



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

# Short Courses

## Studying for Credit Guide

Assessment guidance

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## Assessment guidance on courses assessed by essays

To be able to earn credit for a course you need to attend 70% of classes and submit a 2000-word essay by the due date. For all assessment dates and guidance on assessment submission, see the **Studying for Credit Guide Part 2: Rules and Regulations**.

In order to fulfil the learning outcomes of the course, and to prepare yourself for the assessment, you will need to put aside some time each week for reading and preparing coursework. A useful 'rule of thumb' is that each 10-credit course should take about 100 hours to complete. That includes attending the course, doing background reading and preparing coursework.

### Practice essays and essay plans

All courses include the opportunity for you to complete a formative assessment to help prepare you for the credit essay. On some courses, this is a 1,000-word practice essay; on others it is an essay plan. On Credit Plus courses, you will have the opportunity to do both. While the formative assessment is not compulsory, we highly recommend that you take this opportunity to gain valuable feedback from your tutor before attempting the assessed essay.

As part of this exercise, you will need to include material from your course readings, cite this in your practice essay or essay plan, and include full references in your bibliography. (For more details about referencing, please see 'Referencing' in this guide.)

## Practice essays

The practice essay is designed to give you the chance to write a short essay in response to a question for feedback, before you tackle one of the credit essay questions. The practice essay question/s is given with the credit essay questions. You should submit your practice essay through Turnitin from week 6. Your tutor will feedback electronically and release comments to you from week 7. You will have the chance to submit a practice essay if you are taking a course from our Art History, History, Literature, Personal Development, Philosophy & Religion, Psychology & Language Sciences, and Society & Politics sections. Please note that you won't get a mark or grade for your practice essay – instead, it is designed to give you feedback and help prepare you for the credit essay.

## Essay plans

The essay plan gives you the opportunity to receive feedback on the plan for your credit essay. You should submit your essay plan through Turnitin from week 6. Your tutor will provide feedback electronically and release comments to you from week 7. You will have the chance to submit an essay plan if you are taking courses from our Archaeology and Film, Media & Contemporary Cultures sections. Please use the proforma which is included at the end of this guide, and which you can download from the credit section of our website.

## Credit essays

Essays are your chance to show that you can construct an argument in answer to a question, based on your reading and the themes and topics presented in class. You will choose a question from a choice of three or more, and your tutor will probably give you a list of readings to help guide you.

## How long should my essay be?

Your essay should be 2000 words long. The essay title, your examination number and the assignment details and the bibliography are NOT included in the word count. Everything else IS included. It is wise to try and restrict your use of quotations, footnotes and appendices as they use up valuable words. For length penalties, see the **Studying for Credit Guide Part 2: Rules and Regulations**.

## How should I present my work?

You need to conform to certain academic 'conventions' when you write and submit your work. The list below sets out what you need to do. **Please follow it carefully.**

- Essays, reports and projects must be word-processed and must be double-spaced. Please contact our Student Guidance Advisor if word-processing your essay and submitting it electronically might be difficult for you.
- Leave a margin of at least 5 cm on the left- or right-hand side of every page for markers' comments.
- Put your examination number and the assessment question at the top of the first page, and remember to number the pages.
- DON'T put your name as your essay will be marked anonymously.
- If a quotation is no more than three lines long, it should be enclosed within single quotation marks and included in the text. If it is longer it should be separated from the text of the essay by indenting every line and it can be single spaced if you wish.
- If you are using figures or tables, number them sequentially and include a caption that gives an in-text reference for the source of data used. Figure captions should also explain what the image or diagram shows. Figures used must be referred to within the essay text and should not be used for decoration only. You must give the full reference for any sources in your bibliography.
- Write in continuous prose. Use paragraphs to separate the points you are making and don't start each new sentence on a new line.
- Don't use headings, unless you are advised to by your tutor.
- Your essay should be fully referenced using Short Course's preferred referencing format (see section on '**Referencing**' below). It should have a bibliography at the end.

## Referencing

### Why?

To reference means to give details of the sources that you are drawing on in your essay. Your essay should combine your own ideas, explanations and arguments with supporting evidence from a number of sources. Referencing is therefore an essential part of academic writing. It shows the reader:

- where your information/evidence is from;
- where you are representing the ideas or words of another person.

As well as giving credit to the work of other authors, citing sources enables you to demonstrate the background reading you have done, and to show how the content and conclusions of your essay are supported by work that you have consulted.

## How?

When referencing, you need to do two things: give a brief reference in the text of your essay and a full one in your bibliography. This allows your reader to identify the precise source to which you are referring, and the exact location within that source. You need to provide an in-text reference (also referred to as a 'citation') for information, ideas, quotations etc. that you have taken from other sources to include in your academic work.

