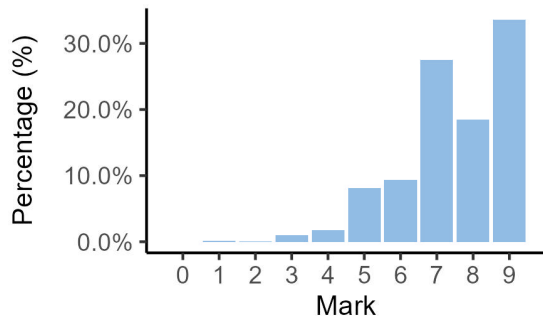


IA3 marks

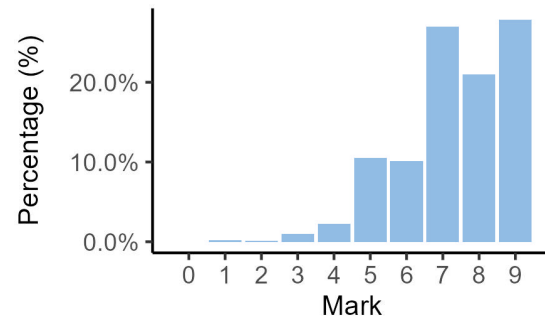
IA3 total



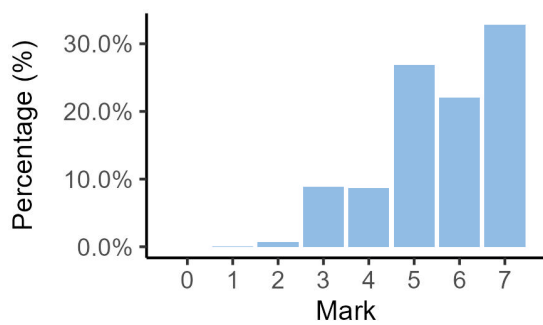
IA3 Criterion: Knowledge application



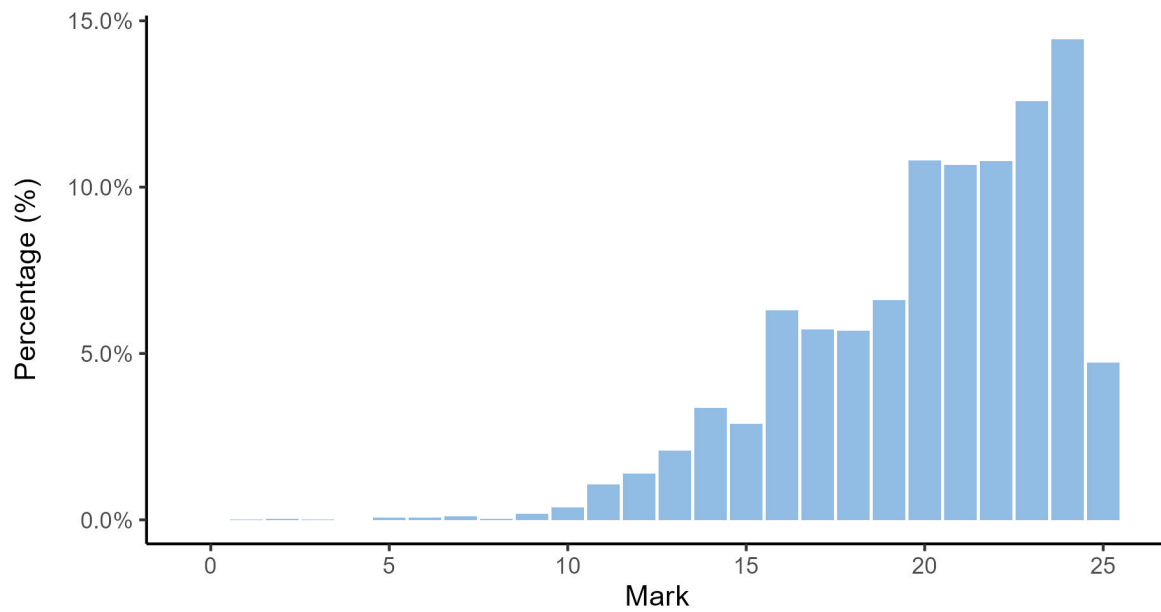
IA3 Criterion: Organisation and development



IA3 Criterion: Textual features

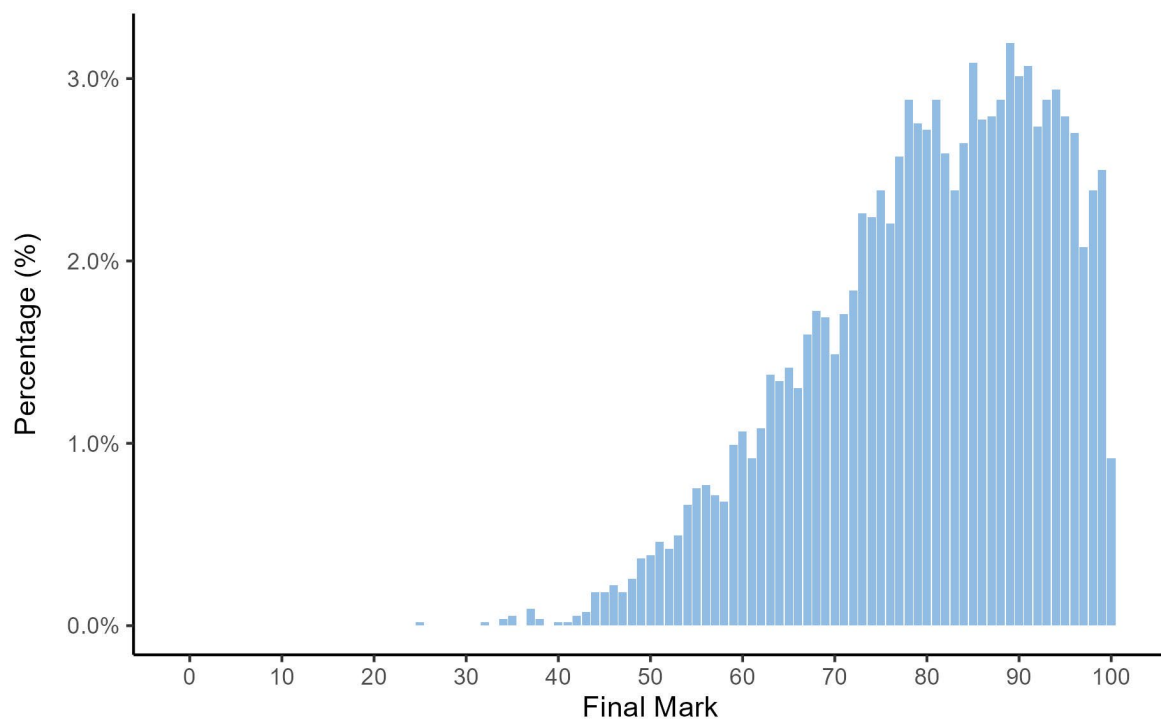


External assessment (EA) marks



Final subject results

Final marks for IA and EA



Grade boundaries

The grade boundaries are determined using a process to compare results on a numeric scale to the reporting standards.

Standard	A	B	C	D	E
Marks achieved	100–85	84–66	65–43	42–17	16–0

Distribution of standards

The number of students who achieved each standard across the state is as follows.

Standard	A	B	C	D	E
Number of students	2,327	2,280	817	19	0

Internal assessment



The following information and advice relate to the assessment design and assessment decisions for each IA in Units 3 and 4. These instruments have undergone quality assurance processes informed by the attributes of quality assessment (validity, accessibility and reliability).

Endorsement

Endorsement is the quality assurance process based on the attributes of validity and accessibility. These attributes are categorised further as priorities for assessment, and each priority can be further broken down into assessment practices.

Data presented in the Assessment design section identifies the reasons why IA instruments were not endorsed at Application 1, by the priority for assessment. An IA may have been identified more than once for a priority for assessment, e.g. it may have demonstrated a misalignment to both the subject matter and the assessment objective/s.

Refer to *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v6.0*, Section 9.5.

Percentage of instruments endorsed in Application 1

Instruments submitted	IA1	IA2	IA3
Total number of instruments	209	209	209
Percentage endorsed in Application 1	68	56	87

Confirmation

Confirmation is the quality assurance process based on the attribute of reliability. The QCAA uses provisional criterion marks determined by teachers to identify the samples of student responses that schools are required to submit for confirmation.

Confirmation samples are representative of the school's decisions about the quality of student work in relation to the instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG), and are used to make decisions about the cohort's results.

Refer to *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v6.0*, Section 9.6.

The following table includes the percentage agreement between the provisional marks and confirmed marks by assessment instrument. The Assessment decisions section of this report for each assessment instrument identifies the agreement trends between provisional and confirmed marks by criterion.

Number of samples reviewed and percentage agreement

IA	Number of schools	Number of samples requested	Number of additional samples requested	Percentage agreement with provisional marks
1	209	1,597	34	94.74
2	209	1,598	42	94.26
3	209	1,601	5	97.61

Internal assessment 1 (IA1)



Examination — analytical written response (25%)

The examination assesses the application of a range of cognitions to a provided question on a literary text from the prescribed text list.

Student responses must be completed individually, under supervised conditions, and in a set timeframe.

Assessment design

Validity

Validity in assessment design considers the extent to which an assessment item accurately measures what it is intended to measure and that the evidence of student learning collected from an assessment can be legitimately used for the purpose specified in the syllabus.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment

Validity priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions
Alignment	41
Authentication	0
Authenticity	2
Item construction	6
Scope and scale	17

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- clearly aligned with task specifications that required students to
 - write an analytical essay for an audience with a deep understanding of the text, under supervised conditions, in response to a seen question or task that relates to how a literary text from the prescribed text list addresses issues and ideas related to culture and identity
 - critique others' interpretations and/or responses to a literary text
 - sustain analysis and synthesis to fully answer the question/task (Syllabus section 4.4.1)
- clearly and unambiguously followed the conventions of item construction, identifying the title and author of the text from the *Prescribed text list, Literature 2023–2025* and used cognitive verbs aligned with syllabus objectives for students to demonstrate Assessment objectives 3, 4 and 5
- developed questions or tasks aligned with syllabus specifications related to how a particular literary text from the prescribed text list addresses issues and ideas related to culture and identity
- adhered to syllabus conditions.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- manage scope and scale in
 - text selection if poetry, short stories or television programs from the prescribed text list are chosen for study, by requiring students to respond to one or two poems, one short story or one television episode, rather than an entire anthology, collection or series
 - response requirements through careful selection of a critic’s interpretation to ensure it relates to how a particular literary text, selected from the prescribed text list, addresses issues and ideas related to culture and identity and
 - does not exceed the scope of the task by directing students to include references to more than one critique in their response
 - allows students opportunities to formulate their own unique responses rather than specifying subject matter that should be included in the responses to a critic’s interpretation. Directing students to respond to a critic’s interpretation through analysis of specific character/s, concepts, or aesthetic features such as symbolism can limit students’ abilities to develop their own critiques and unique responses.
- are constructed to align with the specifications in Syllabus section 4.4.1 clearly prompting students to analyse others’ interpretations of, or responses to, the literary text studied to allow students to demonstrate Assessment objective 31 and
 - avoids ambiguous wording or task directives that requires students to analyse a critic’s perspective of a text, rather than directing students to critique others’ interpretations or responses to literary texts. For instance, asking students to analyse the extent to which a critic’s interpretation can be supported or justified in a text, gives the impression students should analyse the critic’s interpretation in depth with supporting evidence from the literary text, rather than analysis of perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and places in a literary text from the prescribed text list
 - ensures questions refer to a specific aspect of a critic’s interpretation, rather than ask students to choose an aspect of the critic’s interpretation to respond to, as this is outside the scope of the task
 - avoids using the author, playwright, or director as the critic, as this does not meet syllabus specifications of others’ responses or interpretations of the literary text studied
- Provide only one exam question for students; there is no requirement for schools to design two separate questions each year. One question/task is sufficient. Consider using additional questions for comparable assessment, if required.

