

# Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies subject report

2024 cohort

January 2025





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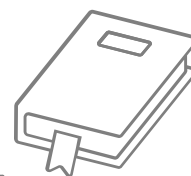
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# Introduction



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

**9**  
schools offered  
Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait  
Islander Studies



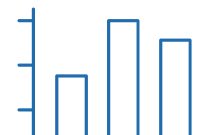
**75.64%**  
of students  
completed  
4 units



**98.31%**  
of students  
received a  
C or higher



# 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 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies: 9.

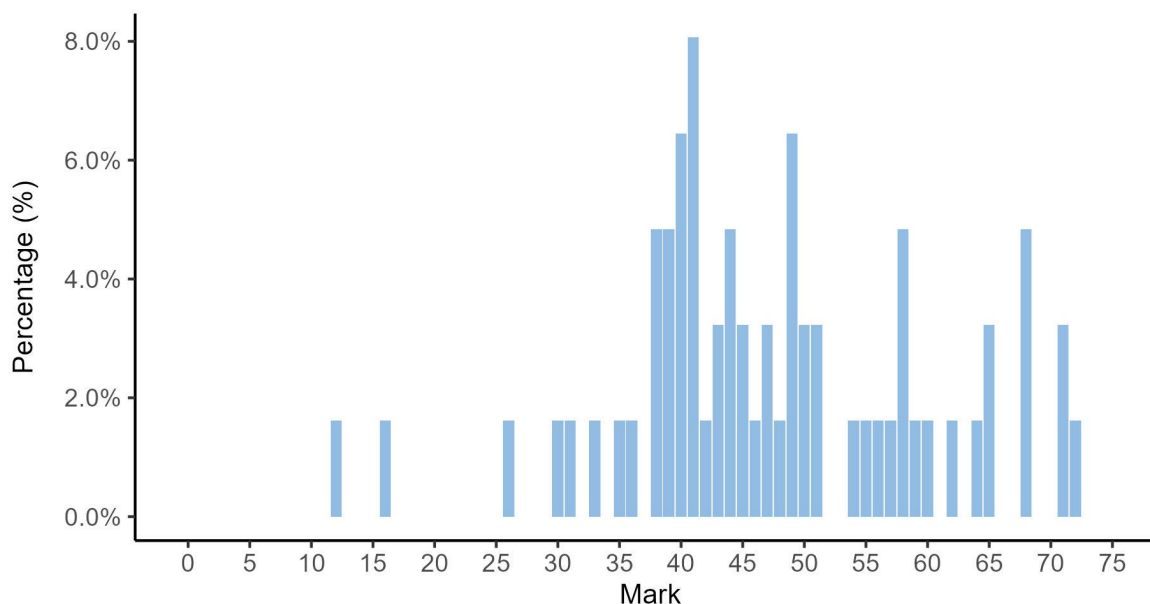
Completion of units	Unit 1	Unit 2	Units 3 and 4
Number of students completed	78	68	59

## Units 1 and 2 results

Number of students	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Unit 1	63	15
Unit 2	63	5

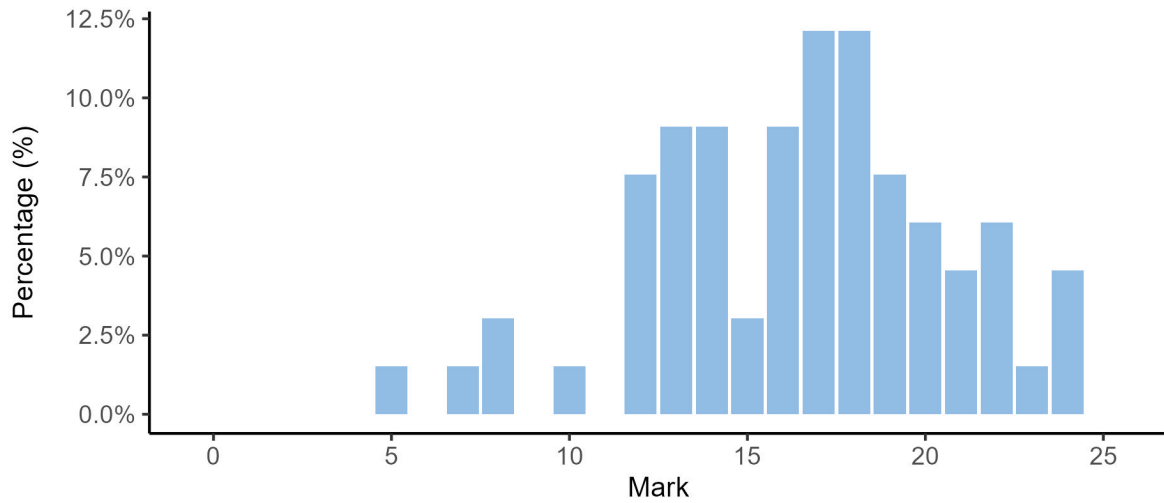
## Units 3 and 4 internal assessment (IA) results