The kinds of things for which you MUST provide an in-text reference include:

- distinctive arguments or points of view;
- arguments or points of view directly attributable to or associated with a specific individual;
- primary material, case studies, reports;
- sources for pictures, statistics, data or other factual information;
- any direct quotation, no matter how brief;
- implied quotation, e.g., 'Smith has argued that...'

You should also indicate if you are representing ideas of a tutor or fellow students, or if you received help. This can be done using an in-text reference or a footnote (see below on footnotes).

Your **bibliography** is a list containing full details for all your in-text references as well as any other texts or sources that you have consulted, but that you didn't refer to directly. If you have used all your sources well and referenced them appropriately, we would expect most of the material in your bibliography to appear in in-text citations.

## Format

There are different ways to reference. Some referencing styles use footnotes with a bibliography; others use what is called an 'author-date' or an 'author-title' system. In COL, we use the author-title system, and require students to follow the Anglia Ruskin Harvard Referencing Style Guide. You can find this at:

<http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.htm>

This guide gives details of how to reference many different kinds of sources.

Please note there are different versions of Harvard. They differ in the instructions they give, e.g. on where to use commas, full stops, inverted commas and brackets. Although this level of detail might seem daunting, following a style guide makes referencing simpler because it means that you can be consistent in your referencing, and your work will look polished rather than untidy.

There is software to help you do to reference. If you are using Word 2016, you can enter the details of your sources into the 'Insert Citation' field which you can find if you click the 'References' tab. Or you might like to use an online 'citation manager' tool, such as Zotero, which will also save reference details from library catalogues and other online sources. Both Word 2016 and Zotero enable you to select the Harvard Anglia style.

The required format for an in-text reference and for a full reference in a bibliography is very similar whether you are citing a book or a radio programme or an online source, and this is laid out below. If you want to find out how to reference kinds of sources not listed here, such as images, podcasts and email correspondence, check the Anglia Ruskin guide via the link above.

## In-text references

### Printed sources

For in-text references you should give the surname of the author, the date of publication, and, if appropriate, the page number, in brackets, in the text of your essay. You would make your point, followed by the text you are referring to, e.g. (Myers, 2002, p.117). If the author's name appears in your text, then you might be able to simply put the date, and page number if necessary.

Where there are two, three or four authors for a text, you should include them all in your citation. If there are more than four authors, you should put the surname of the first author followed by et al., e.g. (Jones, et al., 2011).

Here are some examples:

The relationship between being optimistic and being successful has been explored by psychologists (Myers, 2002).

Or:

Myers (2002) summarises psychological research into the relationship between optimism and success.

Or:

To quote one social psychologist who reviewed the research, 'Optimists also enjoy greater success. Rather than see setbacks as signs of their incompetence, they view them as flukes or as suggesting a new approach' (Myers, 2002, p.117).

To refer to work cited by others (called secondary referencing) follow this example:

Larsen and Kasimatis (1990) studied the relationship between extroversion and mood (cited in Myers, 2002, p.121).

For each of these, the full reference for the Myers work would appear in your bibliography (see below).

If two or more items have the same author and year, then distinguish between them by adding letters: Myers, 2002a; Myers, 2002b; Myers, 2002c. You would then list them in letter order in your bibliography.

If you are citing more than one author with the same surname and date of publication, then give the initial too.

If you are referring to the work of an author that appears as a chapter in a book or other document that is edited by someone else, you should put the name of the author of the piece in the citation, not the editor of the whole work.

If the work has no author but is by a recognised organisation, it is usually cited by the name of the organisation, e.g. (Anglia Ruskin University, 2010).

For examples of how to reference other works with no author, or with more than one author, check the Anglia Ruskin Guide.

## Electronic journals and online books

Cite author and date, and a page number where needed and if given, as you would for a print journal.

## Websites

An in-text reference for a web source follows the same format. If the website has an author, cite the author and date as for a book, and give a page number if needed and if given, on the webpage you are consulting. If it has no author, give the source as the reference instead.

## Films, television and radio programmes

To reference a film, put the title in italics and the year of public release in the country of origin, e.g. (*Bridge on the River Kwai*, 1957) in brackets in the text of your essay.

For radio and television programmes, you should put the title in italics and the year of broadcast in brackets, e.g. (*India with Sanjeev Bhaskar*, 2007).

## Sources with no date or no page number

If a source has no date, you should put n.d. – e.g. Jones (n.d.) has argued that...; if it has no page numbers (as with many online sources) put n.p.: 'Good referencing shows good scholarship' (Jones, 2011, n.p.).

## Full references for your bibliography

Your bibliography is a reference list that comes at the end of your essay. The bibliography should be in alphabetical order, by authors' surname. Where several items are listed under one author, the order should be chronological. If you consulted more than one type of source (e.g. websites in addition to books), you may wish to consider splitting your bibliography into different categories.

