



BRISBANE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

# Creating stimulus for success in extended response tasks

QETA Conference February 2026

# Learning intention

To identify the features of high-quality stimulus that move students beyond description and support sophisticated analysis and evaluation in extended responses.

# Success criteria

**By the end of the session, participants will be able to:**

- Identify why certain stimulus limits responses to description
- Explain how stimulus can prompt analysis and evaluation
- Modify or design a stimulus set that supports higher-order thinking



# What do the subject reports tell us?

- Teachers should provide a range of **current, accurate and relevant data/information** from diverse sources
- Stimulus must be presented visually (graphs/tables) **and** textually, so students have *multiple entry points* to interpret economic relationships
- Provide *substantial seen stimulus* before the exam and *concise unseen stimulus* at exam time (as QCAA expects unique synthesis in responses).
- Present *quantitative trends* that can be interpreted (e.g., changes in GDP, unemployment, inflation, budget balance).
- Include *qualitative commentary* (expert views, policy context) to prompt evaluation discussions.
- Avoid overly simplistic or isolated data – the stimulus should **invite comparison, contrast, and linkage** to unit concepts

# One way to develop stimulus (supported by syllabus)

## Align Stimulus with the Marking Criteria

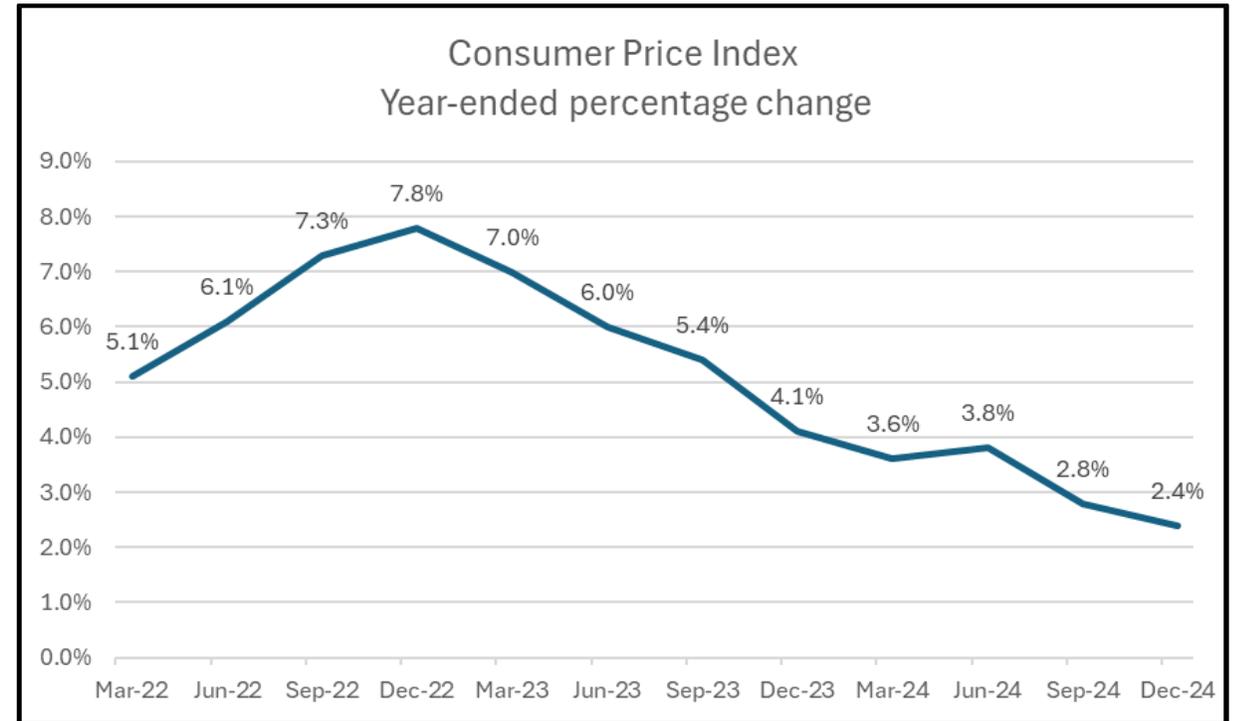
- Allow students to **easily** identify a key pattern and trend from the economic issue
- Ensure data allows cause/effect interpretations (linking causes to economic outcomes)
- Stimulus should invite evaluation criteria and allow students to incorporate perspectives (youth, gender, retirees, low-income, regions)
- Include multiple sources so students can select and justify evidence use
- Frame stimulus around *debate-worthy propositions*
- Provide *contrasting data points or viewpoints* that encourage deeper evaluation.
- Link stimulus explicitly to *unit vocabulary and conceptual frameworks* so students practise using rigorous economic language.

