



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Short Courses

Studying for Credit Guide

Additional Marking Schemes

September 2016

Additional marking schemes

Most Short Courses use the three marking schemes in the **Studying for Credit Guide Part 3: Assessment guidance**. However courses in History, Literature, and Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences have separate marking schemes, and these are given below.

History extended common marking scheme

| Mark | Grade | Description |
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| 90 – 100 | A1 | Excellent. An answer that fulfils all of the criteria for A2 and in addition shows an exceptional degree of insight and independent thought, together with flair in tackling issues. Work displaying the highest level of scholarship and originality attainable within any given course/year of study. |
| 80 – 89 | A2 | Excellent. An authoritative answer that provides a fully effective response to the question. It should show a command of the literature and an ability to integrate that literature and go beyond it. The analysis should achieve a high level of quality early on and sustain it through to the conclusion. Sources should be used accurately and concisely to inform the answer but not dominate it. There should be a sense of a critical and committed argument, mindful of other interpretations but not afraid to question them. Presentation and the use of English should be commensurate with the quality of the content. |
| 70 – 79 | A3 | Excellent. A sharply-focused answer of high intellectual quality, which adopts a comprehensive approach to the question and maintains a sophisticated level of analysis throughout. It should show a willingness to engage critically with the literature and move beyond it, using sources creatively to arrive at its own independent conclusions. |
| 60 – 69 | B | Very Good. Clearly structured work displaying an ability to deal with the concepts, sources and arguments relevant to the topic under discussion and critical judgement in selecting, evaluating and organising material. In the 65 – 69 range the work will display some of the qualities of excellence outlined above, although some aspects will be less fully realised. The 60 – 64 range represents above-average achievement in all or most respects. |
| 50 – 59 | C | Good. Sound and competent work which covers the basic subject matter and is appropriately organised and presented. May tend to narrative and description rather than analysis but does attempt to answer the question. There will be some evidence of the inclusion of irrelevant material, a certain lack of focus in the discussion or deficiencies in the evidence used to support the argument. Work in the 50 – 54 band is likely to be factually sound but to show only a general grasp of the issues which the question is raising, and to be weak in critical awareness and analytical qualities. |
| 40 – 49 | D | Pass. Work which is adequate but limited. It may include irrelevant material and be too descriptive and narrative. Some aspects of the question may be answered competently, but others will be ignored because of omissions in the reading, factual inaccuracy, difficulty in identifying the key issues and arguments, or poor style, structure and presentation. In exams, an answer left unfinished may earn a mark in this range if it gives evidence of the potential to perform better. |
| 30 – 39 | E | Marginal Fail. Work which is poorly structured and of very limited relevance to the question. It may be distinguished by a lack of supporting evidence, |

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| | | misunderstandings, a failure to address the question asked, substantial generalisation and the lack of any real argument. |
| 20 – 29 | F | Clear Fail. Work which shows little or no real understanding of the question and which displays little or no evidence of learning. |
| 10 – 19 | G | Bad Fail. Work which fails on all criteria. It could also be the mark for a very short answer with little relevant material. |
| 0 – 9 | H | Bad Fail. |