Use a capital letter for the first letter of the first word of a book, journal article, newspaper article etc. The exceptions are the names of organisations, people, art movements etc.

For materials you found online, you need to give information about the article or the book, where you found it and when you accessed it. If you found the article on a database that you accessed as a student of the University of Edinburgh and the URL does not link to it directly, then give the name of the database instead. Here are some examples. Please note when italics and brackets are used.

## Books

Author(s), Initials., year. *Title of book (in italics)*. Edition. (Written as e.g. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Only include the edition if it is not the first). Place of publication (town or city, not country): Publisher.

Myers, D., 2002. *The pursuit of happiness. Discovering the pathway to fulfilment, well-being, and enduring personal joy*. New York: Quill.

Drew, S. and Bingham, R., 2001. *The student skills guide*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Aldershot: Gower.

Where there are more than four authors, just put the first listed, followed by et al. (Author, Initials. et al., year. *Title of book*. Place of publication: Publisher).

## A chapter in an edited book

Chapter Author(s), Initials., year of chapter. Title of chapter. In: Book editor(s) Initials. Surname(s), ed(s). Year of book. *Title of book*. Place of publication: Publisher, chapter number (e.g. ch.4) or first and last page number (e.g. pp. 2-4).

If the chapter and book are published in the same year, then simplify to:

Chapter Author(s), Initials., year. Title of chapter. In: Book editor(s) Initials. Surname(s), ed(s). *Title of book*. Place of publication: Publisher, Chapter number (e.g. ch.4) or first and last page number (e.g. pp. 2-4).

Macdonald, D., 1970. Introduction. In: M. Levine, G. McNamee, and D. Greenberg, eds., *The tales of Hoffman*. New York: Bantam Books, pp. xi-xxiv.

## Books (online)

Use information from the book and the website:

Author(s), Initials., year. **Title**. [type of medium] Place of publication (if known): Publisher. Available at: <URL> [Accessed (insert date)].

Brontë, C., 1864. *Jane Eyre*. [e-book] New York: Carleton. Available at: [www.bronte.netfury.co.uk/jane-eyre/](http://www.bronte.netfury.co.uk/jane-eyre/) [Accessed 26 July 2011]

## Journal article

Author(s), Initials., year. Title of article. *Full title of journal*, Volume number (issue/part number), page number/s.

Thompson, R. A., 2001. From arcadia to wonderland: reflections on a decade of continuing education in Scotland. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education*, 7(1), pp. 111-118.

## Journal article (online)

Use information from the article and the website.

If it is from a freely-available source:

Author(s), Initials., year. Title of article. *Full title of journal*, [type of medium] volume number (issue/part number), page numbers if available. Available at: <web address> [Accessed date].

If it is an article from an electronic source which you accessed through the password-protected University Library database:

Author(s), Initials., year. Title of article. *Full title of journal*, [type of medium] volume number (issue/part number), page numbers if available. Available through: name of database [Accessed date].

Crow, G. and Pope, C., 2008. The importance of class. *Sociology*, [e-journal] 42(6), pp. 1045–1048. Available through: Sage Journals online [Accessed 12 June 2012].

## A newspaper or magazine

Author(s), Initials., year. Title of article or column header. *Full title of newspaper*, day and month page number(s) and column line. (The column line is given as a letter indicating the column where the article appears.)

Abrahams, M., 2011. Who cut the cheese, and how? *The Guardian*, 2 Aug., p. 31d.

## Online newspaper articles

Author(s) or corporate author(s), year. Title of document or page. *Name of newspaper*, [type of medium] Additional date information. Available at: <url of database> [Accessed date].

Harvey, F., 2011. EU emissions reduction vote postponed. *The Guardian*, [online] 24 June. Available at: <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/jun/24/eu-emissions-vote-postponed>> [Accessed 24 June 2011].

## Websites

Authorship or source, year. *Title of web document or web page*. [type of medium] (date of update if available) Available at: < url > [Accessed date].

National Library of Scotland, 2012. *Science fiction in Scotland*. [online] Available at: <<http://www.nls.uk/exhibitions/treasures>> [Accessed 11 June 2012].

## Publications on websites

Author or corporate author, year. *Title of document*. [type of medium] Place: producer/Publisher. Available at: <url> [Accessed date].

Kennedy, D., n.d. *Essay guide*. [online] s.l.: Royal Literary Fund. Available at: <<http://www.rlf.org.uk/fellowshipscheme/writing/essayguide.cfm>> [Accessed 11 June 2012].

(Use s.l. (sine loco) if no place of publication is given).

## Films, television and radio programmes

For films, list:

*Title*. Year of release. [medium] Directed by name. Country of origin: Film studio.

*Bridge on the River Kwai*. 1957. [film] Directed by David Lean. UK: Horizon Pictures.