# First, explore patterns and trends for an economic issue

**Aim:** To find a clear and succinct pattern or trend

EG: Yr 12 IA3 (economic issue: decreasing inflation)

- Thinking back to our learners on our post-it note
  - Is this clear, concise, digestible?
  - Does it show a clear trend?
  - Do I have dates, data, direction?
  - Could I easily calculate with the data?



Source: ABS

Where you require an unseen source – this becomes your major graph

# Next, complete the puzzle

The subject reports says that high-level responses show connections and interconnections between sources

Data  
Cause

Data  
Effect

Eval – macro  
objectives  
GDP, Inflation,  
Unemployment (data  
only)

Text-based source  
(commentary which  
supports a view)

Text-based source  
(article supporting  
one of the data for  
accessibility)

Data  
2<sup>nd</sup> Cause

Data  
Context/Comparison/  
other trends

Text-based source  
(commentary which  
supports a view)

Text-based source  
(commentary which  
supports a contrary  
view)

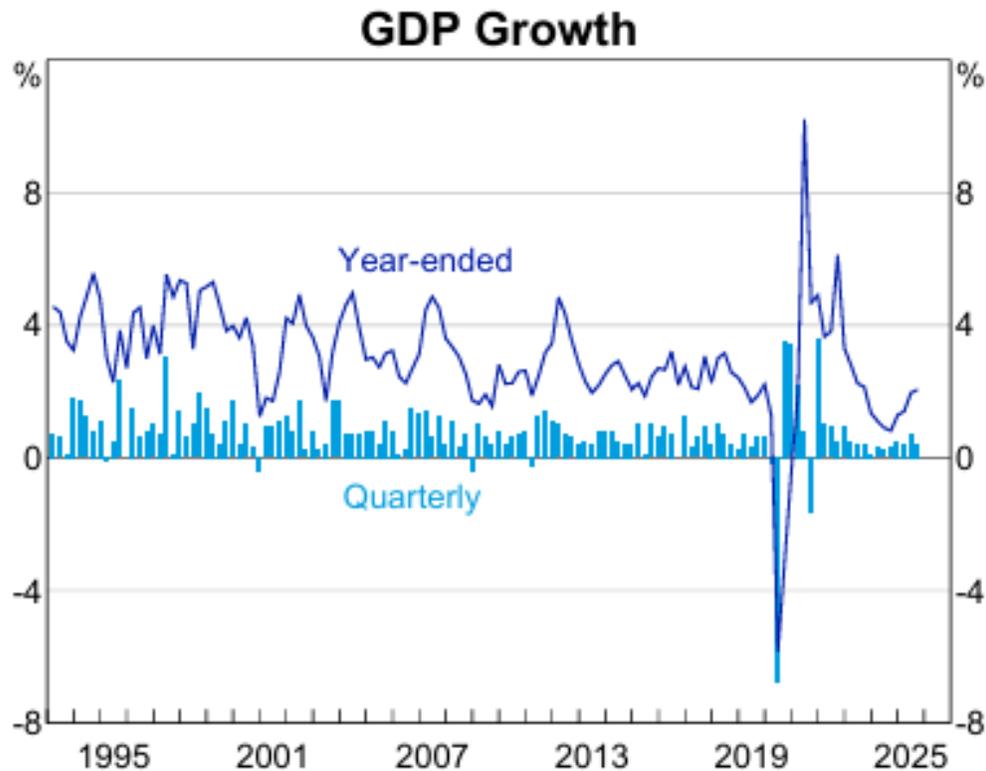
Text-based (or  
infographic) source  
(incorporating  
perspectives)

# The next step is critical

## Write a response

- Can you find trends/patterns with easy to discern data points? Or do sources contradict each other?
- Can you find clear cause and effect relationships which support the trend?
- Is criteria accessible from the text-based sources?
- Are there options on criteria to use?
- Can students see perspectives, who does this economic issue, impact?
- Can students spot an alternative view?