### Total marks for IA

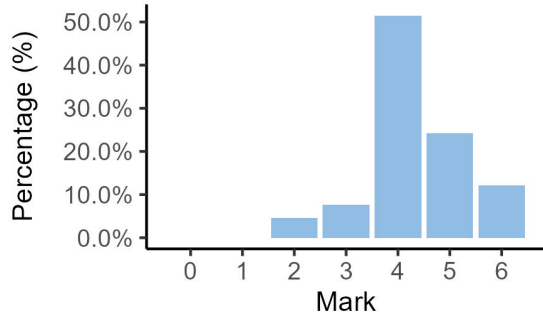


## IA1 marks

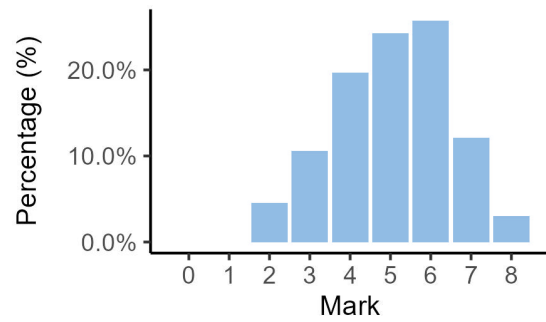
### IA1 total



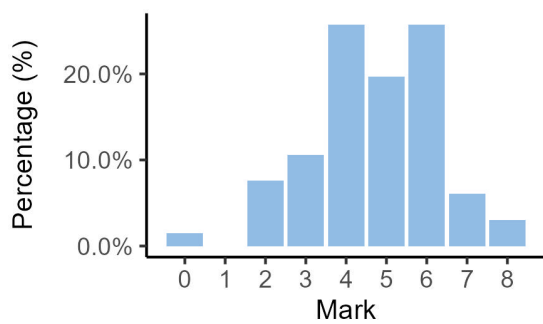
### IA1 Criterion: Defining, using and demonstrating understanding



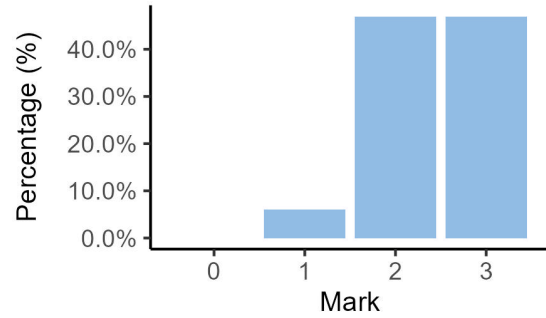
### IA1 Criterion: Analysing



### IA1 Criterion: Evaluating

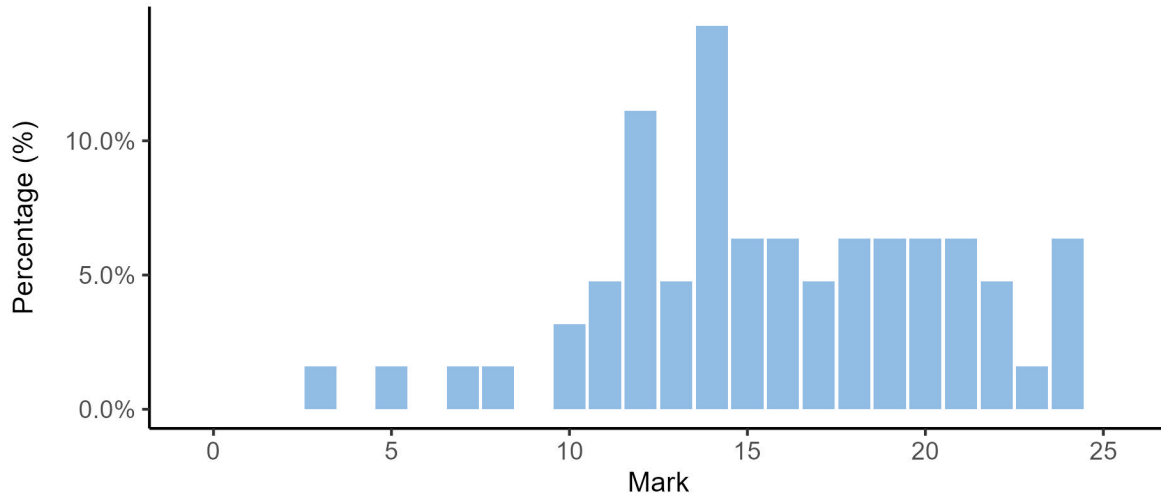


### IA1 Criterion: Creating

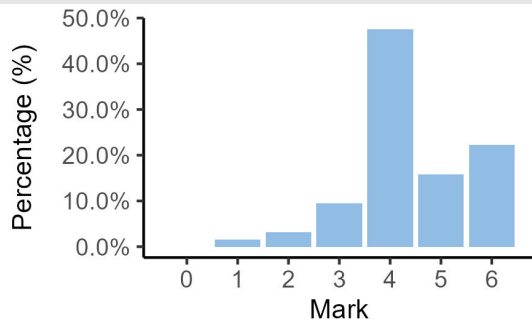


## IA2 marks

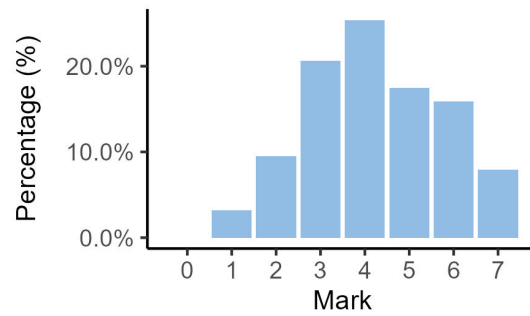
### IA2 total



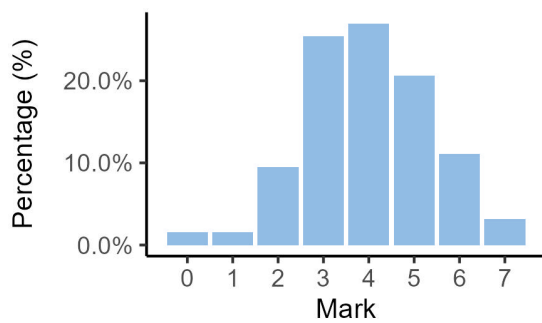
### IA2 Criterion: Defining, using and demonstrating understanding