Accessibility

Accessibility in assessment design ensures that no student or group of students is disadvantaged in their capacity to access an assessment.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment

Accessibility priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions
Bias avoidance	0
Language	17
Layout	0
Transparency	2

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- selected interpretations or responses relating to culture and identity that were accessible and devoid of ambiguity
- used clear and transparent language to frame a question or task with cues that enabled students to construct a synthesised analysis of the literary text and a critique of others' interpretations or responses to the text
- modelled effective use of textual features and consistency of language conventions in task construction, including correct spelling of the author's name, using italics for titles of selected texts, and ensuring tasks were free from punctuation and grammar errors
- used clear and consistent formatting.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- use language consistent with syllabus objectives and specifications, particularly in the use of the cognition 'analyse' and in references to the analytical essay genre to clearly convey what students are required to do and/or demonstrate in their response, e.g. in Syllabus section 4.4.1, students are asked to respond to a 'question or task', not a 'prompt', and 'to write an analytical essay', not to 'respond in an analytical manner'.

Additional advice

- Schools should ensure they refer to the *Prescribed text list, Literature 2023–2025* when developing assessment instruments.
- In the task description, schools could model a range of examination questions and item constructions, such as 'analyse', 'to what extent', 'discuss' and 'how is the reader invited', to help prepare students for the external assessment in Unit 4.
- Questions need to clearly cue students to analyse the chosen literary text and provide clear, unambiguous opportunities to demonstrate the assessment objectives of the Knowledge application criterion. Assessment tasks should avoid overly complex questions about others' interpretations or responses to the literary text.

Assessment decisions

Reliability

Reliability is a judgment about the measurements of assessment. It refers to the extent to which the results of assessments are consistent, replicable and free from error.

Agreement trends between provisional and confirmed marks

Criterion number	Criterion name	Percentage agreement with provisional	Percentage less than provisional	Percentage greater than provisional	Percentage both less and greater than provisional
1	Knowledge application	95.22	4.78	0	0
2	Organisation and development	98.09	1.91	0	0
3	Textual features	99.04	0.96	0	0

Effective practices

Accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG for this IA was most effective when:

- for the Knowledge application criterion
 - responses presented an interpretation of the literary text that consistently involved all three aspects of knowledge application, i.e. responses at the 8–9 performance level showed evidence of the interrelated nature of the assessment objectives by making it clear that the analysis of perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times, and places in the literary text required complementary analysis of the ways cultural assumptions, attitudes, values, and beliefs underpin texts and invite audiences to take up positions *through* the examination of the effects of aesthetic features and stylistic devices on audiences
 - responses focused on responding to only one critic’s interpretation. Referring to two or more critical interpretations of the literary text did not allow for a demonstration of a discerning analysis of others’ interpretations
- for the Organisation and development criterion
 - at the 8–9 performance level, responses
 - contained a thesis that clearly responded to the question or direction of the endorsed assessment instrument. This was evident through the use of key words and the others’ interpretation, or responses quoted or named within the task description
 - demonstrated a purposeful selection of evidence from the literary text to support agreement, disagreement or partial agreement with the critic’s interpretation and to present a discriminating interpretation of the literary text
 - were synthesised so that evidence from the literary text *and* the analysis of evidence from the literary text were clearly and consistently related to the critic’s interpretation through the thesis of the essay and direct reference to the critic’s interpretation throughout the entirety of the essay

- the evidence presented in the response was from the literary text and used to support an interpretation made by the student' in connection with the critic's interpretation. As outlined in Syllabus section 1.2.5, 'the central purpose of an analytical essay is to inform the reader of an interpretation of a literary text'. High-level responses provided evidence from the relevant critic, rather than analysing the critic's words or choices
- for the Textual features criterion
 - the evidence in responses combined and used a range of textual features, including grammatically accurate clauses and sentences, to achieve the particular purposes of the writer, e.g. the upper performance-level qualifier of discerning was matched to those responses where a range of different clauses and sentence constructions were used in the analytical essay
 - high-level responses made use of discipline-specific metalanguage to present a clear and rigorous interpretation of a literary text.

Practices to strengthen

To further ensure accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG for this IA, it is recommended that:

- when matching evidence to the descriptors for the Knowledge application criterion, attention should be given to
 - determining whether the analysis of evidence *from the literary text* is explicitly connected to the ways that audiences are invited to take up positions and the ways that audiences are prompted to critical and emotional responses. This is a crucial clause in Assessment objectives 4 and 5, e.g. the response must examine the constructed nature of the text by pointing out how the author/designer has purposefully constructed a particular idea or concept *for a certain effect*. The response should embed audience positioning to demonstrate the examination or consideration of the way that the text has been constructed to explain and interpret it for finding meaning about the ways that audiences are invited to take up critical and emotional positions. Simply stating the existence of aesthetic features or paraphrasing the quotation does not constitute analysis
- when making judgments for the Assessment objective 3 of the Knowledge application criterion at the 8–9 performance level, it is recognised that responses require the student's interpretation of the literary text to consistently be in response to the critic's interpretation, meaning that the evidence and analysis within all paragraphs should clearly support the thesis of the essay (which must be made in response to a critic's interpretation or response). A cursory mention of the critic's interpretation in the introduction or conclusion does not provide evidence of effective or discerning analysis of others' interpretations. Likewise, a response that has merely explained a critic's position without responding to this interpretation throughout the response does not provide evidence of appropriate, effective or discerning analysis of perspective and representations
- when making judgments about the Organisation and development criterion, consider
 - ensuring that there is appropriate evidence of the synthesis of all aspects of the Knowledge application criterion rather than treating elements of analysis as separate. Synthesis of all aspects of analysis is required for the upper performance levels of the second and third descriptors in the Organisation and development criterion
 - if the patterns and conventions of an analytical essay are fulfilled, especially as they pertain to the use of cohesive devices, such as a thesis (made explicitly in response to the question or task), topic sentences, and cohesive words and phrases.

Samples

The following excerpt demonstrates:

- for the Knowledge application and Organisation and development criteria
 - the analysis effectively identifies and dissects aesthetic features and their effects on readers. For example, the imagery related to ‘button-holes’ and ‘parma violets’ is explored as an ‘object ... that places emphasis on [Dorian’s] masking of depravity’, accompanied by reader positioning language such as ‘the exploitation of an object as trivial as a flower alone invites readers to realise that ...’ This approach is further supported by the examination of ‘urbane imagery’, which connects to the cultural assumptions and attitudes of the time, positioning audiences to adopt critical and emotional responses
 - the response explicitly examines the constructed nature of the text, analysing how the author purposefully constructs ideas to achieve specific purposes. Audience positioning metalanguage, such as ‘invites readers to realise’ and ‘emphasises Dorian’s hypocritical nature’, is employed to discerningly unpack how audiences are encouraged to adopt particular perspectives. Stylistic and aesthetic devices — including ‘exploitation of an object’, ‘juxtaposes’, ‘urbane imagery’, ‘dandified characterisation’, ‘the objectifying term “made”’, ‘metaphorical artwork’ and ‘double meaning in ... [the] ... use of the word “good”’ — are named and examined. Beyond identification, these features are deconstructed to explore their constituent parts, revealing patterns, relationships, and deeper meanings. This analysis is consistently framed by language choices that demonstrate how these elements and underlying cultural assumptions, attitudes, values, and beliefs work to position audiences critically and emotionally
 - the response explicitly connects the author’s positioning of readers to the student’s central perspective (thesis). The thesis is reinforced throughout the response, with direct references to key terms and integration of a critic’s perspective. The response weaves the concept of ‘hypocrisy’ through the argument, using cohesive topic sentences that are carefully crafted to align with the thesis. For instance, the topic sentence introduces the critic’s name alongside a complementary quote that references ‘hypocrisy’ and focuses on Victorian social attitudes and beliefs. This cohesion is maintained throughout the response by consistently referencing the critic and their contention at key points, demonstrating a synthesised approach to all aspects of the Knowledge application criterion. Rather than treating elements of analysis as separate, the response integrates these aspects into a unified, discerning argument.

Note: The characteristic/s identified may not be the only time the characteristic/s occurred throughout a response.

Oscar Wilde

condemns this duality in his novel, The Picture of Dorian Gray (1891), which follows characters whose aesthetic facades entitle them to a life of covert immorality. Further, Neslihan Günaydin explores Wilde's criticisms in her ^{article} ~~article~~ "The charm of Corruption Behind a Respectable Façade in The Picture of Dorian Gray", contending that Wilde's novel represents "the hypocrisy of Victorian aristocracy and the middle-class". Günaydin's perspective is justified, as Wilde exposes how privileged Victorians ^{hypocritically} ~~hypocritically~~ endorse the concealment of depravity beneath aesthetic ideals. This is articulated through ^{too} the aristocratic Dorian Gray, who exploits beauty to ~~maintain~~ ^{maintain} respectability, as well as the aesthetic values of middle-class artist, Basil Hallward.