For radio and television programmes, list:

*Title*. Year of broadcast. [type of medium] Broadcasting organisation and channel, date and time of transmission.

*Afghanistan: War without End?* 2011. [TV programme] BBC 2, 23 June 2011 23.20.

## Course handouts/lecture notes

Lecturer/Author, Initials., year. Title of item, *Course code Course title*. HE Institution, unpublished.

Bamford, C., 2011. *Researching sources, Z300 Transition to Degree Study*. University of Edinburgh, unpublished.

## Student and tutor contributions

To reference a tutor or another student, put their name, e.g. Jones, and the year into the text of your essay. In your bibliography, you would put:

Jones, J., 2 June 2007. *Student contribution, Introducing Politics*, University of Edinburgh. If you wanted to explain this contribution in a little more detail without interrupting the flow of your essay, then you could use a footnote, like this.<sup>1</sup>

## Other sources

For more examples of ways to reference e.g. emails, blogs, YouTube videos, check the Anglia Ruskin guide.

## Footnotes

With the Harvard System, you don't need to use footnotes unless you want to put in further details from a source without interrupting the flow of your argument. Footnotes are unlikely to be necessary in an essay of this length, and they use up valuable words. However, should you wish to use a footnote, number it in the text like this<sup>2</sup> and then give further details either at the end of the page or at the end of the essay. Remember that footnotes are included in your word count, and that in the Harvard system, in-text references should be included in your main text and not separated out as footnotes. Any sources you cite in your footnotes need to appear in your bibliography too.

## Plagiarism – rules, regulations and how to avoid it

Referencing is required to show your reader the sources you have used. This gives academic depth and credibility to your work. It also enables you to avoid plagiarism.

Here is the definition of plagiarism used by the University:

Plagiarism is the act of copying or including in one's own work, without adequate acknowledgement, intentionally or unintentionally, the work of another or your own previously assessed original work.

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<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to Jane Jones for suggesting the relevance here of social contract theory.

<sup>2</sup> The text of your footnote would appear here.

The key to avoiding plagiarism is to make sure that you give correct references for anything that you have taken from other sources to include in your academic work. This might include, for example, any ideas, theories, findings, images, diagrams or direct quotations that you have used, from print sources such as books and journal articles, from the web, or indeed from other students. You should use in-text references to signal, within the text of your work, the origins of any material taken from another source, even if you have put it into your own words. You then need to give full references for these sources in your bibliography. If you take any material word-for-word from another source it is essential that you make it clear that this is what you have done.

If you take material from another source, change a few words and then include the reference, you may still have plagiarised because you have not made it clear to your reader that you have essentially reproduced part of the original source. You should either express the ideas fully in your own words and provide an in-text reference for the source that you were drawing from, or use clearly labelled direct quotes and reference those.

Accidental plagiarism is sometimes the result of not taking good notes. Make sure, in taking notes, that you would be able, later, to distinguish between verbatim quotes, paraphrased material and your own ideas.

The University has produced detailed guidance for undergraduates on the avoidance of plagiarism, and we recommend that you read this. It can be found at:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/plagiarismstudentguidance.pdf>

This includes some very useful questions and answers, such as the risks of plagiarism if you collaborate with other students on work that you are required to complete individually. It also outlines the steps that will be taken if a student is suspected of plagiarism.

## Duplication of coursework

There are other forms of academic misconduct that the University also lists. These include deceit, through resubmitting your own previously assessed work. In COL, we follow the guidance produced in the School of Social and Political Science on Duplication of Coursework:

*Students are not allowed to submit the same piece of work for more than one unit of assessment in their programme of study, nor are students allowed to submit for assessment work submitted at another institution. Each piece of writing submitted for assessment should be a substantially original piece of work produced specifically for that unit of assessment. It may occasionally be appropriate to have quite similar short passages in separate pieces of assessment, conveying more general or 'background' points the two pieces have in common, in which case the student should do their best to rephrase the material, and limit any verbatim passages to a*

*few sentences (no more than 100 words). Apart from this, students should avoid any duplication of previously submitted coursework.*

School of Social and Political Science Undergraduate Teaching Office, 2010. *Year 1 and 2 Coursework Requirement*. [online] Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh. Available at:

[www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/year\\_1\\_2/assessment\\_and\\_regs/coursework\\_requirements](http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/year_1_2/assessment_and_regs/coursework_requirements)

[Accessed 13 August 2015]

For a list and definitions of other forms of academic misconduct, see:

[www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct)

When submitting essays, students are required to complete a checklist to confirm that the work has not been plagiarised from other sources. This is copied here so that you can see what you need to acknowledge – and what you mustn't do. Please see 'Submitting your work' for instructions on submission.