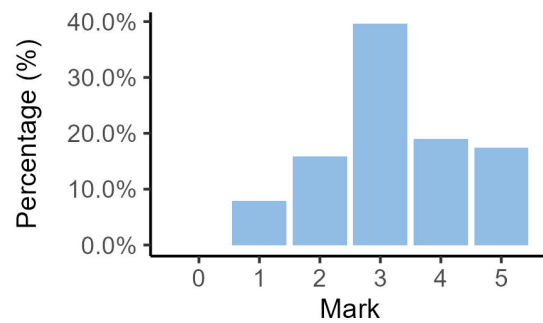
### IA2 Criterion: Analysing



### IA2 Criterion: Evaluating

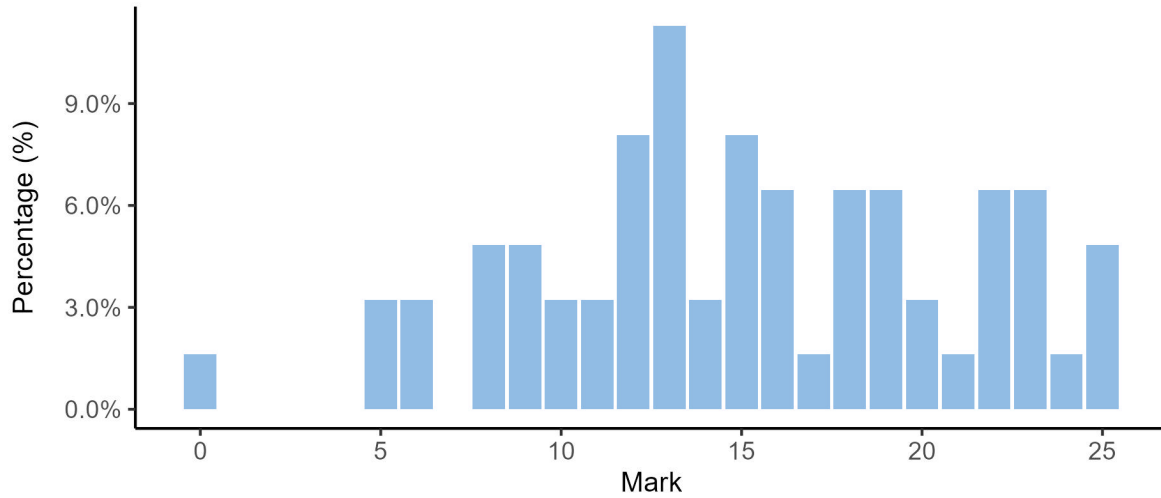


### IA2 Criterion: Considering, organising and creating

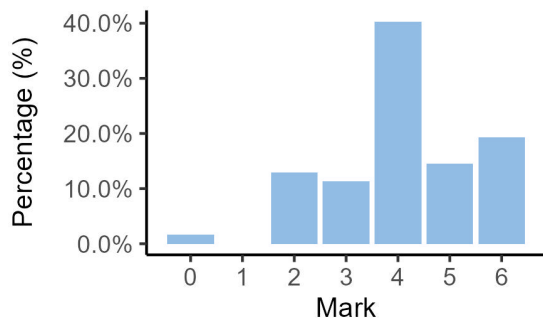


# IA3 marks

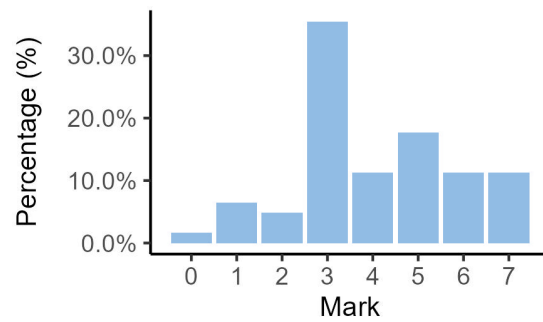
## IA3 total



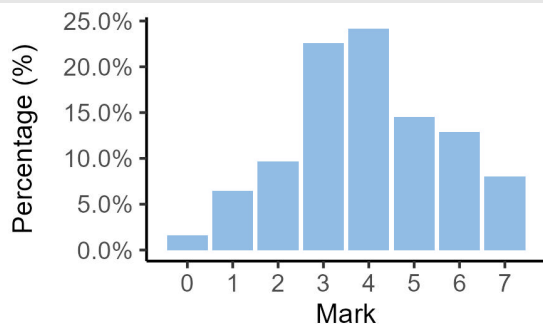
## IA3 Criterion: Defining, using and demonstrating understanding