In the article, Günaydin states that "social hypocrisy originates from the ~~strife~~ ^{strife} to keep [a] respectable profile in [the] public eye", ~~which~~ ^{which} Dorian achieves by ~~exploiting~~ ^{exploiting} an aesthetic facade to conceal his ~~wickedness~~ ^{wicked nature}. Wilde exposes this at Lady Northborough's dinner party, ~~where~~ ^{where} Dorian enters "wearing a large button-hole ~~of~~ ^{of} Parma violets" (167), and despite having "maddened ~~nerves~~ ^{nerves} ... his manner ... was as ... graceful as ever" (167). ~~Dorian's~~ ^{Dorian's} choice of wearing "Parma violets" – an object of ~~of~~ ^{of} beauty with symbolic connections to modesty – places emphasis on his ~~concealment~~ ^{concealment} of depravity beneath aesthetic costuming in order to ~~maintain~~ ^{appear respectable} respectability. The exploitation of an object as trivial as a flower alone invites readers to realise that Dorian is completely intentional in his facade; hence, he endorses hypocrisy as his recent murder of Basil juxtaposes the propriety he ~~strives~~ ^{strives} to emulate. Further, the ~~urbane~~ ^{urbane} imagery created through Dorian's "large button-hole" and "graceful" manner establishes his donned characterisation, underpinning his imitation of a conventional aristocratic appearance. ~~This~~ ^{consequently, this} allows Dorian to aesthetically conceal his "maddened nerves" – a ~~reference~~ ^{reference} to his ~~fear~~ ^{inherent fear} of losing his reputation: an

aristocrat's most ^{important} ~~important~~ asset. It is this fear that emphasises how Dorian's hypocritical nature originates from his endeavour to maintain a "respectable ^{respectable} profile", as contended by ^{Gunaydin}. However, Dorian is successful in concealing his depravity, ^{as} Lady Norborough tells him that "you ^{are} ~~are~~ made to be good — you look so good" (171).
 The use of the objectifying term "made" projects Lady Norborough's belief that Dorian's beauty makes him a metaphorical artwork, which according to aestheticism is completely ^{divorced} ~~divorced~~ from any ^{immoral} ~~immoral~~ ^{component} ~~component~~.
 These aesthetic ideals prompt Dorian's assumption of a facade, as he knows his beauty ^{privileges} ~~privileges~~ him with a life of hypocrisy where he can indulge in wickedness, but maintain public respectability. Furthermore, the double meaning in Lady Norborough's use of "good" reinforces the Victorian belief that beauty is synonymous with morality, ^{undermining} ~~undermining~~ the traditional dichotomy between good and evil and instead allowing ^{aristocrats} ~~aristocrats~~ like Dorian to hypocritically identify with both.

Gunaydin, Neslihan 2014, *The charm of corruption behind a respectable facade in the picture of Dorian Gray*

Additional advice

- When analysing, describing characters is not the same as scrutinising the stylistic features of characterisation. Characterisation can, however, be as simple as showing how the author/designer purposefully constructed two characters to represent opposing values, or that the narrative voice of a particular character is used for an effect.
- Similarly, naming an aesthetic feature or stylistic device followed by a definition does not constitute analysis. A quotation from a literary text followed by an identification or summary of the text's events does not constitute analysis. Analysis requires responses to examine and consider a textual construction made by the author/designer in order to interpret it by finding meaning or relationships and identifying patterns, similarities and differences. Discerning, effective, and adequate analysis must clearly treat the aesthetic features and stylistic devices as features of textual construction.
- When selecting an appropriate response for others' interpretations of the literary text studied in class, schools should
 - select a critique, review, or essay that presents a sufficiently contentious and complex perspective to allow students to develop a discerning interpretation of the literary text. Although students may study and consider a range of critical interpretations when preparing for this task, the consideration and inclusion of multiple critics' interpretations within the analytical response is outside the scope of this assessment instrument. While students can engage with a variety of others' interpretations of, and/or responses to, a literary text, including peripheral information (e.g. quotations or analysis from other literary texts) is beyond the scope and scale required for this assessment instrument. Close literary analysis should focus on the literary text named within the endorsed assessment'
 - ensure that the selected critique is appropriate for the scope of knowledge required for the Literature syllabus. While others' interpretations may include the use of literary theory, theoretical interpretations are not the focus of this task or the syllabus
 - be encouraged to prepare students for this assessment by having them engage in learning experiences that involve both criticism and justification of different interpretations of the literary text made through analysis. A key part of this task is students demonstrating
 - an appreciation that literary texts allow for multiple, contesting interpretations
 - the ability to develop and support their own interpretation of a literary text in response to others' interpretations

Practising developing arguments to support or criticise different interpretations of the text, and justifying these with evidence from and analysis of the literary text, are key skills that students must demonstrate in this assessment.

Internal assessment 2 (IA2)



Extended response — imaginative spoken/multimodal response (25%)

This assessment focuses on the reinterpretation of ideas and perspectives in a literary text from the prescribed text list. It is an open-ended task. While students may undertake some research in the creating of the extended response, it is not the focus of this technique.

This assessment occurs over an extended and defined period of time, of approximately 12 hours. Students may use class time and their own time to develop a response.

Assessment design

Validity

Validity in assessment design considers the extent to which an assessment item accurately measures what it is intended to measure and that the evidence of student learning collected from an assessment can be legitimately used for the purpose specified in the syllabus.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment

Validity priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions
Alignment	77
Authentication	0
Authenticity	6
Item construction	7
Scope and scale	4

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- demonstrated clear alignment with assessment specifications for an imaginative spoken/multimodal response that requires students to draw on their knowledge of the relationship between language, culture and identity to create a reimagined text for a new cultural context (Syllabus section 4.4.2). These instruments provided clear instructions for students to
 - select a new cultural context for an audience familiar with the base text and the new cultural context
 - invite the audience to question or reflect on dominant cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs that underpin the base text
 - use spoken/signed and nonverbal features (and complementary if appropriate) to achieve particular purposes
- gave individual students opportunities to choose an aspect of the base text to prompt emotional and critical responses, which could include perspectives of characters and/or representations of concepts, identities, times and places. It is not a requirement that students reimagine the whole text

- effectively constructed task descriptions with clear information identifying the base text from the *Prescribed text list, Literature 2023–2025*, as well as providing opportunities for students to demonstrate the assessable objectives.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- provide students with opportunities to choose aspects of the base text for reimagination, as per the specifications in the Syllabus section 4.4.1. Tasks are designed to be open-ended, rather than outlining specific cultural contexts, perspectives, concepts or characters for reimagination. For instance, asking students to reimagine a specific concept, to act in the role of a specific character, or to choose a pivotal moment in the text limits students' opportunities to choose aspects of the base text, including perspectives of characters and/or representations of concepts, identities, times and places, to reimagine or reinterpret to prompt emotional and critical reactions from the audience
- provide students with opportunities to demonstrate Assessment objective 2 — establish and maintain the role of the speaker/signer/designer and relationships with audiences — by identifying an audience and explicitly stating that the audience is familiar with the base text and new cultural context. It is not sufficient to specify an audience such as literary festival enthusiasts as this type of audience may not be familiar with the base text and the new cultural context
- ensure that scaffolding does not restrict students' opportunities to demonstrate the assessment objectives by requiring students to follow a specific narrative structure, such as Freytag's Pyramid. Scaffolding should provide clear instructions for students about the processes they could use to complete and present their responses.

Accessibility

Accessibility in assessment design ensures that no student or group of students is disadvantaged in their capacity to access an assessment.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment

Accessibility priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions
Bias avoidance	0
Language	9
Layout	0
Transparency	6

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- used language and cues such as 'use' and 'create', that align with syllabus objectives, task specifications and the ISMG, and explicitly instructed students to demonstrate Assessment objectives 3, 4 and 5
- provided clear and transparent checkpoints consistent with task requirements by providing feedback on a spoken or multimodal response, e.g. a video recording or digital draft in the required mode of delivery for assessment as per the *QCE and QCIA policies and procedures handbook v6.0*, Section 8.2.5.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- ensure that language consistently reflects assessment objectives, such as ‘spoken/signed and nonverbal features’ rather than ‘verbal and nonverbal features’. If both spoken and multimodal options are highlighted in the Conditions section, both options should be referenced in the Task section, rather than just one of these options
- explicitly cue students to demonstrate nonverbal features in their spoken or multimodal response to provide evidence of facial expressions, gestures, stance and movement, as outlined in the Textual features criterion, which gives them the opportunity to demonstrate Assessment objective 11
- display an understanding of the differences between spoken and multimodal responses, including length requirements, as indicated in the document *Confirmation submission information: Literature 2019*. For multimodal responses, students present or submit responses that integrate more than one mode, e.g. a blog, vlog, or digital folio.

Additional advice

- Carefully consider text selection and whether a poem provides the same scope in allowing students to choose an aspect of the base text for reimagination as an extended text such as novel or film.
- It is recommended that if schools offer students the option of a spoken or multimodal response, the differences between the two options are clearly distinguished. A multimodal presentation must include a combination of at least two modes, one of which must be spoken/signed (Syllabus section 4.4.2), and mode-appropriate features are to be considered when constructing the response. A list of mode-appropriate features is outlined in the syllabus glossary, including complementary and digital features such as graphics, still and moving images, design elements, music and sound effects.
- To assist students in developing responses that effectively demonstrate an understanding of syllabus objectives, ensure tasks are constructed so that specific task requirements are explicit for students in the Task section. Some school assessments have been constructed with key specifications and objectives included in the Scaffolding section rather than grouped together in the Task description section, which could give students the impression these specifications and objectives are optional, rather than mandatory.

Assessment decisions

Reliability

Reliability is a judgment about the measurements of assessment. It refers to the extent to which the results of assessments are consistent, replicable and free from error.

Agreement trends between provisional and confirmed marks

Criterion number	Criterion name	Percentage agreement with provisional	Percentage less than provisional	Percentage greater than provisional	Percentage both less and greater than provisional
1	Knowledge application	96.65	2.39	0.96	0
2	Organisation and development	96.17	3.35	0.48	0
3	Textual features	98.09	1.44	0.48	0

Effective practices

Accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG for this IA was most effective when:

- for the Knowledge application criterion, attention was given to
 - ensuring that the creation of perspectives and the representation of concepts, identities, times and places is subtle and complex within the response, by considering whether the response presented convincingly portrayed reimagined character/s whose perceptions, thoughts, memories, experiences and/or expectations were explored and developed across the response. At the 8–9 performance level, there should be clear evidence of a new time and place which shapes the ways that the character/s think, act, and feel, supported by specific language choices and aesthetic features which allow for the development of the character and perspectives
 - how successfully the response made use of aesthetic features and stylistic devices to prompt emotional and critical responses in audiences. In a high-level response, the aesthetic features engage the audience, complement the creation and development of relevant representations and perspectives such as the ‘perspectives of characters and/or representations of concepts, identities, times and places’, and contribute to the ways the reimagined text reinterprets the base text
 - determining whether the response clearly drew on concepts, issues or ideas of the base text to create representations and perspectives in the reimagined text. In a high-level response there should be clear evidence of critical engagement with concepts and ideas explored in the base text in a way that is relevant to the new cultural context of the reimagined text
 - determining if the response manipulated the ways cultural assumptions, values, attitudes and beliefs underpin texts by inviting the audience to question or reflect on the dominant ideas and issues in the reimagined text. At the 8–9 performance level, there will be clear evidence of a character or narrator questioning, challenging, struggling with or supporting cultural assumptions, values, attitudes and beliefs in the context of the base text and/or in

the reimagined context, or of characters being involved in internal or external conflicts related to cultural assumptions, values, attitudes and beliefs

- for the Textual features criterion, attention was given to
 - whether the use of spoken/signed and nonverbal features, as well as complementary features, were manipulated to engage the audience and enhance the aesthetic effect of the text. The 6–7 performance level featured language choices, spoken/signed and nonverbal features (and complementary, if appropriate) suitable to the new cultural context and incorporated purposefully to prompt emotional and critical audience responses to the reimagined text. The overuse of clips or an over-reliance on script limits opportunities to demonstrate a discerning use of spoken/signed and nonverbal features
 - whether the use of language choices was appropriate and appropriately manipulated for particular purposes within the specific new cultural context established and developed throughout the response. The use of anachronistic language or direct quotations from the base text may not be appropriate.