# As a learner, would you like to analyse this graph?



Source: ABS.

Source: RBA Chart Pack

What about in an unfamiliar environment which is unseen?

- Date range is really hard to decipher data points
- How do you read the quarterly in terms of data points/years?
- You will rarely (if ever!) see RBA charts in the external exam
- Use them as a teacher resource, or for in-class activities when you have time but generally not good stimulus

# Be guided by the type of stimulus students will receive in the external – these have been scrutinised for accessibility

You also want to build capacity with unfamiliar scenarios as much as possible (ideally, in-class where they can take risks!)

Source: QCAA 2024  
External stimulus

Source 1: Extreme global weather events, 1945 to 2024

	Storm	Flood	Drought	Other
1945–1964	200	80	<10	<10
1965–1984	380	420	25	21
1985–2004	1390	1450	340	360
2005–2024	2000	3200	400	680

Source 2: State Government media release, 2024

The \$5 billion CopperString Project 2032 is the largest expansion to the power grid in Australia. It links to the North West Minerals Province (375 000 square kilometres), an area that contains one of the world's richest deposits of critical minerals, worth an estimated \$500 billion.

Source 3: Solar panel advertisement

### Is solar for you?

Full cost after federal government subsidies are paid to you!

18 kW for \$15 000    10 kW for \$10 000

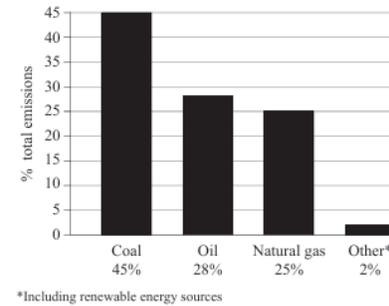


Source 4: Scientific statement

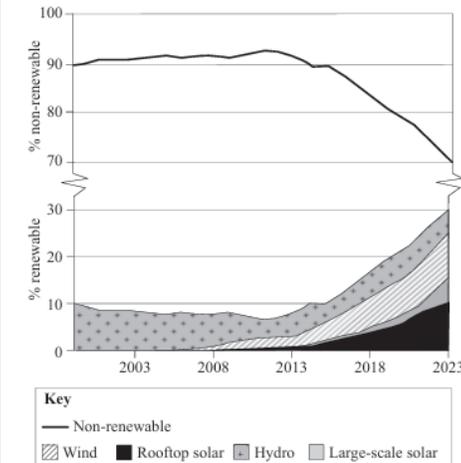
There is evidence that non-renewable energy is a major contributor to climate change due to carbon emissions.

Australian weather disasters are damaging food, transport and major export industries and assets.

Source 5: Global carbon emissions by source, 2023



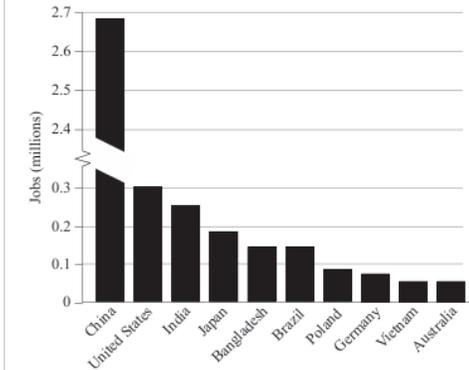
Source 6: National electricity generation by fuel type



Source 7: Economic commentary, 2024

Emerging technologies rely on critical minerals that are important to the production of electric vehicles, renewable energy projects and storage, and low-emission power sources. The location of these minerals is accessed through a small, separate power grid that is gas-fired. The existing system is not enough for processing minerals or associated manufacturing.