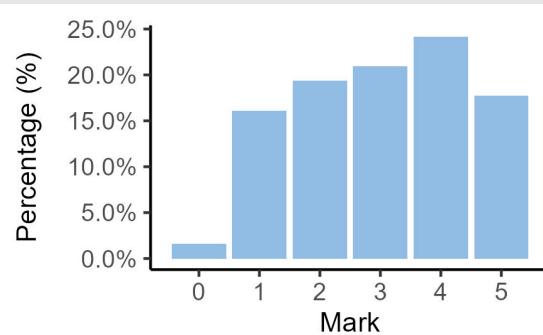
## IA3 Criterion: Analysing



## IA3 Criterion: Evaluating

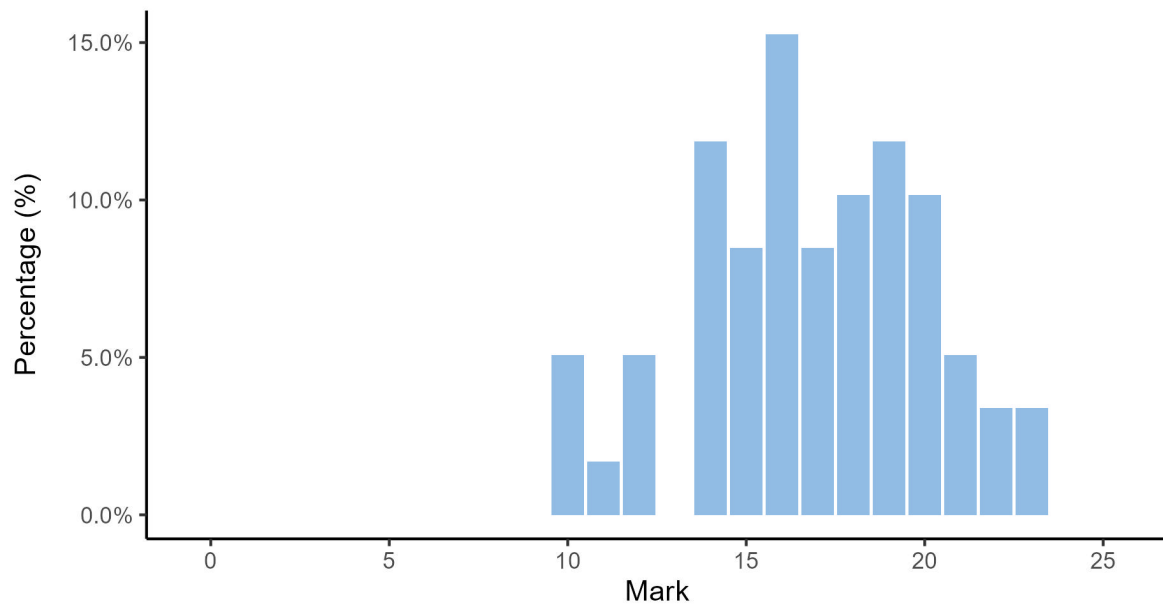


## IA3 Criterion: Considering, organising and creating



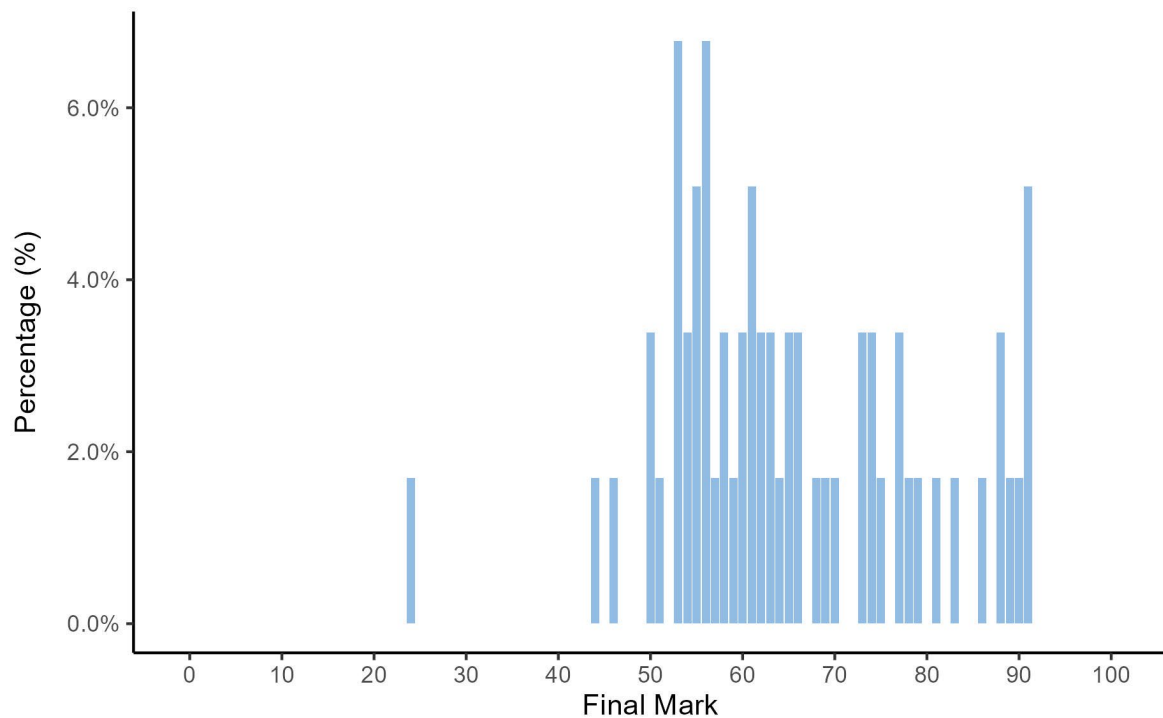


## External assessment (EA) marks



## 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	100–80	79–62	61–44	43–17	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	10	21	27	1	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	9	9	8
Percentage endorsed in Application 1	55	55	100

## 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	8	38	7	75.00
2	8	38	3	62.50
3	8	37	3	62.50

# Internal assessment 1 (IA1)



## Examination — extended response (25%)

The examination assesses the application of a range of cognitions to a provided question, scenario and/or problem.

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	4
Authentication	0
Authenticity	0
Item construction	1
Scope and scale	0

### Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- included stimulus material that students could use to create informed analytical essays. Effective stimulus materials provided the opportunity for students to analyse the responses and contributions that addressed the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the 20th century
- included a range of stimulus material demonstrating different perspectives. These provided opportunity to explain causal factors and patterns directly related to responses and contributions to rights and freedoms in depth
- aligned with the subject matter of Unit 3 Topic 1: Rights and freedoms and the IA1 specifications. This alignment was evident in instruments through the consistency between the task description, instructions and other cues.

## Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- use task instructions that maintain alignment with the assessment objectives, specifically the alignment between the cognition and its associated subject matter. This ensures that expectations are clear and that students are directed to demonstrate the requirements of each objective, e.g. students be directed to evaluate the significance of the responses and contributions
- include an unseen question or hypothesis with stimulus material that focuses on events that addressed the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples that occurred in the 20th century
- ensure the task only reflects subject matter relevant to Unit 3 Topic 1: Rights and freedoms. This needs to be evident in the task statement or question, instructions and stimulus material. This consistency avoids inclusion of subject material relevant to Unit 3 Topic 2: Land rights.

## 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	1
Layout	0
Transparency	0

### Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- provided clear and concise context captions or explanatory statements for each stimulus item. When used, these statements included important details without limiting opportunities for students to demonstrate all aspects of the Defining, using and demonstrating understanding criterion as well as the Analysing criterion.

## Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- use language that acknowledges the diversity and complexity of Aboriginal cultures and Torres Strait Islander cultures. This acknowledgment needs to be reflected through the use of capitalisation and plurals when referring to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## 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	Defining, using and demonstrating understanding	87.50	0.00	12.50	0
2	Analysing	75.00	12.50	12.50	0
3	Evaluating	87.50	0.00	12.50	0
4	Creating	100.00	0.00	0.00	0

### Effective practices

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

- for the Defining, using and demonstrating understanding criterion, accurate decisions were made about the
  - use of terminology related to the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, e.g. using correct legal terms such as legislation, discrimination and citizenship when discussing the 1967 referendum
  - explanations about the relevance of the responses and contributions related to the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, e.g. noting the importance of the Yirrkala bark petitions (1963) as both an assertion of Yolŋu sovereignty and the first traditional document to be recognised by the Commonwealth Parliament
- for the Creating criterion
  - features of the analytical essay genre were effectively used. This was evident in responses that included an introduction, body paragraphs that developed key ideas and a conclusion
  - succinct communication of ideas through the development of a strong hypothesis related to the question/hypothesis outlined in the assessment instrument. Succinct communication also required that the ideas included in the analytical essay link back to the hypothesis.

### Practices to strengthen

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

- for the Analysing criterion
  - stimulus material is used effectively. Responses need to include evidence that demonstrates students' ability to interpret the stimulus and use this interpretation to explain how the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been addressed

- judgments at the upper performance level need to include thorough and detailed examination of how rights and freedoms of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been addressed. For instance, when discussing the significance of the Day of Mourning (1938), responses may identify that while this event was a direct response to the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the First Fleet in Sydney, it was the result of many years of activism
- for the Evaluating criterion, at the upper performance level, reasoning used needs to be accurate and relate to the hypothesis. Often this is indicated through the use of key words or references to key ideas included in the hypothesis.

## Samples

The following excerpts have been included to demonstrate:

- thorough and accurate use of terminology and comprehensive and appropriate identification of responses and contributions. Both excerpts include terminology that relates to the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. For instance, the response refers to segregation, civil rights and the 1967 referendum. As the excerpts form part of both the introduction and conclusion, it is to be expected that they refer to the focus of the analytical essay. In this response, the excerpts clearly show that the focus is on the 1965 Freedom Rides. The excerpts include evidence of comprehensive identification as they provide more detailed information about the Freedom Rides and their impact. Specific locations and the role of the media in its success are also referenced and were outlined in more detail in the response
- a well-justified evaluation of the extent to which responses and contributions influenced the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. These excerpts also include a clear judgment supported by assessing and examining several points that support the conclusion that the Freedom Rides challenged the political landscape. These points include the demonstration of the power of peaceful protest through the Freedom Rides, which also attracted media attention that proved to be very influential in increasing public awareness of discrimination experienced by Aboriginal peoples in Australia.

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



**Excerpt 1**

The 1965 Freedom Rides served as a pivotal moment in Australian history as it significantly addressed the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Post colonialism saw the segregation and dispossession of Indigenous Australians and throughout the past two centuries it has been a long fight against discrimination and prejudice. As the fight for justice continues, it is ~~more~~ vital that the 1965 Freedom Rides are acknowledged for the true act of bravery they were as they challenged the political landscape at the time, displayed how a peaceful civil-rights protest can be conducted and showcased the monumental effects it had on Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait <sup>Islander</sup> peoples lives.

**Excerpt 2**

Therefore, the Freedom Rides of 1965 addressed the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to a significant extent. This is due to the success of the events within the protest including the students time in Moree and their efforts in Walgett. The ~~large~~ growing media coverage the Rides endured was tremendous and can be accounted for the positive outcome of the 1967 referendum. This civil-rights movement forever changed Indigenous history due to its challenging of the political landscape at the time, the success of the events within the protest and how it effected the racial prejudices within the 1960's.



# Internal assessment 2 (IA2)



## Investigation — inquiry response (25%)

This assessment requires students to research a specific question or hypothesis through collection, analysis and synthesis of primary and/or secondary data. An investigation uses research or investigative practices to assess a range of cognitions in a particular context. Research or investigative practices include locating and using information beyond students' own knowledge and data they have been given.

Students must adhere to research conventions, e.g. citations, reference lists or bibliographies. This assessment occurs over an extended and defined period of time. 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	4
Authentication	0
Authenticity	1
Item construction	0
Scope and scale	0

### Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- focused the investigation on the relevant timeframe of the 20th century and ensured that this specification was consistently used in the context, task and instructions
- included instructions that aligned with the ISMG, providing students with the opportunity to demonstrate each criterion in its specified context. For instance, instructions that specified the need for worldviews of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be analysed within a historical, social and cultural context clearly aligned with the descriptors used in the ISMG for Analysing
- ensured that the task instructions enabled unique student responses. Students should be provided with opportunities to develop a range of hypotheses on responses and contributions related to land rights of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their significance. Instruments may include an open-ended statement that acts as a starting point from which students are able to devise their own hypotheses. The student hypothesis forms the focus of the inquiry.

## Practices to strengthen

It is recommended that assessment instruments:

- use the terminology listed in the subject matter. Instruments need to focus on 'land rights'. This is the focus of both the topic and the assessment instrument. Land rights is not synonymous with native title. While native title is a response to seeking land rights, it does not equate to the concept of land rights.

## 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	0
Layout	0
Transparency	0

### Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- applied legal terminology only when relevant, ensuring that it was contextualised to both the topic and the subject matter selected for the assessment instrument.

### Practices to strengthen

There were no significant issues identified for improvement.