Practices to strengthen

To further ensure accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG for this IA, it is recommended that:

- when making judgments for the Knowledge application criterion, ensure
 - all performance-level descriptors are informed by the importance of the response being a reimagining of aspects of the base text to invite audiences to reinterpret the base text. Manipulation ('adapt or change to suit one's purpose') requires a purposeful construction rather than a simple repetition of ideas, perspectives and representations from the base text. This is most evident when responses change and manipulate cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs, of both the base text and the new cultural context, to create a new text that may position audiences differently from how the base text positions them. Responses may show a connection to the base text, but evidence of reimagining to allow audiences to reinterpret must be apparent
 - responses that do not move beyond expository language choices, or 'telling', are not to be considered subtle and complex, discerning or effective
- when making judgments for the Organisation and development criterion, ensure
 - the first performance-level descriptor references the ways the patterns and conventions of the chosen genre for the response are used to invite audiences to reinterpret the base text. High-level responses will exploit imaginative genre conventions to successfully prompt emotional and critical reactions in the audience that complement the ways in which the response repositions audiences in relation to the base text. The use of the imaginative genre (e.g. monologue, YouTube story/vlog, Instagram live, digital story) can be manipulated for purpose, but the genre should still be clear and used to engage audiences with the reimagined text
 - for both the Organisation and development criterion and the Knowledge application criterion, the assessment objectives require engaging audiences with a reimagined text. The creation of a new cultural context, time and place for the reimagination should be significantly different from those of the base text, and the development of this throughout the response, is a key feature of this assessment instrument
- when matching evidence to the descriptors for the Organisation and development criterion, determine if a response

- is discerning in its selection and synthesis of subject matter and its organisation and sequencing of subject matter. This may include the use and development of a distinctive time and place (usually established in the opening phase) to allow clear sequencing of the subject matter
- for the second and third descriptors, considers whether ideas and characters are developed throughout the response to arrive at a purposeful resolution. Characters may change their mind or actions, or consider an action to arrive at a resolution, which uses purposeful selection and synthesis of ideas and concepts
- makes use of cohesive ties distinctive to the imaginative genre, including motif, extended metaphor, symbolism and the use of imagery
- at the 7–8 performance level, invites audiences to reinterpret the base text in some way. The base text should be considered a springboard to prompt creative responses rather than a text into which students are intervening. A response that relies too much on extracts, quotations or clips from a base text may not successfully invite audiences to reinterpret it.

Samples

The following excerpt demonstrates, for the Knowledge application and Organisation and development criteria, a nuanced and complex creation of perspectives, highlighting the concepts of sacrifice and the human capacity for evil. The response draws on an aspect of the film *Interstellar* without merely repeating it.

The time and place are clearly established through specific religious word choices and language associated with sacrifice. The response begins in the middle of the action, with an inciting incident in the ‘church’, but also develops the reasons for the monologue through backfill. The cornfields and cave are richly described later in the response to further establish time and place, suggesting a sense of primitiveness that aligns with the concept of sacrifice.

The response convincingly portrays a reimagined character, exploring their perceptions, thoughts, memories, experiences, and expectations in subtle and complex ways. The character’s shift in actions and thoughts at the end, as they seek revenge through their final actions, clearly demonstrates believable development in their attitudes and behaviour.

The specific language choices and aesthetic features related to religion, blood, and decay contribute to the development of both the character and the perspectives on sacrifice and cruelty.

The response effectively employs the imaginative genre of a multimodal reimagination and the conventions of the science fiction genre to elicit emotional and critical reactions from the audience, complementing the ways in which the response repositions audiences in relation to the base text.

Both the concepts of fear, evil, and sacrifice, as well as the character’s attitudes, values, and beliefs, are developed throughout the response to lead to a purposeful resolution. The character’s final actions demonstrate both a release from the influence of others and a devastating recognition of how fear and humanity’s capacity for evil can change and shift over time.

While the student appears in a darkened room, the response remains clear, and the student is always visible in detail. Additionally, the response is supported by close-up shots of the mouth, eyes, eating, and the movement of robes, demonstrating the use of a range of verbal, nonverbal, and complementary features. The speaker makes discerning use of gestures, facial expressions, volume, pace, silence, and complementary features, effectively addressing all aspects of Assessment objective 11.

Note: The characteristic/s identified may not be the only time the characteristic/s occurred throughout a response.



Video content: (4 min, 14 secs)

www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/curriculum-assessment/portal/media/sr-2024/snr_literature_ia2_e1.mp4

The Shepherd and The Lamb

Rot seeps through the stained glass, decay drifting like dust motes in the damp air. A hundred worshippers line the rows, rigid as corpses in coffin-wood pews, sunken faces turned unseeing towards the dais.

Each service is the same. Empty seats echo with a presence of their own. I would count them once, only now there are too many, growing each day as another preacher wastes away. Those of us who are left sit hungry, stuffing our bellies with parables like cotton wool, wanting words to fill the gaps in-between.

They never do.

Tension pulls taut between us. Ripples of discontent shift the air. That is something scripture never taught us: how, as the body starves, so does the soul. How no devil's whisper is sweeter than the thought of sating the hunger that devours us from the inside. How long can we wait?

The ecclesiastic leans across the lectern, stole spilling scarlet across its wooden edge. I think he sees the answer in our faces, for he says we have been patient. "God speaks," he says. "He knows of our struggle, and He is merciful. He tells us this: just as Abraham led his son, our faith will be rewarded. But we must be willing to prove ourselves to Him."

Our God demands sacrifice, yet our tables are emptier than His altar. We have nothing left to give but ourselves.

"God must be fed." His eyes meet mine; his gaze pins me like a lamb beneath the butcher's blade. I know all at once what he is saying.

A hundred heads twist to stare at me, realisation darting from one face to the next. The ecclesiastic says something more but I do not hear him, for the whispers have begun to swell and fill my ears with a buzzing static.

I am the fish. I am the loaves. I am torn into a hundred starved pieces to feed a hundred starving people whom I will never satisfy.

Murmurs morph into eulogies, mourning me even as I walk among them. As though the word of one man is enough to pronounce me dead.

And they may weep, prayers slipping from wet cheeks, but beneath the thin film of pity there is relief. Reach for me, but only to reach – not to touch, not to stop me. Truth lies in the space between their hands and my skin: we will all die if I do not die first.

Our Shepherd emerges, no more than a spectre, soundless and veiled. *A man playing God.* I hate the way they all shrink before him, retreating into their shells polished with endless penance.

Atone for the sins of humanity. Atone for the sin of being human.

Our procession trails silently from the church. Flanked by rotting cornfields, listless and still, even in the grey wind. Thick bruised clouds press down on our shoulders as though our God would crush us all into the earth to feed Him.

Mud sucks at my shoes. Everything is soft with rot. Frost runs its wet chill across the back of my neck, colder now that it is the last time I will feel it. The last time.

At the crest of the hill, I dare to look back. Winter's perpetual twilight paints the scene like a hazy memory; jutting houses sprouting from endless fields that roll out towards a milky horizon. Above it all, you cannot see the festering below the soil.

Our Shepherd halts us before the mouth of a cave. Scarlet stoles and black cassocks wait at the entrance like rotted teeth in its gaping maw, yawned wide and dark and desperate to swallow me whole.

Led by my Shepherd, I am to walk to my death escorted by the mantle of martyrdom. I am to lay still as he places his blade against my youth-pale throat. I am to bear it for him, bleed out for him. My life is no longer mine.

Our Shepherd nods almost imperceptibly, and all at once my mourners turn their backs to me to retreat down the hillside, the ecclesiastics trailing behind them like bloodied shadows. No more prayers, no silent cries of saviorhood to walk me to my grave.

Just the Shepherd and the Lamb, alone at the altar.

The Shepherd looms so close I can hear his words twist sickly with fever. I imagine the way his eyes glitter beneath the veil, ravenous for something I know too well. "Peace built on lies is still peace."

I drop to the ground as he lunges for my throat. We tumble. Metal clatters sharply as his blade skitters away into the darkness. Blood fills my mouth, my nose, my throat, sluggish and metallic and suffocating. Flailing blindly, feet scrabbling in open air, I feel myself sliding. Fingers catch in fabric and I drag myself from the edge of the precipice.

The Shepherd grabs me by the wrist, nails digging bloody half-moons into my flesh. His other hand finds my throat. "I am your Shepherd," he hisses, breath hot on my cheek. Relentless pressure drives darkness into my vision. My palm scrapes a loose stone. I bury it in my fist.

With the last of my breath, I whisper, "We aren't so different."

The stone cracks against the side of his head. Air floods back into my lungs and I twist, pinning the Shepherd beneath me. A hiss as my knee digs sharp into his ribs. He writhes, but skull is softer than stone. *Thump. Thump.* My heart and my hands beat to the same rhythm: *sur-vive. Sur-vive.*

The veil peels away to reveal a mass of blood and flesh and moon-white bone collapsed inwards like rotted fruit. He is no god, no saint. No longer a man, either.

Eyes cast to the heavens; darkness floods with the ache of my screams. "Is this what you wanted, God? Are you satisfied?" In the echo of His silence, I realise what I knew long before the Shepherd's confession: if there is a God, He isn't here.

I wipe my hands on the robes, already red, but the smell I cannot wipe away. The earth and air are wet with it. Dampness crawls across my skin as I pull the Shepherd's pallium over my own head.

I will give my people something to believe in.

Additional advice

- The simple replication of characters or events from the literary text placed in a modern context is not appropriate for this assessment instrument. Responses that use the same characters and plot as the base text, or which merely add to the base text in the form of an imaginative intervention, prologue or epilogue, do not adequately demonstrate Assessment objectives 1, 3, 4 or 6, which require students to reimagine and reinterpret the base text. Responses for this assessment instrument should draw on, but not simply repeat, ideas and perspectives in the base text to reimagine and reinterpret ideas and perspectives to create a new text for a new cultural context. Responses that simply transpose a character from one time period to another may not draw on appropriate cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs to invite audiences to reinterpret the base text as is required to demonstrate Assessment objectives 3 and 4. Responses that replicate or transpose the base text do not demonstrate alignment with the subject matter of Unit 3: Literature and identity.
- Teachers should note that for both the Knowledge application criterion and the Organisation and development criterion, responses are required to make use of a genre that allows for a creative reimagining of the base text and for the sustained and purposeful development of characters and their perspectives across the response that invites readers to reinterpret the base text. For this assessment instrument, students should be given the opportunity to create ('bring something into being or existence; produce or evolve from one's own thought or imagination'), rather than analyse to demonstrate student achievement in the objectives. Some imaginative genre types may limit students' ability to demonstrate a range of assessment objectives at a discerning or effective level, e.g.