I confirm that all this work is my own except where indicated, and that:

1. I have read and understood the Plagiarism Rules & Regulations in the course sections and Programme Handbooks;
2. I have clearly referenced / listed all sources as appropriate;
3. I have referenced and appropriately indicated all quoted text of more than three words (from books, web, etc);
4. I have given the sources of all pictures, data etc that are not my own;
5. I have not made any use of the essay(s) of any other student(s) either past or present;
6. I have not submitted for assessment work previously submitted for any other course, degree or qualification;
7. I have not incorporated any work from or used the help of any external professional agencies other than extracts from attributed sources;
8. I have acknowledged in appropriate places any help that I have received from others (e.g. fellow students, teachers in schools, external sources);
9. I have complied with any other plagiarism criteria specified in the course and Programme handbooks;
10. I understand that any false claim for any of the above will mean that the relevant piece of work will be penalised in accordance with the University regulations;
11. I hereby grant the University of Edinburgh, SFC, HEFCE and TurnitinUK a non-exclusive licence to make an electronic copy of the work and make it available for assessment and archiving purposes.

By selecting the assignment link and submitting this assignment I confirm I have read and agreed to the above declaration.

If you require further guidance on plagiarism, you can:

- consult your course handbook
- consult your course organiser or supervisor

[www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct)

## Writing your essay: some tips

1. Plan your time
  - It will always take longer to write an essay than you think. Work backwards from the submission date allowing time for all the steps below.
2. Read the question
  - Take time to decide which question you will choose.
  - Read very carefully the question you are proposing to answer.
  - What – precisely – is it asking you to look at?
  - Are there any words or phrases which you need to take account of, understand or explain? From what perspective/angle are you going to approach it?
  - What area/s of your subject/course does it focus on?
  - Do you see any pitfalls you have to be aware of? Too broad a topic? A lack of material? Too much material? Potential bias?
3. Begin your reading
  - Always read with the question in mind.
  - Ask your tutor for help if you are having difficulty finding appropriate reading.
  - How will this reading help you to answer the question you are tackling?
  - Your reading should help you to make connections between ideas, to compare and contrast information from different sources, to evaluate theories, and to draw conclusions.
  - Try to read 'critically' by asking questions of what you read. This means asking questions of the argument or case that the author is making.
4. Use your reading to:
  - deepen your understanding of what has been covered in class;
  - find examples;
  - find ideas, and perhaps quotations;
  - explore different points of view.

Remember that the essay should reflect your grasp of the material covered in the course and recommended reading.

5. Take effective notes
  - Take clear notes that you will be able to use when you come to prepare your essay. Make sure your notes are relevant to the essay question.
  - Take down the author's name, full title and publication details and relevant page numbers of every work you consult during your research – this will save you time in the end, and will help you avoid the possibility of plagiarism. There is software to help you do this; see 'Referencing' for details.
6. Organise your material
  - Get organised before you begin to write. Go through your notes. Highlight any key points you wish to include, evidence you want to use and corresponding references to your reading.
  - Think about what approach you want to take and what your argument is.

- Write a plan. This will help you to think through your material, and to structure your essay.
- Your plan should list your key points (one per paragraph), the information/evidence (including references) you will use to illustrate each point, and the conclusions you might draw for each point/paragraph.
- Think about a logical order in which to place these paragraphs.

7. Writing your essay

- Begin writing! If you get really stuck, work on your plan/notes/idea – don't just stare at a blank screen or piece of paper.
- You don't have to start at the beginning and work through to the end of your essay. If there's a part you feel able to write best, by all means do this part first. You don't have to write the introduction first, although some people like to. But, if you write out of sequence, remember to go back and read your essay over as a whole and amend any inconsistencies.
- Make sure that each paragraph deals with a single point relevant to the question, that it is supported by evidence, and is expressed with clarity.
- Aim for precision, avoid unfocused narrative and only use quotations where strictly necessary.
- Show yourself to be open to doubt and criticism, and capable of seeing the merits of opposing views.
- Keep copies of your work. Remember to save it as you go along and keep the copy until you get your essay back. It is always wise to save electronic documents in more than one place (e.g. on your computer and on a memory stick or disk). One simple way to do this is to email your essay drafts to yourself.

8. Before you hand it in . . .

- The last thing you want to do when you have finished your essay is READ IT OVER, but you have to.
- Try to leave at least 24 hours between finishing your essay and re-reading it before you submit it. You are more likely to see mistakes and flaws in your argument if you have a break from it.
- Check your spelling, grammar and punctuation. Poor spelling can really spoil a good essay, especially if you have spelled personal names, place names or technical terms incorrectly. Clumsy grammar can impede communication of your ideas and effective use of punctuation can make your writing clearer and more dynamic.
- Does your essay flow/progress logically? Have you made your points clearly? Is your argument clear? Have you emphasised the important points? Relatively minor adjustments – even at this stage – to key areas of your essay, or to your introduction or conclusion, can lift the overall quality of your essay. Try reading it out loud for a fresh view on style and punctuation. However, you have to know when to call it a day and submit it!