## 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	Defining, using and demonstrating understanding	87.50	0.00	0.00	12.50
2	Analysing	62.50	25.00	12.50	0.00
3	Evaluating	75.00	12.50	12.50	0.00

Criterion number	Criterion name	Percentage agreement with provisional	Percentage less than provisional	Percentage greater than provisional	Percentage both less and greater than provisional
4	Considering, organising and creating	75.00	12.50	12.50	0.00

### Effective practices

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

- for the Defining, using and demonstrating understanding criterion, students included explanations of relevant responses and contributions related to land rights. At the upper performance level, explanations were relevant, accurate and included a high level of detail pertaining to the specific responses and contributions being discussed
- for the Evaluating criterion, there was an evaluation of the extent to which responses and contributions have influenced the land rights of Aboriginal peoples and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. The evaluation was often included as part of a hypothesis where the position of the author on the topic was clearly articulated. At the upper performance level, this evaluation was insightful, meaning that it demonstrated a clear understanding of what is considered to be a complex situation rather than simply agreeing or disagreeing with the hypothesis devised by the student and presented in the assessment
- for the Considering, organising and creating criterion, responses were well-organised. This meant that the ideas included in the analytical essay clearly linked to the hypothesis the student devised. Evidence of careful proofreading was also apparent in upper performance-level responses where there were only minimal errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation.

### Practices to strengthen

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

- for the Analysing criterion, the analysis of worldviews is examined within the context of the recognition of land rights. This involves identifying and explaining the relationship between the identified worldviews and the aspect of land rights being explored in the response. At the upper performance level, an explanation of the influence of the identified worldviews, and how these have formed and informed the recognition of land rights, is required.

### Samples

The following excerpt demonstrates how a discussion of worldviews can be linked to the recognition of land rights. The excerpt outlines some key points about the worldviews of the Wik peoples, namely their connection to Country through continued traditional practices. The response further elaborates on this point, identifying that it was the refusal to acknowledge the enactment of these worldviews as a form of sovereignty that led to the Wik peoples seeking native title. The excerpt not only identifies important components of the worldviews of the Wik peoples but incorporates these into the discussion about why native title was sought.

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

as far back as 1605 according to Durmush (2018). Wik peoples' worldviews are heavily influenced by their spiritual connection to their land, ancestral beings, storytelling, dreamings and their connection to their traditions and traditional practices. British colonisation, not only disturbed Wik peoples' worldviews, but rendered their sovereignty related to their lands an 'invisible' quality under Australian law. With their traditional connections to their land being ignored and taken away from them under the Australian governments crown land and pastoral leases, the Wik case was a fight for at least recognition of their native title at that point in history. Native Title as an Australian legal construct recognises First Nations peoples' rights to their traditional lands which until 1992, Australian law did not recognise this form of ownership under traditional law, custom and sovereignty. The late 1990s was pivotal in challenging historical European viewpoints which have impacted land rights of Wik peoples and their maintenance of worldviews and connections around Country.

The following excerpt demonstrates an evaluation of the Mabo High Court decision within an economic context. The opening sentences of the excerpt outline a clear judgment: that the decision provided the potential for greater economic empowerment for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This argument is further elucidated before a conclusion is reached that this potential was ultimately unfulfilled. This is an example of thorough reasoning.

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

Additionally, the Mabo Decision (1992) demonstrated significant economic advantages and empowerment for all First Nation's across Australia. As a result of the Mabo Decision (1992), Indigenous communities under the native title act, had the ability to negotiate with owners of other forms of land titles, a crucial step towards securing a mutually beneficial agreement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australian's (National Native Title Tribunal, N.D). These economic benefits not only increased the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the national economy but also inspired more Indigenous individuals to seek native title claims and strive for socio-economic equality. Additionally, the Mabo Decision (1992) influenced a significant social movement among First Nation's people, leading to the return of stolen lands and strengthening Indigenous communities' resilience.

Although the Mabo High Court Decision (1992) promised the potential for economic prosperity and land rights schemes for Aboriginal peoples, this was not the case for majority of Indigenous communities. Economic potential of land tenure for Indigenous peoples has not been seen in reality for the First Nation's communities still in negotiation with mining companies or government oil or gas exploration. These negative affects demonstrate the harmful outcomes that have come forward as a result of the Mabo Decision.

unfulfilled promise!

# Internal assessment 3 (IA3)



## Investigation — inquiry response (25%)

This assessment requires students to research a specific question or hypothesis through collection, analysis and synthesis of primary and/or secondary data. An investigation uses research or investigative practices to assess a range of cognitions in a particular context. Research or investigative practices include locating and using information beyond students' own knowledge and the data they have been given.

Students must adhere to research conventions, e.g. citations, reference lists or bibliographies. This assessment occurs over an extended and defined period of time. 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	0
Authentication	0
Authenticity	0
Item construction	0
Scope and scale	0

### Effective practices

Validity priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- identified relevant and appropriate customised examples of forms of cultural expression from which students could choose to focus their investigation. This indicated alignment between teaching and learning contexts of individual schools and the design of the assessment instrument
- included context statements that aligned to the subject matter. Open-ended context statements enabled students to create unique hypotheses and responses relevant to the topic
- identified that the student response needed to be in the form of an analytical essay. This information can be included in either the task or task instructions.

### Practices to strengthen

There were no significant issues identified for improvement.

## 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	0
Layout	0
Transparency	0

### Effective practices

Accessibility priorities were effectively demonstrated in assessment instruments that:

- used the correct terminology to place the investigation in the correct context. This involved making the relationship between 'a form of cultural expression' and the concept of resilience clear.

### Practices to strengthen

There were no significant issues identified for improvement.

### Additional advice

- Often schools will choose to include a quote in the Context section that reflects an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander worldview that is relevant to the topic. These are usually thought-provoking or inspiring in nature, prompting students to consider the role of cultural expression in retaining and maintaining the cultures and identities of Aboriginal peoples and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. If used, these quotes need to align to the task and support student understanding of the task without compromising their ability to devise an individual hypothesis that directs their investigation. It is also important to include relevant details of the author to ensure that the quote is authentic.
- Schools' assessment instruments can be tailored to suit the individual context of the school while still adhering to the task specifications. A list of the forms of cultural expression that students can select as the basis of their investigation is located in the syllabus under the subject matter for Unit 4 Topic 1: Resilience. However, schools may choose to refine the options from which their students may choose in order to support the school-based learning that accompanies this unit. This also allows schools to respond to their local context by selecting forms of cultural expression that are suitable to their local context and the needs of their school community.