- genres such as children’s stories, picture books, letters and diary entries may restrict students’ range of options to demonstrate Assessment objectives 5, 9, 10
 - genres such as speeches, keynote addresses, author interviews or news programs may limit students’ ability to demonstrate Assessment objectives 1, 3, 4 and 5
 - genres such as video essays, lectures, or those that use analytical genres as their predominant form may limit students’ ability to demonstrate Assessment objectives 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8.
- There are different time limits for the spoken/signed and multimodal response. Application of school-based length policy should be apparent in assessment decisions and must be clearly annotated within response submissions.
 - Multimodal responses must use a combination of at least two modes (e.g. spoken/signed and nonverbal, written, digital features) delivered in an integrated way, so that each mode contributes significantly to the response. The combination of the spoken/signed mode and props, for example, may be more appropriately suited to the spoken/signed response type as complementary features include digital features such as graphics, still and moving images, design elements, music and sound effects.
 - Decisions about matching evidence in a reimagined response with the ISMG are informed by a clear understanding that this is an individual task. While it may be appropriate for other people to appear within a spoken or multimodal response, they should be regarded as a prop, so the focus of the assessment decisions about the spoken content is on the individual student who is being assessed.
 - Consider the type of evidence that must be gathered in response to a multimodal task (*QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v6.0, Section 8.2.7*). A multimodal response must use — in addition to the spoken mode — at least one of the complementary features listed on the ISMG: graphics, still and moving images, design elements, music or sound effects. Further, to demonstrate Assessment objective 11, spoken responses must contain evidence of both spoken/signed and nonverbal elements. While responses may include voiceover, this cannot be used for the entirety of a response, as this does not allow a student to demonstrate their ability to use spoken/signed and nonverbal features to achieve particular purposes. Similarly, a response that makes too much use of close-up shots or is filmed in a way that does not allow a student to show facial expressions or gestures (e.g. the use of a mask or an extremely dark set) may limit the student's capacity to demonstrate their ability in this objective.

Internal assessment 3 (IA3)



Extended Response — imaginative written response (25%)

This assessment focuses on the creation and crafting of an original literary text. It is an open-ended task. While students may undertake some research in the creating of the extended response, it is not the focus of this technique.

This assessment occurs over an extended and defined period of time, of approximately 12 hours. Students may use class time and their own time to develop a response. There is no prescribed text list for this assessment instrument.

Assessment design

Validity

Validity in assessment design considers the extent to which an assessment item accurately measures what it is intended to measure and that the evidence of student learning collected from an assessment can be legitimately used for the purpose specified in the syllabus.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment

Validity priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions
Alignment	13
Authentication	0
Authenticity	2
Item construction	6
Scope and scale	1

Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- aligned with syllabus specifications to enable students to develop and compose an original, imaginative written text as an open-ended task, for a specified audience, in any form that is predominantly prose and allows them to demonstrate the assessment objectives to
 - draw on their understanding of the range of stylistic features they have studied throughout the course, such as point of view, narrative voice, plot structure, non-linear narrative, focalisation, characterisation, symbolism, use of motifs, setting, dialogue, mood
 - determine a clear purpose/s for writing the text, whether it be to engage, to explore, to celebrate, to critique, to inspire, to satirise, to question, to move, to disconcert, to subvert, or to entertain
 - consider how their imaginative text will shape perspectives and representation to position audiences in relation to cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs
 - decide on subject matter and a genre that best suits their purpose/s
- constructed items that followed the accepted features of the item type for an extended response and cued students to create an original literary text

- identified an audience to inform targeted language choices in the creation and crafting of an original literary text
- provided clear instructions to students in the Scaffolding section about the processes they could use to complete their responses, or the presentation requirements for the response.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- support students in maintaining the role of the writer and relationship with audiences by specifying an audience or asking students to identify a suitable audience for the imaginative written response. To allow students to effectively demonstrate Assessment objective 2, task descriptions should identify audiences such as readers of a specific literary publication, rather than broad descriptions such as ‘YA readers’ or ‘readers of short story anthologies’
- support students to create their ‘own perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and places’ to prompt critical and emotional responses from the audience and avoid instructing students to create a representation of a specific time and place, or to use specific aesthetic features or stylistic devices, such as allegory and symbolism
- support students to demonstrate task specifications to
 - determine a clear purpose for writing the text — whether it is to engage, to explore, to celebrate, to critique, to inspire, to satirise, to question, to move, to disconcert, to subvert or to entertain — rather than narrow the purpose to one specific aim
 - respond in any imaginative form that is predominantly prose and allows them to demonstrate the assessment objectives. Verse poetry styles should be avoided
 - draw on their understanding of the range of aesthetic features and stylistic devices studied throughout the course to enable them to demonstrate Assessment objective 5
 - consider how their imaginative text will shape perspectives and representations to position audiences in relation to cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and beliefs
- avoid too much scaffolding, particularly with regards to genre, form, purpose, audience and context, e.g. directing students to include narrative elements such as orientation, rising action, climax and denouement in their responses may limit students’ abilities to manipulate patterns and conventions to suit their purposes.

Note: there is no prescribed text for this assessment instrument.

Accessibility

Accessibility in assessment design ensures that no student or group of students is disadvantaged in their capacity to access an assessment.

Reasons for non-endorsement by priority of assessment

Accessibility priority	Number of times priority was identified in decisions
Bias avoidance	0
Language	6
Layout	0
Transparency	0

Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- used language effectively to provide students with the opportunity to respond by crafting an original literary text
- used language consistent with syllabus specifications and terminology that enabled students to create an imaginative written response
- allowed for flexibility of students' interests and strengths in creative writing
- modelled effective textual features and consistency of language conventions in task construction, ensuring tasks were free from punctuation, spelling and grammar errors.

Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- adhere to the assessment specification that IA3 is an open-ended task by framing the task to allow for greater original composition of an imaginative written text and to enable students to demonstrate Assessment objective 1
- include specific instructions or cues to improve transparency and avoid contradicting the syllabus specifications
- use language consistent with syllabus terminology of 'an imaginative written response' and an 'original, imaginative written text', rather than language such as 'narrative or short story' response
- ensure scaffolding provides purposeful prompts and cues with regards to genre, purpose, audience and context to enable students to best demonstrate the assessment objectives.

Additional advice

- To assist students in developing responses that effectively demonstrate an understanding of syllabus objectives, ensure tasks are constructed so that specific task requirements are explicit for students. Some assessments have been constructed with key task specifications and objectives included in the Scaffolding section rather than grouped together in the Task section. The purpose of the Scaffolding section is to provide clear instructions to students about the processes they could use to complete and present their responses or the presentation requirements for their responses. Including important task specifications and objectives in the Scaffolding section may give students the impression these specifications and objectives are optional, rather than essential elements of task requirements.
- Within the teaching and learning cycle, consider how to support students to write in any imaginative form that is predominantly prose and allows them to demonstrate the syllabus objectives. While it is valid to stipulate a specific prose form such as a short story, or genre such as gothic or crime fiction, the intent of the task is to provide students with flexibility to demonstrate their learning by providing them with choice in how they respond to the syllabus specifications, e.g. students could write a short story, a memoir, interior monologue, a chapter for a novel, a drama script, a screenplay for a short script.

Assessment decisions

Reliability

Reliability is a judgment about the measurements of assessment. It refers to the extent to which the results of assessments are consistent, replicable and free from error.

Agreement trends between provisional and confirmed marks

Criterion number	Criterion name	Percentage agreement with provisional	Percentage less than provisional	Percentage greater than provisional	Percentage both less and greater than provisional
1	Knowledge application	97.61	1.91	0.48	0
2	Organisation and development	99.04	0.96	0.00	0
3	Textual features	99.52	0.48	0.00	0

Effective practices

Accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG for this IA was most effective when:

- for the Knowledge application criterion
 - the creation of the perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and places was made *through* the discerning use of aesthetic features and stylistic devices. For instance, in a response at the 8–9 performance level the development of aesthetic features (including, but not limited to, motif, pathetic fallacy, or symbolism) that placed the character/s in a clear time/place across the piece *and* were purposefully used to prompt critical and emotional audience responses
 - a response at the 8–9 performance level was successfully intriguing, thought-provoking and/or surprising, and contained a development of setting, character, concept or idea, and/or plot that was complex, nuanced, and/or original. Responses that were overly didactic in purpose, used predominantly dialogue, and/or contained one-dimensional characters that lacked development of character, setting or perspective across the response did not match the upper performance-level qualities of the descriptor
 - consideration was given to the extent to which the response purposefully manipulated cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and/or beliefs *through* the exploration and development of characters and concepts to achieve authorial purpose, e.g. high-level responses invited the reader to challenge, question or endorse particular cultural assumptions, values, attitudes and/or beliefs by considering the subtleties of perspectives and representations. Responses that simply repeated familiar or stereotypical plotlines dealing with cultural assumptions, attitudes, values and/or beliefs in stereotypical ways, without *purpose*, did not match the discerning qualities of the descriptor
- for the Organisation and development criterion, the evidence in the response at the 8–9 performance level matched the characteristics of making purposeful and considered use of different patterns and conventions of the chosen imaginative genre to invite audiences to take up positions. Additionally, responses were strengthened when purposeful choices were made

across the response to select and synthesise subject matter to support the chosen purpose, and this authorial purpose was maintained throughout

- for the Textual features criterion, all the descriptors for the 6–7 performance level require students to make language choices ‘for particular purposes’. For instance, responses that used a purposeful range of interconnected language choices, rather than using jargon, overly complex language, or overly simplistic language that may not be appropriate for the text type, provided clear evidence to match the appropriate performance level descriptors of the ISMG.