## Assessment criteria

When your essay is being marked, tutors will consider four key criteria:

- Knowledge
- Argument and analysis
- Language and expression
- Referencing, bibliography and use of illustrations.

The table below describes what tutors consider for each of these.

Criterion	What to consider	Extra notes for students
Knowledge	<p><i>Range:</i> How wide is the range of material informing the text? Is it comprehensive or limited in scope? Has the reading been well or poorly assimilated? Has the essay covered sufficient sources? Are there significant omissions? Is the material relevant?</p> <p><i>Command of material:</i> Does the essay show a good command of the sources? Does the student show original insights/evidence of independent thought? Is the command adequate? Or perhaps the essay betrays too great a dependence on the sources and may even be vague or uncertain? Is the material used accurately?</p> <p><i>Awareness of scholarship:</i> How good a grasp does the student have of the critical debates/issues associated with the topic?</p>	<p>Have you read widely enough and does your answer show that you understand what you have read and studied in class?</p> <p>Have you applied your knowledge well, avoiding too much description?</p> <p>Do you show an awareness of different approaches?</p>

Argument & analysis

*Focus on question:* To what extent does the text focus on the question? Does the answer display an awareness of the complexities involved or is the focus diffuse and uneven? Does the student do what the question asks for (compare/contrast, explain, discuss etc)?

*Clarity of structure:* Is the structure coherent or prone to lapses, ambiguity or repetition? Does the structure follow a logical sequence? Is there a clear introduction and conclusion?

*Analytical skills:* How critically astute is the essay? Does the argument/discussion demonstrate a critical appreciation of the question? Does the text display a tendency to a descriptive account? Are key concepts appropriately deployed? Is the conclusion compelling?

*Evaluation of evidence:* Has the student demonstrated compelling use of evidence? Is the evidence incorporated in a sophisticated way or deployed spasmodically? To what extent does the evidence support the argument? Is it used accurately?

Do you answer the question?

Does your essay have a clear introduction, main body and conclusion?\*

Do you manage to really get to grips with the question, or do you tend to stop short at describing different approaches or issues?

Remember that you need to show how you know something – and you need to evaluate how reliable your evidence is.

<p>Language &amp; expression</p>	<p><i>Clarity and accuracy of expression:</i> How clear and precise is the writing?</p> <p><i>Grammar and syntax:</i> Is the syntax erratic/weak or sophisticated? Is the grammar correct or prone to error?</p> <p><i>Spelling:</i> Is the spelling accurate, occasionally erroneous or seriously defective?</p> <p><i>Fluency of writing:</i> Is it easy to follow the writer's line of thought, and the flow of the argument?</p>	
<p>References &amp; bibliography</p>	<p><i>Accuracy and consistency of referencing:</i> Are there references and illustrations where appropriate? Is the referencing consistent?</p> <p><i>Accuracy and consistency of bibliography:</i> Is there a bibliography? Is it complete and organised correctly?</p> <p><i>Use of tables/illustrations:</i> Has the student used and properly referenced illustrative material where appropriate?</p> <p><i>N.B. Failure to acknowledge sources properly via in-text references and a bibliography can lead to lower marks and disciplinary action being taken for plagiarism.</i></p>	<p>Remember to refer to the section on referencing earlier in this guide.</p>

\* An introduction would tell the reader what the essay is going to be about, and how the question will be tackled. The main body would engage with the question and be divided up into several paragraphs, with each paragraph containing (1) a substantive point or idea followed by (2) some development of it. The conclusion should briefly tie everything up, summing up your argument and giving some evaluation of the essay's main issue.

## Assessment Guidance for Creative Writing courses

Creative Writing courses are assessed by portfolio. The portfolio for Creative Writing has two sections: a creative assignment and a reflective commentary. The portfolio is marked out of 100. There is no separate mark for the commentary.

When your portfolio is being marked, tutors will consider three key criteria:

- Originality and imaginative development.
- Language and expression.
- Structure and techniques.

Criterion	What to consider	Extra notes for students
Originality & imaginative development	Does the work shows originality and a good command of the genre? Is it uneven? Is it lacking an established voice or imaginative development of material?	Review your work for consistency of voice, development and understanding of the genre based on your tutor's general guidance and formative feedback.
Language & expression	Is the use of language accomplished and imaginative? Is there evidence of control of expression or is the mastery of language and expression uneven or weak and poorly edited?	Self-edit your work and look out for typographical and grammatical errors. Check that use of tenses is grammatically consistent and has the intended effect. Proofread your work to make sure general presentation is spotless.
Structure & technique	Does the work display a good understanding of structure and technique?  Does it show control over the material or is it uneven and are there lapses in organisation and development?	Check that use of first/second or third person narration is consistent throughout and has the intended effect. Leave your work aside and reread it later; take in-class feedback into account; ask someone to read your work and see how they respond.