Source 8: Global solar production employment, top 10 countries, 2023

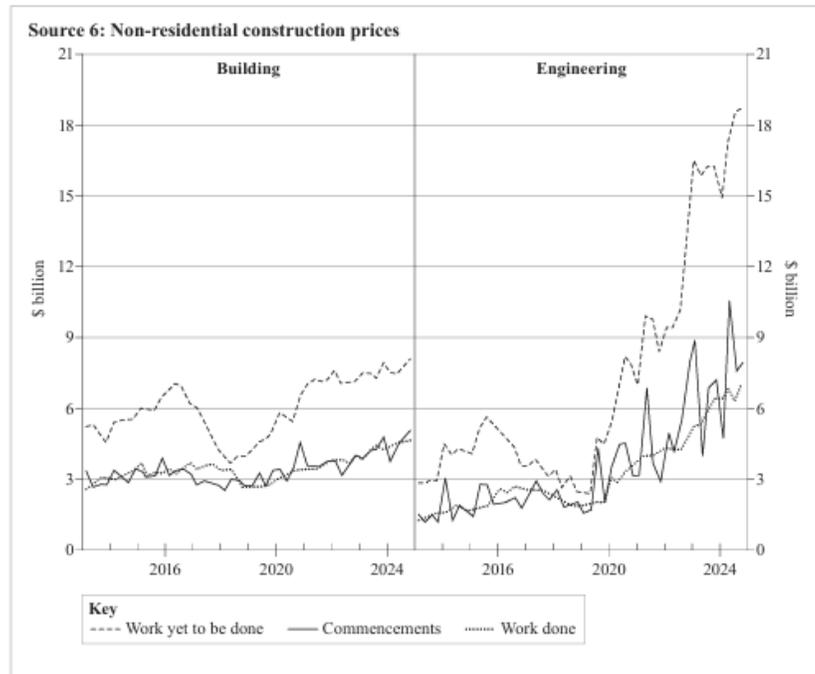
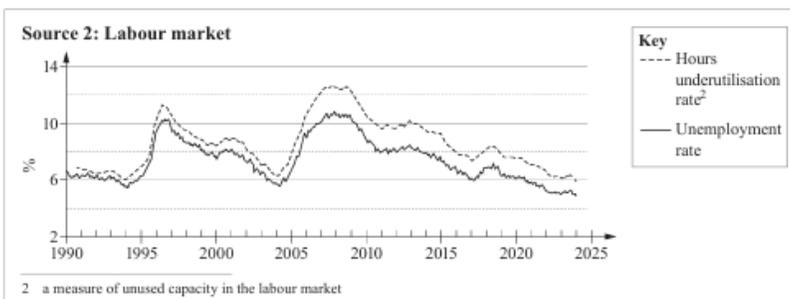
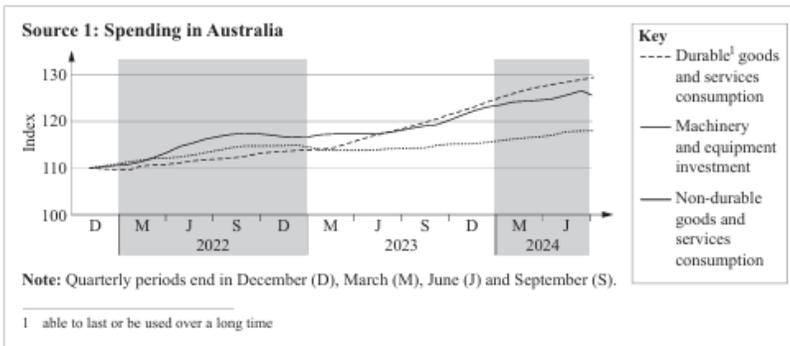


China has 63% of solar jobs

The top 10 countries have 87% of solar jobs

# What do you notice about these stimulus?

- Clear trends and patterns to discern
- Easy to read axis
- Unfamiliar data but accessible with titles
- Very, very few words, simple language

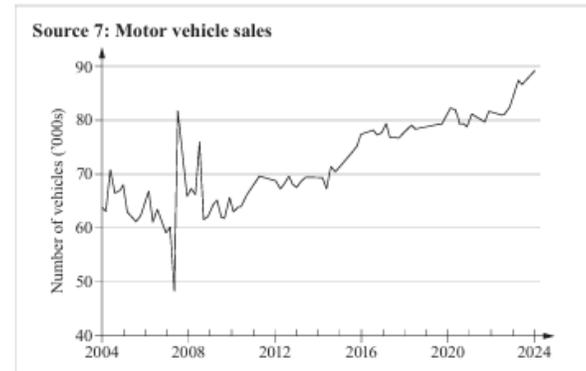
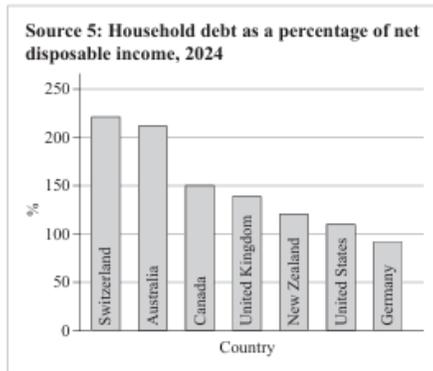