Practices to strengthen

To further ensure accuracy and consistency of the application of the ISMG for this IA, it is recommended that:

- when making judgments about the Knowledge application criterion, ensure
 - responses that overuse nouns and noun groups in place of the purposeful use of aesthetic features and stylistic devices to prompt critical and emotional responses are not judged as discerning or effective. In a response at the 8–9 performance level, the aesthetic features must be manipulated in a subtle way to engage the audience, complement the creation and development of representations and perspectives, and contribute to the development of a central purpose that invites readers to take up positions. Similarly, the use of singular or individual aesthetic features used in isolation (such as a repeated simile or several examples of alliteration) cannot be considered discerning or effective. Responses that do not move beyond expository language choices, or ‘telling’, are not considered subtle and complex, discerning or effective
 - responses that use previously established characters or plot points from an existing text do not show subtle and complex creation of perspectives and representations of concepts, identities, times and places. Similarly, responses that reuse cliché archetypes without clear purpose or development also do not show evidence of the upper performance-level qualifier. For instance, using a well-known character/character type with a slightly altered name, repeating a stereotype without clear purpose, or a response that is more a reimagination (and therefore is not appropriate for this assessment instrument) does not meet the requirements of ‘create’ for Assessment objective 3
 - in the imaginative response, the aesthetic dimension of the text relates to the creation of perspectives and representation, control and use of generic features and conventions, and the selection of subject matter. Responses at the 8–9 performance level showed evidence of the interrelated nature of all the assessment objectives. Inclusion of aesthetic features or stylistic devices that do not contribute to the style, genre, purpose, character, setting or tone of the imaginative response do not demonstrate a discerning or effective use of aesthetic features and are better matched to the mid performance-level descriptor
- for the Organisation and development criterion
 - responses are not at the 8–9 performance level if they make little use of cohesive devices or employ simplistic and repetitive devices, rather than considered use of a variety of cohesive devices to emphasise ideas and connect parts of an imaginative text. Similarly, responses that made use of cohesive devices that are more commonly associated with analytical writing (such as, firstly, additionally, adding to this) were not successful. At the 8–9 performance level, responses will make use of the cohesive devices of an imaginative text (such as motif, symbolism, juxtaposition, repeated grammatical structures or phrases) to connect and emphasise ideas and concepts explored in the response, and continue to develop the central purpose

- ensure the patterns and conventions of the imaginative text must allow for the response to establish and maintain a clear purpose, e.g. to engage, explore, inspire, satirise, question, move, disconcert or subvert. The features of the chosen genre pattern should be exploited to achieve the intended purpose throughout the entirety of the imaginative response
- ensure appropriate identification of Assessment objectives 1, 2, and 6 at the 8–9 and 6–7 performance levels occurs only when the use of the patterns and conventions of the chosen genre or form contribute to the development of the central purpose through selection and synthesis of subject matter that supports this central purpose. For example, extensive use of simplistic dialogue may not show appropriate selection and synthesis of subject matter to support perspectives in an imaginative text, especially if this dialogue is devoid of aesthetic description and/or does not contain imaginative description of the identities, times and places occurring in tandem with the dialogue.
- for Assessment objective 7 at the 8–9 performance level, the organisation of the plot line should contribute to the development of the central purpose, e.g. responses that use linear plots should come to a clear resolution that invites the reader to question or reflect on the central purpose. Responses that make use of non-linear plots should ensure that these are appropriately organised and cohesive in a way that support the central purpose, and that elements introduced within the different plot lines are resolved to also support a clear resolution that invites the reader to question or reflect on the central purpose
- for the Textual features criterion
 - an extended vocabulary or a control over complex sentence structures was not sufficient to demonstrate a discerning control over textual features if these choices did not contribute to the characterisation, tone, mood, or style of the imaginative response. In some cases, intentional misspellings of words or using punctuation that break with convention were evidence of a discerning control over spelling and punctuation at the 6–7 performance level
 - ensure for all assessment objectives connected to this criterion, responses make use of textual features for particular imaginative purposes. Responses that do not consider the relationship between the Textual features criterion and the overall purpose of the response and/or the ways that these features can support perspectives within the response, may not meet the discerning elements at the 6–7 performance level, even if they are judged as without error. For instance, responses that only make use of simplistic and repetitive grammatical structures, without clear purpose, may not meet the upper performance level descriptors.

Samples

The following excerpt demonstrates for the Organisation and development criterion that the response immediately and purposefully uses the patterns and conventions of the Australian Gothic genre, particularly through the personification of the landscape. Additionally, the response demonstrates an understanding of the interrelated nature of the assessment objectives by using aesthetic features and representations of time and place, established in the opening, to maintain a clear purpose, i.e. to disconcert.

Although the response employs a familiar and popular genre type, it avoids reusing familiar characters or plotlines, ensuring that it is an original and imaginative response.

Through the description of and changes to the setting, the response effectively uses the cohesive devices typical of an imaginative text. Also, the repeated descriptions of the hollow and superficial built environment, contrasted with the menacing natural environment, link ideas across different sections of the text. This emphasises the central purpose of disconcerting the audience and encouraging readers to question particular attitudes related to small towns and the costs of grief and change.

For the Knowledge application criterion, the response employs the genre patterns and conventions to create subtle and complex representations of the character and their concerns. The imagery of the landscape connects the prologue and Chapter 1, demonstrating a discerning creation and use across all assessment objectives.

The aesthetic features of imagery, personification, metaphor, and inferential detail engage the audience, complementing the creation and development of representations and perspectives. These elements allow readers to feel sympathy for the main character and understand their conflicted emotions and implied guilt.

The use of dialogue is appropriately supported by aesthetic description that not only locates the speakers but also establishes their relationships and the attitudes and beliefs of the characters. Additionally, the dialogue is used in a way that is consistent with the Australian Gothic genre and appropriate to the time and place.

For the Textual features criterion, the language choices and grammatical structures support the response and are appropriate for the selected patterns and conventions. The varied sentence lengths allow for the pacing to increase and decrease, enhancing the discerning selection, synthesis, and sequencing of the subject matter.

Note: The characteristic/s identified may not be the only time the characteristic/s occurred throughout a response.

PROLOGUE

Under a cloak of darkness, the night held its breath; its stillness broken only by the feeble gleam of the waning crescent. The cove cliffs were like silhouettes against the sky, their rugged contours delicately traced by the moon's light. The elusive glow danced hesitantly along the jagged cliffs, casting fragmented rays that played upon the sand of the cove below.

In light, the cliff was a living canvas, adorned with handprints, outlines of cattle and constellations of dots that mirrored the sky above. These ancient markings in varying shades of red echoed the silent stories of those who came before. Under the moon's attentive eye, the light usually uncovered the cliff – exposing it, unveiling its secrets, and laying bare its historic tales.

Yet, tonight the light held back, reluctant, as if sensing a fresh scar that the cove yearned to keep shrouded – perhaps one she bore with a sense of shame.

Beneath the familiar scent of brine carried along the breeze, lingered another. A more unsettling aroma. Tonight, the wind was more than a mere messenger; it was a witness.

Another colour painted the canvas. *Blood.*

Another sound joined the symphony. *A crash.*

Another creature washed up against the shore. *A body.*

The ancient rocks stood witness to the unfolding tragedy, their timeless forms steadfastly concealing the secret beneath their imposing cloaks. Yet, these pillars murmured cryptic confidences only to the wind, who in turn howled an invitation for something, someone, to discover the truth.

Tonight, the darkness was a custodian of secrets.

The wind was a notorious gossip.

The sun was a beacon of truth.

And so, the wind roared, urging for its steadfast companion, the sun, to awake and unveil the chilling truth that had transpired beneath the silent cover of darkness.

CHAPTER 1

With just one road, a solitary artery connecting entrance to exit, Charlie knew Agnes Water like the lines on the back of her hand. Eleven months prior, she was a newcomer, yet now the town's contours were carved in her mind. Her car protested against the well-worn tracks of the sandy road, hemmed in by the dense palm tree foliage – it wasn't designed for such terrain.

Unlike the bustling streets of Melbourne, where roads inexorably intersected, the pristine coastlines of Agnes Water offered tranquillity. Here, the wind-tilted palm fronds served as compass needles, their elongated shadows pointing Charlie northbound towards the cliff she sought.

The January morning unfolded languidly. The sun, which had earlier revealed an ominous scene, now made the hair on her arms stand on end, while the wind loomed like a nosy neighbour. The elements seemed playful, *hinting*. Charlie had fled to this coastal town to escape such tentative weather – *and more*. Yet, the elements were chasing her, hunting her down. *And so was her past*.

The road bore witness to her internal struggle. Its surface, sporadically marked with signs, told stories of change and impermanence. Faded speed limits were more ornamental than enforced, decorating the road for the occasional tourist. The other signs, contentious advertisements, promised progress, development, and transformation, but also carried the weight of a great loss. Tomorrow, graffiti would obstruct these signs, and the cycle of oppression would continue.

Proceeding along the sandy road, the words of Charlie's superior echoed in her mind, a grim reminder of the day's task.

'Only 7am and we've already got a call,' he stated as he gulped his coffee. 'Charlie, could you go down to investigate please – it's just another one of their kind off the cliff. I know this might be hard for you, but the boys will be there shortly to help.'

His voice drowned into a deafening silence. Charlie's stomach plunged as his bulged through the gaps of his sweat-stained T-shirt.

Off the cliff? The words were knives, penetrating through her like a blade. This case was like an intimate scar on her psyche; reluctantly familiar and undeniable.

Memories clawed with an intensity that rivalled the relentless North Queensland sun. Her fingertips drummed a frantic beat against the steering wheel, chipping her freshly manicured nails. The stark reminder was etched in black cursive on her arm; a scar that would never heal.

'Leroy. 19/01/2022'

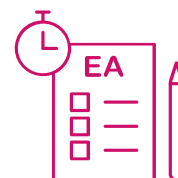
Additional advice

- While this assessment requires students to determine and develop a clear purpose, students should not be required to complete context statements, rationales, inspiration statements, authorial introductions or similar. This is outside the scope of the instrument and should not be included in the assessment decisions. The response should be a standalone imaginative piece that creates concepts, identities, times and places within the text to communicate the purpose rather than relying on additional statements. Similarly, statements or notes that indicate a

chosen genre are not required or appropriate to the task. The chosen genre should be made evident to the reader through the clear and purposeful use of the chosen genre elements throughout the imaginative response. Schools could complete such activities as part of teaching and learning, but it should not be included as part of the final assessment nor used to make judgments about the assessment.

- An important aspect of this assessment is students demonstrating an ability to independently make choices regarding their audience and purpose, and then making choices regarding genre, selection of subject matter, and aesthetic features to compose 'an original, imaginative, written text'. Teaching and learning activities should expose students to a range of imaginative genres and foster students' agency in having creative control over their response. Schools are reminded of the different genres suggested by the syllabus, i.e. short story, memoir, interior monologue, a chapter for a novel, a drama script, or a screenplay for a short film.
- If students include digital images of written text, such as diary extracts or letters, this text must be written by the student and considered part of the imaginative response. The text contained in images contributes to the word count, refer to the *QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook v6.0*, Section 8.2.6. The inclusion of another author's work is not appropriate for the assessment type and should not be considered part of the response.
- It is important to note that the perspective students are creating for the imaginative response may be sensitive for some readers. Please consider whether it is suitable for the school context and meets community standards. Students will require guidance to ensure they make appropriate choices.

External assessment



External assessment (EA) is developed and marked by the QCAA. The external assessment for a subject is common to all schools and administered under the same conditions, at the same time, on the same day.