## Guidelines for reflective commentary

Your commentary should focus on the creative process that governs the writing of your portfolio and your development as a writer. This makes it different from a traditional academic essay. Instead of concentrating on what your prose or poetry means, think about how your stories, characters and ideas came about and the decisions that you took in shaping them. You can divide your commentary into three parts: genesis, development and decisions. The genesis concerns where the initial idea come from. Development concerns what you discovered during the writing process or as a result of any research you undertook. Finally, discuss the choices you made, for example on tense, point of view, imagery, rhythm etc. Don't be afraid to say you are not quite satisfied, but do try to say why.

## Assessment Guidance for Art and Design courses

### Student effort

Each Art and Design credit-bearing course carries 10 credits for successful completion of assessment. Students studying for credit are required to attend classes, carry out directed study and independent study for a total of 100 student effort hours (SEH). Typically, this will comprise the following:

- **Class contact hours: 30** – work you do during the class 'contact time' or supervised work undertaken in taught classes, studio work or sketchbook work undertaken independently.
- **Directed hours: 30** – work set by tutor for student to do each week, in your own time.
- **Independent study hours: 40** – work you set yourself to do, relevant to the intended learning outcomes.

### Formative assessment

As well as ongoing feedback throughout the course, a formative assessment session will occur in week 6 or 7 of the course. Each student will give a 5 minute oral presentation on their practical work in progress to other members of the class group followed by a 5 minute group critique supported by the course tutor.

Each student will also submit electronically their work-in-progress digital journal. The tutor will provide written feedback on the digital journal, which will give an indication of which areas need to be addressed in order to meet the published learning outcomes.

### Summative assessment

Art and Design courses are assessed by two elements:

**A digital journal documenting a summary of the learning journey as evidenced in the portfolio (20% of final mark)**

This will include a summary of idea development, media exploration, contextual research, critical reflection and outcomes through notes, annotation, illustration and photography.

**A portfolio of visual art/design works (80% of final mark)**

This will include a selection of resolved design works, sketchbook works, preparatory studies, visual research and evidence of a contextual awareness.

## Learning outcomes

The portfolio and digital journal submission will be assessed against the three learning outcomes for the course. These are equally weighted and each will be given a percentage mark using the Edinburgh College of Art undergraduate marking scheme (see page 33). To pass, you must achieve an overall combined mark of 40% minimum.

On each course information page, you will find a list of the three learning outcomes that students should achieve to pass each credit course. Each course will be designed and delivered so that the three learning outcomes can be addressed by students. Assessment considers your achievement in each of the learning outcomes by looking at the evidence you have presented in your submission.

## Understanding the learning outcomes

These describe what you are expected to achieve by a combination of attending the classes and carrying out directed and independent study outwith the class time.

Typically, the learning outcomes for Art and Design courses will be described and categorised as follows:

### 1. Research

How well you have developed and evidenced your creative thinking, research, contextual awareness and idea development relevant to the discipline studied to inform visual ideas, usually using a sketchbook or visual journal.

### 2. Practice

How well you have acquired, practised and exploited a range of techniques, processes and skills relevant to the discipline studied to make a range of resolved and accomplished art or design works which reveal a distinctive personal vision.

### 3. Presentation

How well you have selected, edited and presented a coherent body of studies, samples and completed art and design works which have been underpinned by your research and practice.

Use the class descriptions to get a sense of what you think that class expects of you. For example, is the emphasis on learning a new skill in textiles or sculpture? Or will your course(s) develop your competence in drawing, colour or scale? Gathering this information will help you to understand your own 'learning programme' starting with what you want to do.

There is more information about evidencing the learning outcomes in the Assessment section of this guide.

## Directed and independent study

For work required to be undertaken beyond the class hours, the course tutor will negotiate with you a 'directed study plan' which can be undertaken without the need for specialist workshops or access to models. This may include researching a range of suggested artists or designers and their associated movements to engender a contextual awareness. The plan may also include advice about how to annotate and evidence the research within a sketchbook, and practical outcomes as well as how to present the work for assessment.

### Independent study hours can include the following:

Research time, library time, note-taking activities such as watching relevant TV programmes, listening to radio discussions on relevant topics, carrying out research or follow-up on any of these (e.g. by looking up names, terms, concepts with which you are unfamiliar).

- Reading journals, art magazines or newspapers.
- Developing a broad knowledge of contemporary culture and the culture of the past by:
  - going to the theatre, concerts, ballet or opera
  - listening to music, watching films, going to galleries, exhibitions and museums
  - talking about relevant topics to artists, fellow students or experts in other fields.
  - Preparing and presenting your coursework for assessment.