## 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	Defining, using and demonstrating understanding	100	0	0	0
2	Analysing	75	25	0	0
3	Evaluating	75	25	0	0
4	Considering, organising and creating	100	0	0	0

### Effective practices

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

- for the Considering, organising and creating criterion
  - a range of primary and secondary sources were used to meet the descriptors at the upper performance level. This assessment is a contemporary study, and this can be reflected in the sources used in the investigation. For example, students may choose to use interviews, podcast transcripts, artworks and their supporting publications, journal articles and song lyrics to meet the specification requiring the use of a variety of both primary and secondary sources
  - recognised the consistent use of referencing conventions in the response. Referencing is required when students use ideas that are not their own. This includes where ideas are summarised or paraphrased as well as where direct quotes are used.

### Practices to strengthen

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

- for the Analysing criterion, responses focus on a selected form of cultural expression, such as weaving, rather than the portfolio of a single artist or a specific work. At the upper performance level, this provides opportunities for a greater level of analysis, allowing for identification and discussion of patterns about how the selected form of cultural expression worked to maintain and retain cultures and identities
- for the Evaluating criterion
  - responses at upper performance levels include reasoning to support the justification of the selected form of cultural expression as a form of resilience. This requires the inclusion of a number of examples of the selected form of cultural expression in the development of the

argument and its contribution to maintaining and retaining the cultures and identities of Aboriginal peoples and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples

- the hypothesis that guides the investigation is signposted early in the response, e.g. the hypothesis may appear as a standalone statement at the beginning of the response or be easily identified as part of the introduction. This allows for accurate judgments to be made about the quality of the reasoning used in relation to the hypothesis.

## Samples

The following excerpts demonstrate an understanding of the role of dance as a form of resilience. These excerpts are from a single student response.

Excerpt 1 provides discerning and thorough reasoning that explains the importance of dance as a way for younger First Nations peoples to connect with Country. This connection is described as 'crucial' and a way to strengthen 'cultural continuity'. The response has identified dance as an important vehicle through which cultural resilience can be developed.

Excerpt 2 further develops this idea through its discussion of worldviews of Torres Strait Islander peoples and how they are reflected in dance. The relationship between the form of cultural expression, culture, time and place is highlighted. The response emphasises that for many Torres Strait Islander people, dance holds cultural significance and is considered a way that cultural heritage can be shared and maintained. This forms part of a well-reasoned analysis of worldviews.

As a conclusion, Excerpt 3 reiterates the judgment about the importance of dance as a form of resilience and summarises the arguments presented in the analytical essay. This can be considered as part of a well-justified evaluation as it identifies several ways that dance is a powerful expression of culture for many First Nations peoples.

### Excerpt 1

and our sovereignty. Through dance, we honour and acknowledge our Country and the people who have lived here for thousands of years, allowing us to showcase the knowledge of our ancestors and keep their stories alive (ReachOut Australia, 2024). However, for those who didn't grow up on Country or who have been forcibly removed from their traditional land, dance serves as way to feel connected to Country. For many young Indigenous peoples, the privilege of being raised on Country, surrounded by community has not been afforded to us, making dance a crucial way to reclaim and express our cultural identity and reforge our connection to the land of our ancestors. This practice not only fosters a sense of belonging but also strengthens our resilience and cultural continuity. ✓



**Excerpt 2**

While Aboriginal peoples maintain a profound spiritual connection to the land, Torres Strait Islander peoples experience a similar depth of connection with the waterways. Torres Strait Islander communities have a “spiritual and customary living relationship with water in all its forms, through creation stories, use of water as a resource, and knowledge about sharing and conserving water” (Australian River Restoration Centre, N.D). These reciprocal relationships underpin all aspects of life for Torres Strait Islander’s, especially dance. In traditional dances, water is often represented symbolically through movements, rhythms, and sometimes costumes that mimic the natural flow and characteristics of water, all reflecting the water’s importance as a life-giving element, its role in the environment, and its connection to ancestral beings (Yolande Brown, N.D). These dance forms are not just artistic expression but are imbued with cultural significance. Through these performances, Torres Strait Islander peoples celebrate and honour their enduring bond with the waterways, reserving and transmitting their cultural heritage for future generations. ✓✓

*Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander knowledge and connection*, Australian River Restoration Centre, <https://arcc.au/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-knowledge-and-connection>

**Excerpt 3**

Dance holds profound significance as a form of cultural expression for First Nations peoples, as it intricately links us to our land, language, culture, and relationships. As a living tradition, dance serves as a vital conduit for preserving and celebrating cultural narratives, embodying ancestral stories and spiritual beliefs that connect individuals to their heritage. It acts as a connection to the land, reflecting the deep spiritual and environmental relationships embedded in traditional practices and rituals. In the face of language loss and cultural erosion, dance has emerged as a powerful means of continuing cultural traditions, allow First Nations peoples to transmit and revitalise our cultural values and practices. When dancing communities form, reinforcing their bonds, creating a sense of belonging and unity whilst honouring our collective history. It fosters personal and communal identity by linking dancers to their mob’s ancestral memory, thus ensuring the further continuity of cultural traditions. In essence, dance is not merely an art form but a crucial aspect of cultural survival and identity, encapsulating the essence of First Nations peoples’ connection to our land, language and heritage. ✓✓✓✓

# 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 — short 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 consisted of six questions (43 marks).

The assessment required students to respond in sentences or paragraphs to short response questions, using evidence from sources provided in the stimulus book. The sources were unseen and were presented in text-based and visual forms.