Examination — analytical written response (25%)

Assessment design

The assessment instrument was designed using the specifications, conditions and assessment objectives described in the summative external assessment section of the syllabus. The examination is an analytical response to a literary text from the prescribed text list in the form of an analytical essay for an audience with a deep understanding of the text.

The examination assessed subject matter from Unit 4. Questions were derived from the context of Unit 4: Independent exploration.

The assessment required students to produce an analytical written response to an unseen question, on a literary text from the prescribed text list.

The stimulus comprised of eight texts from the prescribed text list, which were designed to elicit a unique response:

- *Catch-22* — Joseph Heller
- *Hamlet* — William Shakespeare
- *In Cold Blood* — Truman Capote
- *King Lear* — William Shakespeare
- *Mrs Dalloway* — Virginia Woolf
- *Terra Nullius* — Claire G. Coleman
- *The Poisonwood Bible* — Barbara Kingsolver
- *Wuthering Heights* — Emily Bronte.

Assessment decisions

Assessment decisions are made by markers by matching student responses to the external assessment marking guide (EAMG). The external assessment papers and the EAMG are published in the year after they are administered.

Effective practices

Overall, students responded well when they:

- for the Knowledge application criterion
 - developed a unique and authoritative response to the exam question/task that moves beyond just reaffirming or restating the question or task, so that the response, while clearly and precisely responding to the question, also explores the significance or implications of the interpretation and how it relates to broader thematic concepts, ideas and perspectives of the literary text

- provided cogent analysis that showed an awareness of the constructed nature of texts and the purposeful choices made by the author or playwright. Responses that included a clear focus on the effects of writer's choices within the literary text and specifically unpacked *how* these devices have been constructed to make meaning and invite audiences to take up positions were often more successful. Discriminating responses often explored a variety of aesthetic features or stylistic devices within paragraphs by including and examining complementary techniques to strengthen arguments
- demonstrated an understanding of the interrelated nature of the aspects of the Knowledge application assessment objectives *through* examination and interpretation of the writer's stylistic and aesthetic choices, coupled with transitions between these ideas and analysis of the ways that text constructs perspectives and how these textual constructions invite audiences to take up positions about the implicit cultural context texts convey. Discriminating responses went beyond identifying and labelling the stylistic devices or restating the cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or beliefs that underpin the text
- provided analysis of perspectives or representations of concepts, identities, times, and places in texts by examining and interpreting specific meanings and viewpoints the text communicates. The analysis of these perspectives or representations was purposefully tied to the specific question/task and assisted in the development of a unique and well-considered response
- for the Organisation and development criterion
 - developed a discriminating thesis that incorporated all aspects of the Knowledge application criterion, so that it contained a clear 'what' (the interpretation), 'how' (key aesthetic features or stylistic devices) and 'why' (how the author or text reflects or criticises cultural assumptions, values, attitudes, and beliefs). A discriminating thesis does not just provide an interpretation that responds to the question/task, but also explores the purpose, significance or implications of this interpretation: why the author represented the character, concept, or event in a particular way
 - provided a clear internal logic that developed arguments across the response by using those ideas set out in the thesis and introduction, and by logically sequencing the information within paragraphs to assist in the strengthening and development of the arguments across the response. For instance, responses that used a compare and contrast or a cause and effect logic within their thesis statements, then followed through with these patterns in all body paragraphs (rather than splitting their response, such as cause in one paragraph and effect in another) were often more successful
 - made use of a range of cohesive links besides connective words. In a high-level response a range of cohesive devices — including nominalisation, and lexical cohesion — were used to clarify the logic of the argument being presented, or to clarify the relationship between the development of ideas
- for the Textual features criterion
 - used a range of grammatically accurate sentence structures to develop ideas, ensuring clarity and precision in presenting arguments. High-level responses demonstrated control over both simple and complex sentence constructions, effectively combining them to convey nuanced ideas to maintain fluency throughout the essay
 - made purposeful language choices to develop ideas, selecting vocabulary that was appropriate for the register of a literary analysis and enhanced the depth of the argument throughout. Strong responses demonstrated a thoughtful selection of words to communicate ideas clearly and with sophistication, avoiding overgeneralisation or vagueness

- used punctuation purposefully to support the logical development of arguments and for effect. High-level responses used punctuation to separate and connect ideas, clarifying relationships between sentences and paragraphs. Discriminating responses used punctuation deliberately to guide the reader through the argument and maintain coherence and flow.

Practices to strengthen

When preparing students for external assessment, it is recommended that teachers:

- for the Knowledge application criterion
 - encourage students to understand and analyse figurative devices (such as metaphor, symbol, motif, characterisation) rather than relying entirely on sound devices (such as assonance, alliteration, consonance, and sibilance). Similarly, the analysis of plosives, while potentially relevant, does not always give opportunity for responses to authoritatively analyse the ways that readers are invited to take up positions and does not provide the ability to easily examine and interpret the cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or ideas. The interconnected nature of the assessable elements for the Knowledge application criterion means that responses need to analyse and unpack how the aesthetic features or stylistic devices reveal the ways that perspectives and representations are created within the text and the ways that the text is underpinned by cultural assumptions, attitudes, values or ideas, to make meaning which requires a certain level of depth that sound devices are limited to
 - develop an awareness that questions include a range of elements that need to be explicitly answered to demonstrate responsiveness for a unique interpretation. A focus on the process of planning and developing a response to an unseen question that addresses all elements of the question/task will help build students' confidence in developing and expressing a more authoritative response to an exam question/task
 - practise a range of different examination question types, while appreciating that there are no mandated item constructs used in the Literature external assessment and students may encounter a question construct in the exam with which they are unfamiliar. For this reason, it is important to practise a range of item constructs when preparing for the exam, while stressing that developing a strong knowledge of the literary text is the best way to ensure a high-level response of any potential question
 - review the use of the item constructs that includes quotations from the novel or play and then the task: 'Analyse this comment in relation to the text as a whole'. This item construct guides students to consider how a statement relates to interpretations or concepts or ideas addressed by the text as a whole. In responding to this question type, students are not restricted to only discussing the quote in the particular context in which it is stated, or to developing an argument related to the veracity of the claim made in the quote. Responses may also discuss how particular concepts suggested by the quotations are addressed in the novel or play or use the quotations as a springboard to explore particular concepts of the literary work
- for the Organisation and development criterion
 - encourage students to develop thesis statements that always take up an arguable position, e.g. *King Lear* Question B responses that simply summarised the quotation to say that a concept was apparent in the text did not create a discriminating thesis that could develop across the response. Responses that argued that Shakespeare used a concept to position audiences in a specific way (such as warning against, endorsing, criticising or condemning a perspective or idea) were more successful Thesis statements should use language that

creates an arguable position rather than language that suggests or enforces a simple summary of the text

- support students to understand that a discriminating thesis statement makes a claim and connects to the bigger concepts in the text in a unique and perceptive way. The thesis statement must offer an interpretation that responds explicitly to all aspects of the question/task. For instance, in Question B the word ‘comment’ required responses to ‘express an opinion or observation or give a judgment’ based on the concepts, characters, and/or ideas raised through the quotation. Responses that simply repeated the quotation or indicated where it occurred in the play in relation to characters actions were less successful
- direct students to avoid self-referential statements that simply state the essay will analyse ideas or that concepts have or will be analysed. Responses should instead use active analytical metalanguage throughout to show well-considered evidence that is used to explicitly support arguments by connecting, developing, and emphasising ideas within paragraphs
- provide explicit guidance on how to cohesively link ideas in ways that do not just rely on connective words or phrases. In a high-level response, paragraphs were structured according to the logic of the argument being presented. Using cohesive ties that do not relate to the argument (e.g. saying ‘therefore’ to introduce a sentence that does not follow logically from the previous sentence) is not evidence of a successful use of cohesion
- for the Textual features criterion, encourage students to
 - expand their vocabulary to develop more deliberate language choices that support their analysis. Students should avoid vague or overused terms and instead focus on selecting words that are specific to the text and the question/task, enriching the quality of their response while maintaining the academic register of the literary analysis
 - develop a strong understanding of sentence structures and grammar that can be applied to their analysis, ensuring clarity in presenting ideas. Students should practice varying sentence types — simple, compound, and complex — so they can develop nuanced arguments while maintaining fluency and coherence in their writing.

Samples

The following excerpt is Question A for *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte. It required students to respond to the question: ‘In the novel, Bronte represents Catherine Earnshaw as incapable of love because she is driven by social class. Discuss’.

Effective student responses:

- began with a discriminating thesis that clearly answered the question/task and presented a thoughtful, arguable position. The argument is consistently advanced throughout the essay, with each point contributing meaningfully to the central claim
- went beyond surface-level observations and engaged with the text on a deeper level. They provide a detailed analysis of a range of stylistic and aesthetic features (e.g. figurative language, structure, tone) and explain how these elements work together to create meaning or convey the author’s message
- had a clear and logical structure. Ideas are organised to support the thesis, with smooth transitions between paragraphs and within individual paragraphs. The response moves fluidly from one idea to the next, building a cohesive argument throughout.

This excerpt has been included:

- to show use of a range of evidence from across the text to support the interpretation presented in the essay: 'Bronte conveys that, though Catherine is capable of love, class structures have stripped away her freedom and thus her ability to realise this love.' This paragraph focuses on how Catherine's fractured identity reflects how her authentic identity is restricted by societal expectations related to class and gender. The paragraph refers to characterisation, language choice, and figurative devices to support its central contention, and integrates all three aspects of the Knowledge application criteria in its discussion of the text
- because it includes evidence that identifies and analyses patterns across the text (characterisation) with discussion of specific aesthetic features and stylistic devices (dialogue, figurative devices) to convey an authoritative interpretation of the text. The analysis of the text draws on interpretations that go beyond superficial features of the text. For instance, in this paragraph, the response includes a discussion of how Catherine's relationship with Heathcliff involves an identification with a masculine identity that defies conventions of the time, demonstrating how Catherine's denial of Heathcliff involves both class and gender expectations
- to show the development of an argument across the paragraph that builds evidence to support a relevant conclusion that is directly related to the thesis of the essay
- to demonstrate a logical structure and a use of cohesive ties to convey information clearly and succinctly. The paragraph is structured chronologically to follow the development of Catherine's character through the novel. Connectives such as 'despite this' and 'thus' are used to mark transitions between different stages in the argument, and to clarify the relationship between evidence and the conclusions entailed by the evidence.