Literature extended common marking scheme

| Mark | Grade | Description |
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| 90 – 100 | A1 | <p>Outstanding. Outstanding work which demonstrates an exceptional understanding of conceptual ideas and literary texts, showing an unusual degree of original insight and breadth of independent research. It will have an authoritative ability to synthesise material and to conceptualise and sustain a sophisticated argument. It will show excellence in its detailed readings and an ability to both engage with critical debate and intervene independently in it.</p> <p>(Marks above 90% are considered outstanding and are only rarely awarded.)</p> |
| 80 – 89 | A2 | <p>Highly Excellent. Excellent work which demonstrates comprehensive understanding of conceptual ideas and literary texts, showing clear evidence of independent insight and breadth of research. It will have an impressive ability to synthesise a range of material effectively, to think analytically and to sustain a complex argument. Its detailed readings will be sensitive and nuanced and it will show an ability to evaluate alternative critical perspectives. Its style will be articulate, convincing and engaging.</p> |
| 70 – 79 | A3 | <p>Excellent. Work which demonstrates excellent understanding of conceptual ideas and literary texts, showing evidence of independent insight and reading. It will have an ability to synthesise material effectively, to think analytically and to sustain an independent argument. It will show excellence in its detailed readings and an awareness of alternative critical positions. Its style will be clear, convincing and engaging.</p> |
| 60 – 69 | B | <p>Very good. Work which demonstrates an ability to understand the issues raised by the course and posed by the specific question, engaging in effective discussion. The work will show a facility in handling concepts, a very good knowledge of primary and some secondary texts, and a clear, fluent and accurate writing style, at ease with the conventions of presentation. It will show critical judgement in selecting, ordering and analysing material and an ability to use detailed analyses of texts to further its arguments. The work will demonstrate a good understanding of the way reading is affected by different critical perspectives. The work will show a thoughtful response to the texts concerned and elements of independent thinking.</p> |
| 50 – 59 | C | <p>Good. Work which covers the subject matter of the course and is appropriately organised and presented. It will demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of relevant conceptual material and literary texts, derived from a solid basis of reading. It will be accurate and clearly written, grammatically correct, use quotation appropriately and show adequate familiarity with conventions of presentation in terms of reference and bibliography. It should be able to draw on information and ideas from lectures and secondary reading, but may not engage effectively in critical discussion.</p> |
| 40 – 49 | D | <p>Satisfactory. Work which shows an adequate but limited knowledge of the subject matter of the course. The work shows satisfactory knowledge of the content and some response to the course texts, a basic grasp of critical vocabulary, and some ability to frame an appropriate response to the question. There are likely to be weaknesses in particular areas, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ability to maintain relevance to the question posed • appropriate illustration to substantiate argument • grasp of critical material encountered in lectures or secondary reading • breadth of reading in the set works on the course |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of effective style, good punctuation and spelling • use of the conventions specified for the presentation of essays. |
| 30 – 39 | E | Falls short of the standard expected for a pass. Work may show some awareness of the issues raised by the course but deals with them inadequately. It may show some knowledge, but clear weakness in the ability to understand and respond to individual texts. It may have stylistic problems of expression, spelling and punctuation. In examinations this mark may indicate short measure, incomplete answers or rubric violation. |
| 20 – 29 | F | Clear fail. Work which shows a lack of understanding of the ideas of the course, a substantially inadequate knowledge of the set texts, and an inability to formulate and communicate a response to the question. In examinations it will often involve seriously short measure or incomplete answers. |
| 10 – 19 | G | Bad fail. Work which shows a lack of understanding of the ideas of the course, a substantially inadequate knowledge of the set texts, and an inability to formulate and communicate a response to the question. In examinations it will often involve seriously short measure or incomplete answers. |
| 0 – 9 | H | Very Bad Fail. These marks are generally only given in examination situations indicating an un-attempted paper or profoundly short measure. |

Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences extended common marking scheme

These descriptors are guidelines for assessing work on similar criteria across the range of marks, but they do not provide a formula for generating a mark. It is clear, for example, that a piece of work may be excellent in one respect and substandard in another. Markers will have to make decisions on aggregate. Note that some descriptors will be more appropriate for essay or project assessment than for examination answers.