**Source 3: Pension incomes, 2024**

The government pension remains a main source of income for many retirees. 'About 3 million Australian households need their personal savings to support themselves', according to a government spokesperson.

**Source 4: Census data**

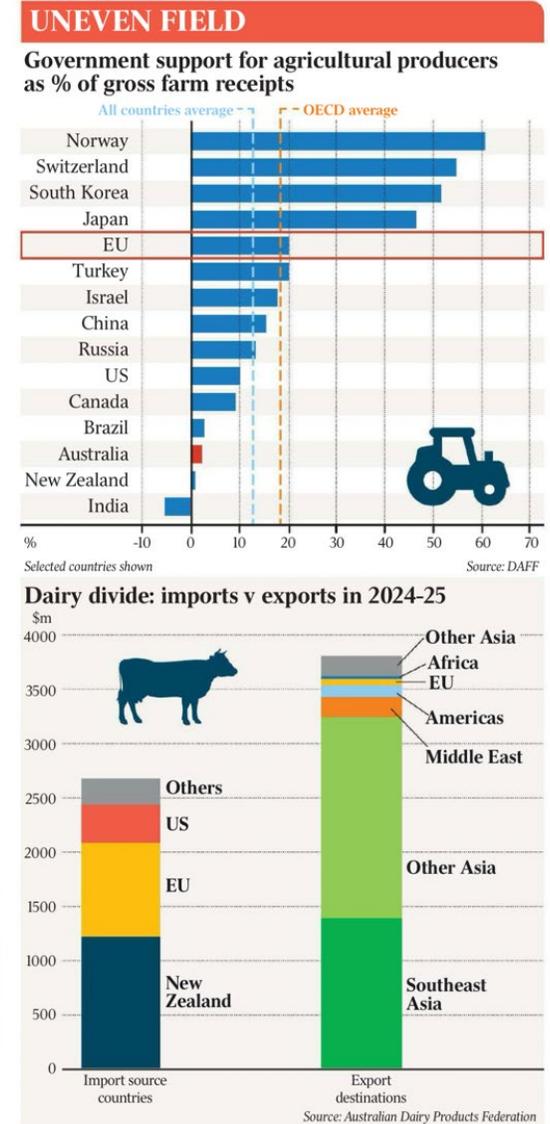
In recent times, there has been much public debate about the rate of home ownership and housing affordability. According to the 2023 Census of Population and Housing, there were nearly 8.8 million households in Australia. Where household tenure was known, 67% (5.9 million households) were homeowners, of which 48% (2.8 million) did not have a mortgage. Further, 32% (1.9 million households) were renters.



Source: QCAA 2022  
External stimulus

# Where do I find data?

- AMP – Econosights weekly newsletter from Diana Mousina (watch axis)
- The Economist
- Government budget papers
- State/Federal government reports (particularly Yr 11)
- The Australian Newspaper
- Australian Financial Review
- Create my own in Excel using ABS data
- Be careful with AI, check the actual data source



# How do I build student capacity in analysis/evaluation?

That's a whole other workshop!

- Have students engage with data, regularly
- Alan Kohler is 3 mins, I make time for his segment on ABC iView almost every lesson, there is a pattern and trend to pause and analyse every night
- Regularly debate current government policy in class, who benefits from this policy decision, who loses? How are you going to decide? With criteria!
- Are your **teachers** confident with data? How can you incorporate professional learning into your department? The QCAA analytical dashboard?

# Conclusion

*Go back to where we started,  
with our 'why' – our students.*

*Do you have some ideas to  
incorporate into your next  
stimulus that will support  
them as learners?*