Bronte conveys that Catherine's social ambitions cause fracture her identity, preventing the realisation of her love for Heathcliff. Initially, Catherine is described as a "wild, wicked slip", with typically masculine traits. It is her authentic identity which aligns her with Heathcliff, who possesses a "half-civilised ferocity", and ~~is~~ and both find social norms to be inconsequential in their relationship. Thus, Brontë portrays that the pair are ^{identity;} ~~the pair's love is relationship~~ is so close that they are one ~~person~~; Catherine claims "whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same." By unifying them, Catherine ~~transcends~~ comments that their love transcends gender and class barriers and incestual prohibitions, but acknowledges that ~~this due to rigid physical boundaries~~ this closeness can only exist in the intangible, represented by their souls. Despite these claims, Catherine's desires later shift to becoming the "greatest

woman in the neighbourhood", and upon meeting the Lintons ~~she~~ develops superficial refinement and sophistication. ~~Thus~~, As she claims "he's more myself than I am", Catherine's love for Heathcliff is intrinsically linked to her identity and is almost a form of selfishness. However, she ~~contrastingly~~ ^{also} comments that "it would degrade me ~~there~~ to marry Heathcliff," indicating that ~~at~~ her identity has changed and ~~to~~ her love for him is a regression to her previous wild, authentic self. ^{to marry Heathcliff, they "would be beggars".} ~~Thus~~ ~~by~~ marrying Edgar, she denies her love for Heathcliff and her ~~self~~ ^{more} 'masculine' identity, whilst becoming powerless against society's standards for women – to be married and restricted, or face destruction. Thus, Catherine becomes imprisoned ~~within a loveless marriage~~ and "doomed to decay" in a "shattered prison". Whilst claiming to love both Heathcliff and Edgar, she can never ~~a metaphor for marriage.~~

Extended response

The following excerpt is Question A for *King Lear* by William Shakespeare. It required students to respond to the question: 'Shakespeare represents Edmund as the most villainous character in the play. Discuss'.

Effective student responses:

- began with a discriminating thesis that provided a nuanced interpretation of the question/task. For instance, this response explores a layered argument, suggesting that while Edmund's defiance of the Great Chain of Being and the law of primogeniture establishes him as villainous, Shakespeare's portrayal of Goneril and Regan through their failure as daughters and the use of animalistic language ultimately positions them as the most villainous figures. This interpretation demonstrates depth by linking characterisation with broader Jacobean beliefs and societal values
- engaged deeply with the text, providing detailed analysis of how Shakespeare uses specific aesthetic features and stylistic devices, such as animalistic imagery and contrasts between natural and unnatural order, to portray characters' villainy. For instance, the exploration of how comparing Goneril and Regan's comparisons to predatory animals dehumanises them and reinforces their moral corruption in the context of filial duty
- used evidence from across the text to support claims, demonstrating an authoritative understanding of characterisation and cultural assumptions. For instance, the response has drawn connections between Edmund's soliloquies and his subversion of natural order and has analysed how Goneril and Regan's betrayal of their father reflects apprehensions about women's roles in Jacobean society

- created a unique and well-considered response to the question by challenging conventional interpretations. Rather than simply reaffirming Edmund's role as the most villainous character, the response has reinterpreted Goneril and Regan as the play's true antagonists, supported by analysis of their characterisation, thematic relevance, and Shakespeare's manipulation of societal expectations
- analysed how Shakespeare critiques both individual ambition and societal structures by examining the interplay between Edmund's rejection of primogeniture and the failure of Goneril and Regan to fulfil filial duty. The analysis has integrated the playwright's stylistic and aesthetic choices with an exploration of Jacobean beliefs, reinforcing the response's unique thesis
- demonstrated a sophisticated use of textual features to enhance the clarity and fluency of the arguments, e.g. sentences have varied in structure and length to create emphasis and flow, balancing detailed analysis with succinct summative points that directly support the thesis
- employed a discriminating range of vocabulary appropriate to a literary analysis, avoiding informal language and instead using precise terminology to discuss Shakespeare's stylistic and aesthetic choices, such as 'animalistic imagery', 'subversion of natural order', and 'filial betrayal'.

Shakespeare's tragic 1605 play King Lear explores the struggle of fathers Lear and Gloucester as they are overthrown by their children. Gloucester's son Edmund and Lear's daughters, Goneril and Regan, are the antagonists of the play, consistently defying Jacobean ideals in their desire for power. While Shakespeare portrays Edmund as villainous through his disregard for the natural order, the playwright's manipulation of Jacobean beliefs around the role of women in society leads audiences to perceive Goneril and Regan as the most evil. ~~Edmund is revealed~~ Through Edmund's defiance of the great chain of being and the law of primogeniture, Shakespeare reveals him as a villain, but it is through Goneril and Regan's failure as daughters and the playwright's strong use of animalistic language that ^{they are} portrayed ~~them~~ as the most villainous characters.

Edmund is represented as villainous to a Jacobean audience through his blatant disregard and destruction of the natural order. As a bastard, Edmund is considered a lesser son and is unable to inherit land, therefore power from his father. He questions the fairness of society's treatment of bastards, exclaiming angrily "Why bastard? Wherefore base?" This repetition reveals Edmund's intense frustration with his position in society, which drives him to reject Jacobean beliefs, instead claiming that ~~"Nature art"~~ his "goddess". ~~"Nature" is~~ "O Nature, thou art my goddess." Edmund's devotion to nature's law over man's law is utilised by the playwright to represent him as a villain, as the society at the time strongly valued order rather than the destructive chaos associated with nature. Furthermore, Edmund's manipulation of his father in order to gain his older brother, Edgar's inheritance is viewed by audiences as a villainous act as it ~~breaks~~ breaks the highly valued law of primogeniture.

The following excerpt is Questions B *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote. It required students to respond to the question: "In his confession in chapter 4, Smith says, 'They [the Clutters] never hurt me. Like other people. Like people have all my life. Maybe it's just that the Clutters were the ones who had to pay for it'. Analyse this comment in relation to the text as a whole".

Effective student responses:

- presented an authoritative interpretation of perspectives and representations within the text, demonstrating a commanding and reliable understanding. The response establishes the interpretation that Capote deliberately evokes reader sympathy for Perry by representing the Clutters as victims of Perry's traumatic upbringing and mental instability. The introduction articulates this perspective assertively, aligning with the broader purpose of the text and forming the foundation for subsequent arguments

- offered a perceptive examination of the interrelationships between cultural assumptions and representations. The response examines societal beliefs surrounding victimhood and culpability, using Perry's deprived childhood and mental instability as focal points. It explores the cultural tension between 'nature versus nurture' and societal ideals tied to the American Dream, showing how these underpin the representations of Perry's criminality. The response sustains a commanding tone, confidently addressing these cultural and societal constructs and their implications throughout
- demonstrated an authoritative examination of stylistic and aesthetic features and their effects. The response analyses Capote's deliberate stylistic choices, such as his use of symbolism, to evoke sympathy for Perry. For instance, the reference to Perry's 'childish feet' during his execution underscores his lack of maturity and reinforces Capote's intent to diminish his perceived culpability. The response interprets such features with precision, linking them directly to Capote's conceptual goals
- included a distinct and discriminating thesis that responded explicitly to the question/task. The response's thesis — 'In "In Cold Blood", Capote effectively portrays the Clutters as scapegoats for the sufferings inflicted upon Perry by external forces, for the purpose of evoking sympathy from readers towards the multifaceted killer' — is perceptive and explicitly tied to the quotation. It narrows the focus to the impacts of Perry's suffering, integrating Capote's portrayal of the Clutters and Perry's instability. The thesis is consistently supported by topic sentences and evidence drawing clear, well-reasoned conclusions.

Treman Capote's self-proclaimed 'non-fiction' 1966 literary landmark, In Cold Blood, masterfully ~~forms~~ presents a unique blend of objective journalistic reportage with narrative storytelling to spark the epistemological discussion of fact versus fiction, whilst simultaneously destabilising assumptions of criminality in his heterodiegetic retelling of the heinous multiple murder of a prosperous Kansas farming family through a parapsychic non-linear narrative structure.

In 'In Cold Blood', Capote effectively portrays the Clutters as scapegoats for the suffering inflicted upon Perry by external forces, for the purpose of evoking sympathy from readers towards the multifaceted killer. This is revealed through Capote's exploration of Perry's psychological complexities, Perry embodying the status of a societal victim and victim of circumstances, and the role of familial instability in shaping Smith's moral compass and life of criminality.

Capote provides a depiction of the Clutter killers as societal misfits

victims of circumstances that committed a heinous homicide due to yearning for an unattainable life from the fringes of society. ~~During passage:~~ This was underpinned in the novel when Capote implements Dick's inner-dialogue as he observes a seemingly wealthy and successful businessman from afar. In this evidence, Dick ^{alliteratively} characterises the businessman as a "Bigshot bastard" & whilst questioning to himself, "why do big-shot bastards get all the luck?" before threatening to "open" these "bastards up and let a little of their bad guilt on the floor" since "Dick had the power with a knife in his hand". This evidence ties with Perry's proclamation that the Audras "had" to be the recipients of an act of brutality since the pair expressed hatred and violence to compensate for a lifestyle ~~that~~ ^{where} business moguls and prosperous farmers living in abundance obtained. ~~Additionally,~~ Additionally, the killers obtaining this perception was exacerbated by their ~~first~~ 'societal misfit' status Capote purposefully establishes throughout In Cold Blood.

Additional advice

- Encourage students to practise crafting topic sentences that both reflect and advance the thesis across the response. Topic sentences that fail to incorporate or address the thesis may result in arguments that are tangential rather than cohesive, weakening the response's ability to strengthen the thesis and draw clear, logical conclusions.
- Guide students to avoid exclusively using low-modality language such as 'could' or 'might' (e.g. 'Shakespeare could be alluding', 'this metaphor might represent'), as this can undermine the authority and confidence of their analysis. Responses that rely on such language often struggle to offer a considered or authoritative unpacking of cultural assumptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, aesthetic features, or stylistic devices.
- Promote purposeful paragraphing to support and develop the thesis throughout the response. Disjointed or overly short paragraphs, as well as responses with only one body paragraph, often fail to demonstrate logical sequencing or cohesion, making it harder to transition and build ideas effectively.
- Clarify that, unlike IA1, the external assessment does not require the use or commentary on critics' interpretations of the text. Citing external ideas or quotations is not necessary and can detract from the student's ability to provide an authoritative, independent interpretation. A close examination of the literary text itself is required to meet Assessment objectives 3, 4, and 5.

- Emphasise that theoretical or philosophical lenses, intertextual references, or comparisons to modern events are outside syllabus requirements. Such inclusions often do not contribute to an authoritative interpretation and can distract from analysis directly tied to the text.
- For Shakespearean texts, while contextual information about the Jacobean or Elizabethan eras can assist in achieving Assessment objectives 3 and 4, encourage students to use it to analyse how cultural assumptions underpin the text. Overemphasis on historical or cultural context at the expense of analysing aesthetic features, stylistic devices, and representations risks undermining the authority and focus of the response.
- Support students in practising deconstructing a wide range of question constructs. Responses that rely heavily on repeating question vocabulary or providing a simple positive/negative answer often fail to address key elements of the question, e.g. Question A for *King Lear* required students to engage with the word 'most'. Similarly, pre-prepared responses that do not adapt to the specific question/task are less successful. Provide strategies for planning responses that involve identifying and addressing all key words in the question.