| Mark | Grade | Description |
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| 90 – 100 | A1 | <p>Outstanding in every respect, the work is well beyond the level expected of a competent student at their level of study. It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows creative, subtle, and/or original independent thinking • Demonstrates breadth of knowledge and deep understanding of the subject matter • Draws on a wide, relevant literature base • Demonstrates an excellent standard of synthesis and evaluation and a critical and insightful analysis of the literature • Is well focused, with concentration on the main issues to be addressed • Presents a compelling case by means of clear logically structured argument or debate, well supported with evidence • Is written with flair • Has, where appropriate, complete and correct referencing • Is flawless in grammar and spelling |
| 80 – 89 | A2 | <p>Outstanding in some respects, the work is often beyond what is expected of a competent student at their level of study. It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows original, sophisticated independent thinking • Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the subject matter • Draws on a wide, relevant literature base • Demonstrates critical and insightful analysis of the literature • Is well focused, with concentration on the main issues to be addressed • Presents a strong case by means of clear, logically structured argument or debate, supported with evidence • Shows a good standard of academic writing • Has, where appropriate, complete and correct referencing • Shows a high standard of grammar and spelling |
| 70 – 79 | A3 | <p>Very good or excellent in most respects, the work is what might be expected of a very competent student. It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores the topic under discussion fully • Shows some complex and/or sensitive independent thinking • Complexity and or sensitivity is reflected in the argument • Demonstrates a sound understanding of the subject matter • Draws in a wide relevant literature base • Demonstrates critical analysis of the literature • Is well focused, with concentration on the main issues to be addressed |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents a good case by means of clear logically structured argument or debate, supported by evidence • Shows a competent standard of fluent academic writing • Has, where appropriate, complete and correct referencing • Shows a good standard of grammar and spelling |
| 60 – 69 | B | <p>Good or very good in most respects, the work displays thorough mastery of the relevant learning outcomes. It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a good understanding of the area in question • Draws on adequate references • Demonstrates good synthesis, analysis, reflection and evaluation of the literature • Concentrates on the main issues to be addressed • Presents an adequate case by means of clear, well structured, logical argument supported with evidence. • Has, where appropriate, complete and correct referencing of sources • Shows a good standard of grammar and spelling |
| 50 – 59 | C | <p>The work clearly meets requirements for demonstrating the relevant learning outcomes. It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows evidence of sufficient knowledge and understanding of the material • Uses references appropriately to support the argument, though they may be limited in number or reflect restricted reading. • Demonstrates limited critical analysis and evaluation of sources of evidence. • Addresses the area in question clearly and coherently • Has satisfactory structure, presentation, and expression • Has, where appropriate, complete referencing of sources, though there may be minor flaws in referencing technique |
| 40 – 49 | D | <p>The work meets minimum requirements for demonstrating the relevant learning outcomes. It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a sufficient level of knowledge and understanding but at a basic level, and there may be minor inaccuracies. • Lacks detail, elaboration or explanation of concepts and ideas. • Displays limited synthesis and analysis of the literature • Presents a highly descriptive account of the topic with no real critical analysis • Presents a weak argument which is not logically structured or which lacks clarity or is based on unsubstantiated statements • Has, where appropriate, complete referencing of sources, though there may be flaws in referencing technique. • Has largely satisfactory expression, though there may be minor spelling or grammatical errors |
| 30 – 39 | E | <p>The work fails to meet minimum requirements for demonstrating the relevant learning outcomes. It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not demonstrate a sufficient level of knowledge and understanding • Utilises only limited reference sources and offers poor analysis of them • May not adequately address the area in question, because its content is too limited or because there are some inaccuracies • Presents a poorly structured, poorly developed, or incoherent argument, or no argument at all |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has an awkward writing style or poor expression of concepts • Has incomplete or inadequately presented references • Shows a lack of attention to spelling and grammar. |
| 20 – 29 | F | <p>The work is very weak or shows a decided lack of effort. It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays very poor or confused knowledge and understanding • Does not address the area in question. • Presents no argument or one based on irrelevant and erroneous content • Displays an unacceptable academic writing style and /or presentation • Has incomplete or inadequately presented references, if any |
| 10 – 19 | G | <p>The work is extremely weak. It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays no knowledge or understanding of the area in question • Presents incomplete, muddled, and/or irrelevant material • Provides no coherent discussion of the area in question • Has incomplete or inadequately presented references, if any |
| 0 – 9 | H | <p>The work is of very little consequence, if any, to the area in question. It</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is incomplete in every respect. |

Adapted from Lowrey, McQueen and Robertson (2005) by Ellen Gurman Bard, Peter Milne, Martha Whiteman.

Lowrey, J., McQueen, A., Robertson, A. (2005, May). College Undergraduate Studies Committee (HSS). Report of Working Group on Extended Common Marking Scheme, Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh CHSS UGSC.