

Undergraduate Generic Marking Criteria

The College marking criteria set out below should be read in conjunction with discipline-specific criteria as appropriate and should be viewed as a starting point. The College marking criteria provides guidance on the overall standards expected at different grade bands but discipline-specific criteria may be needed in order to ensure that marking decisions are consistent, fair and transparent to both staff and students.

		Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
Grade A++ First 90-100	All levels	Outstanding answer, well written, highly structured & informed, showing striking personal insight and originality		
	Understanding	Full understanding of key facts demonstrating for example originality in written assignments, comprehensive understanding of the knowledge base and critical judgement.	Full understanding of key facts demonstrating for example originality in written assignments, comprehensive understanding of the knowledge base and critical judgement.	Extensive understanding of key facts demonstrating an ability to formulate ideas in analysis, comprehensive understanding of methodologies with a high degree of precision, highly independent and critical judgement.
	Depth of Knowledge	Extensive range of sources used and applied, appropriately to the assignment and of outstanding quality.	Extensive range of sources used and applied appropriately to the assignment, insightful and of outstanding quality.	Extensive range of sources used and applied, to the assignment in a highly insightful manner and of outstanding quality.
	Structure	Excellent structured, focused and well written presentation.	Excellent structured, focused and well written presentation. Compelling arguments made.	Excellent structured, focused and well written presentation. Compelling argument throughout.
Grade A+ First 80-89	All levels	Highly thoughtful answer informed by wider reading, showing clarity of thought, personal insight and originality		
	Understanding	Thorough understanding of key facts with informed discussion. Evidence of critical evaluation.	Thorough understanding of key facts with evidence of evaluation in the discussion. Independent and critical evaluation-	Thorough understanding of key facts with insightful discussion, and independent and critical evaluation integrated throughout.
	Depth of Knowledge	Full range of sources used and applied in a focussed manner.	Full range of sources used and applied in a highly focused manner.	Full range of sources used and applied in a detailed integrative way throughout the work.
	Structure	Clear and fluent style. Very well focused and structured.	Clear and fluent style. Very well focused and structured.	Clear and fluent style. Very well focused and structured.
Grade A First 70-79	All levels	Thoughtful answer informed by wider reading showing clarity of thought and personal insight		
	Understanding	Thorough understanding of key facts with sound discussion.	Thorough understanding of key concepts demonstrating insight and a good level of evaluation	Thorough understanding of key concepts with insightful and creative analysis.
	Depth of Knowledge	A comprehensive range of relevant literature used	Comprehensive range of relevant literature, evidence is used to support arguments, awareness of wider issues.	Comprehensive range of relevant literature / evidence used demonstrating independent thought and extensive reading.
	Structure	Clear and logical presentation.	Clear, logical and integrated presentation.	Clear, fluent, integrated and focussed presentation.

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Grade B Upper 2nd 60 – 69	All Levels	Good understanding of basic principles and relevant evidence, with a coherent and logical argument		
	Understanding	Good understanding of key facts showing evidence of discussion.	Good understanding of key concepts with development of analytical thought.	Good understanding of all key issues and wider implications with a convincing analysis.
	Depth of Knowledge	Relevant literature	Good use of relevant literature	Breadth in examples and literature / evidence used without any major omissions. Demonstrates extended reading.
	Structure	Coherent and well organised presentation.	Coherent, well organised and logical presentation.	Coherent, well organised and logical presentation.
Grade C Lower 2nd 50 – 59	All Levels	Sound understanding demonstrated with some analysis		
	Understanding	Sound understanding of most facts but is mainly descriptive.	Sound understanding of the key issues is demonstrated, evaluative thought is apparent in some areas	Sound understanding of basic principles and main key issues with evidence of analysis or synthesis.
	Depth of Knowledge	Appropriate reading, attempts made to use the material in the work.	Appropriate reading is demonstrated to support the discussion.	Appropriate material accessed but little evidence of extended reading, possibly some omissions.
	Structure	Clearly presented but little development.	Clearly presented but little development.	Clearly presented and some structure but little development.
Grade D Third 40 – 49	All Levels	Basic understanding of main issues demonstrated		
	Understanding	General knowledge of some areas demonstrated but lacks detail	General knowledge demonstrated but the work is mainly descriptive.	General knowledge demonstrated but analysis limited in depth and breadth.
	Depth of Knowledge	Basic literature / material are limited. Low quality in a number of areas.	Sparse coverage of basic literature / material. Low quality in a number of areas and poor range of reading.	Skeletal coverage of basic literature / material. Insufficient use of known literature. Low quality in a number of areas.
	Structure	Adequate presentation. Some disorganised sections.	Adequate presentation. Some unclear sections.	Adequate presentation and generally logical.
Grade F + Fail 33 – 39 ¹	All Levels	Unsystematic incomplete and / or inaccurate FAIL.		
	Understanding	Some knowledge but limited understanding. Work contains inaccuracies and meaning is unclear	Some knowledge but does not focus on the question or is very limited. Descriptive work with little recognisable analysis	Key issues not identified poor analysis.
	Depth of Knowledge	Limited and/or inappropriate literature/material. Poorly referenced	Inappropriate literature/material used in assignment. Key tests missing	Inappropriate literature/material used in the assignment. Insufficient reference to the literature some key texts missing.
	Structure	Disorganised/unclear presentation. Lacked logical order, structure not apparent	Disorganised/unclear presentation with loose ends.	Disorganised/unclear presentation. Argument sketchy
Grade F Fail 20- 32	All Levels	Unsystematic incomplete and / or inaccurate, FAIL.		
	Understanding	Work is mainly inaccurate or meaning is very unclear.	Very little knowledge lacks focus with no recognisable analysis.	Very poor analysis or none evident.
	Depth of Knowledge	Poor and/or inappropriate literature/material. Shows lack of understanding of the assignment	Poor and/or inappropriate literature, lacking accuracy, unsound, limited range of sources. Demonstrated poor understanding of topic	Poor and/or inappropriate literature, lacking accuracy, unsound, limited/dated range of sources. Limited understanding of topic
	Structure	Poor presentation, spelling errors, limited structure,	Poor presentation, spelling and grammatical errors, unacceptably brief	Poor presentation, clumsy and disjointed, spelling and grammatical errors, conventions not followed, unacceptably brief
Grade FF	All Levels	Unsystematic incomplete and / or inaccurate, FAIL.		

¹ A mark ≥ 33 - < 39 is condonable where programme specific regulations permit

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Fail 0- 19	Understanding	Work is mainly inaccurate or meaning is very unclear, uncritical and confused. Difficult to follow	Very little knowledge and understanding of key concepts.	No analysis evident
	Depth of Knowledge	Poor and/or inappropriate literature/material. Shows no discernible knowledge or understanding.	Poor and/or inappropriate literature/material. Shows no discernible knowledge or understanding, lacks coherence.	Poor and inappropriate literature, lacking accuracy, unsound. Poor uses of sources, no use of evidence to support argument. Very limited understanding of topic.
	Structure	Very poor presentation, poor spelling and grammar, lacks structure.	Very poor presentation, poor spelling and grammar, lacks structure.	Very poor presentation, poor spelling and grammar, lacks structure.

Approved CASC March 2015

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