The questions and sources required students to engage with key ideas about treaty-making and truth-telling processes, initiatives by governments as acts of reconciliation and the importance of the Masig Statement in recognising the unique cultures and histories of Torres Strait Islander peoples.

### 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:

- used explanations to support judgments
- used relevant evidence from sources to support their analysis
- communicated ideas that clearly related to the examination question using purposeful and fluent sentences.

### Practices to strengthen

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

- emphasise the importance of carefully reading the question to identify what is required in the response, e.g. identifying if references to sources are required. This careful reading of questions is also important to determine the cognition/s that are being assessed, e.g. a question may require students to analyse specific sources in order to evaluate the effectiveness of a framework
- ensure that students have many opportunities to practise making judgments. When students make judgments, they are drawing a conclusion about the topic or focus of the question. Judgments need to be specific to the question, rather than a statement or opinion about the topic

- provide opportunities for students to build their skills in defining terminology. Students need to demonstrate that they understand the meaning of a word or concept, and are able to use it in the correct context. A list of terminology is included in the subject matter for each topic
- incorporate teaching and learning strategies that build students' skills in deconstructing stimulus material. Students need to be able identify the key ideas in sources, highlight key features and connect them to the question.

## Samples

### Short response

The following excerpt is from Question 2. It required students to analyse two sources to explain how those sources demonstrated key ideas about treaty-making processes.

Effective student responses:

- analysed the two sources to identify key ideas about treaty-making processes
- used the analysis to explain how the sources demonstrated those key ideas
- used relevant evidence from the sources to support their analysis and explanation.

This excerpt has been included:

- to illustrate different ways that analysis can be demonstrated. In this excerpt, the response has examined both of the sources to show how they demonstrate key ideas about treaty-making processes highlighting that, in the context of the sources provided, a reframing of a relationship is required. The response also identifies that both sources noted that the reframing of a relationship is a vital step.

Both source 1 and source 2 demonstrate key ideas about the significance of the treaty-making process. Source 1 highlights how this process will demonstrate a "commitment to a reframed relationship" between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians. A step that is vital as it promotes truth telling, a significant form of reconciliation. Additionally, source 2 also demonstrates how the treaty-making process will allow for truth-telling. Bidjara and Birri Gubba Juru woman, Dr Jackie Huggins states that the journey of treaty will "highlight the history of our state" and therefore "promote many opportunities for all to learn and to share" (source 2). Both of the sources demonstrate the key ideas of "reframed relationship history" and "learning" that are embedded through the treaty-making process as a way to promote truth-telling and reconciliation between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal peoples.

The following excerpt is from Question 3. It required students to analyse two sources to explain how the establishment of the Yoorrook Justice Commission aims to enable stronger truth-telling processes in Victoria.

Effective student responses:

- identified how the establishment of the Yoorrook Justice Commission aims to enable stronger truth-telling processes
- supported this assertion by including an explanation that used an analysis of two specified sources
- used evidence from the two specified sources.

This excerpt has been included:

- to illustrate an example of analysis. The student has summarised a number of key points from the source to show how it links to their argument. These points are then drawn together with the student providing an interpretation of their importance in the truth-telling processes promoted by the Yoorrook Justice Commission — that historical wrong-doings will no longer be able to be ignored.

there can be no treaty? Source B explains that the implementing of this Commission ensures there will be no hiding the wrongs committed to the First Nations people. It references the stolen generation, the loss of culture and connection and the massacres committed against the First Nations people. They explain that because of the wrongs in the past they will forevermore tell the truth and build trust between the Yoorrook Justice Commission and the Victorian government. This will mean that past injustices will no longer be overlooked and they finally acknowledge the fault of their actions. The Yoorrook Justice Commission

The following excerpt is from Question 4b). It required students to use their evaluation from the previous question, which focused on two initiatives between a state government and First Nations peoples, to suggest a future action that may progress reconciliation.

Effective student responses:

- linked the suggestion made in 4b) to the evaluation in the previous question
- suggested a future action that could progress reconciliation
- provided an explanation that supported their suggestion.

This excerpt has been included:

- to demonstrate a clear judgment. Evidence of the use of the evaluation from the previous question to reach a decision is in the first sentence where it is suggested that truth-telling processes need to be formalised and driven by First Nations peoples
- to provide an example of an explanation to support a judgment. The explanation in the excerpt outlines a reason why the focus on truth-telling is so important. This positions the judgment as more than the personal opinion of the student but as a decision reached after careful consideration.

A future action that may progress reconciliation could ~~be~~ simply be <sup>a</sup> further push for all governments around Australia to enable a commission in partnership with local elders and mobs to continue the process of truth-telling. ~~By~~ performing this ~~the~~ would prove one step closer to reconciliation as it would force the Australian government to reflect on historical injustices created at the hands of non-Indigenous people within Australia.



The following excerpt is from Question 6. It required students to analyse three sources in order to identify the purpose of the Masig Statement and how it recognises key aspects of Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories.

Effective student responses:

- analysed the specified sources to explain how the Masig Statement reflects key aspects of Torres Strait Islander peoples' histories and cultures
- provided an explanation that outlined the importance of recognising the histories and cultures of Torres Strait Islander peoples
- purposefully used sentences to convey ideas related to the question.

This excerpt has been included:

- to illustrate an explanation of the importance of the Masig Statement in recognising aspects of the histories and cultures of Torres Strait Islander peoples. The response conveys the importance of the statement in recognising the relationship between the people of the Torres Strait and the waterways, land and sky Country by describing it as crucial. It also notes that the traditions that are informed by this relationship are ancient and that the statement, with its focus on unity and voice, advocates for the protection of culture.

(source 8), this recognition is vital to people of the Torres Strait as these laws allow them to freely practice their laws and culture. It is <sup>crucial</sup> vital for the protection of the water, land and sky as these traditions date back 60000 years, much longer than white societal policies and laws. "to have unity, one voice for Torres Strait Islanders." (source 10). This is a new step in reconciliation for First Nation peoples, and certainly not the last.