You do not need to keep track of your independent study hours in a systematic way, but, as long as you have evidenced its impact, it will be clear from your work whether or not you are keeping pace with the input required – your tutor can help to guide you in this.

## Preparing your art or design portfolio for assessment

Each 10-credit course you submit for assessment represents 100 hours of your own effort. It is important that the assessment team can understand the journey you have taken in your work. Begin by gathering together all of your work. You don't need to submit everything you have done. However, it is important that you are able to show both your preparatory studies and samples as well as resolved pieces. It is advisable to edit out work which shows too much repetition or is less relevant to what you were trying to achieve. One element of assessment is your ability to use your judgment in selecting and presenting your work.

### How to present your work

For each course assessment submission, you will be allocated a small space to submit your portfolio, usually a table top approximately 90cm x 70cm. You can also use the space under or alongside the table for larger work.

### Two-dimensional works

Present your work in a portfolio, which needs only to be a folded piece of thin card with your details labelled on it.

You should not go to any great expense mounting or framing your work. For most two-dimensional works such as drawing, painting, printmaking and photography, your work should be neatly and simply presented on white card or thick paper mounts. Tidying and trimming your 2D work and mounting it onto sheets can make a huge difference to the work being seen. Do not use coloured mounts or draw frames around your work as this only distracts attention away from your achievements.

Allow each image to breathe with a good amount of white space around it. If you have a series of three or four smaller works which can fit onto an A1 sheet, make sure there is enough space and do not overlap or angle any of the images – if in doubt put less work on each sheet. The sheets should be presented in a logical order, e.g. the order in which you did the work, or thematically.

### Small three-dimensional works

If you have a series of small, light 3D works such as jewellery, textiles or light constructions, which you are able to bring in, you can place these in a small box or fix them down on thicker mounting card if they are suitable. Again it is important that the works are clearly accessible.

## Larger three-dimensional work

Often it is impractical for you to bring in **larger scale** 3D work such as sculpture and large stained-glass pieces. In these cases, you **may** take **good quality** photographs, print them and present them on sheets of white card. The photographs should reveal the scale and be taken from a variety of angles against as neutral a background as possible (i.e. we are not assessing the interior of your living room, just the work). Try to find a place where the work can be seen against a white or plain background. However, if you can bring in the work, you may do so, as long as you are also able to remove it at the time allocated.

## Audio, video and digital Works

If some of your work is in digital format, such as videos, digital images, sound or slideshows, you will need to inform the COL office **at least 2 weeks** before your assessment deadline, so that we can ensure that we have the right devices and software to view your work. You should NOT provide your own computer or audio/visual devices for assessment. You should discuss with your course tutor what might be the most appropriate format to show your work; this may be a DVD on a TV monitor or a PowerPoint slideshow on a PC or Mac. Please do not assume that we will just be able to view whatever format you hand in. If all or most of your work is in digital format, you will still be required to submit a paper journal or sketchbook which explains to the assessment team what they are looking at and how to access it.

## Plagiarism

Before you begin your preparations for assessment please review the University regulations on plagiarism (see above). Although these have been written with mostly essay-based work in mind they apply equally to studio-based work.

## Evidencing the learning outcomes in assessment submission

Look at the published learning outcomes for your course and consider whether you have included evidence to support your competence in each of the three categories:

### Learning outcome 1: research

As well as resolved pieces you should submit studies, samples, experiments and at least one sketchbook or journal which informed your final works. This should include both written and visual annotation explaining and reflecting on why you have made your choices, whether artists and designers may have informed your work and any pertinent reading or research you have undertaken. Your sketchbook or journal should contain a record of relevant exhibitions you have seen, art events you attended, and artists you have discovered and

so on. It should not be simply a scrapbook, but rather a record of your responses to events and how they have impacted on your studies for the course.

## Learning outcome 2: practice

You should have completed a range of studies and more resolved art or design work related to the discipline being studied and practised. These should demonstrate both the skills you have acquired during the course and how well you have exploited the medium to develop a personal visual language from sustained enquiry into visual themes, concepts or subject matter. The quantity of work will depend on the nature of the discipline, but normally there is an expectation that you produce a series of related works which show your development from study in depth.

## Learning outcome 3: presentation

The way in which you select, edit and present your work demonstrates how well you have engaged in your studies and understood the requirements of professional practices within the discipline. This does not have to be elaborate – a coherent and neatly presented body of work is better than a complicated submission which does not show your work to its best advantage. Although you can take advice from your tutor, responsibility for what and how you present rests primarily with you.

## Submitting work for assessment

Please see **Studying for Credit Guide Part 2: Rules and Regulations**.

## How your Art and Design work is marked

Each course submission is assessed separately and only work submitted can be considered. So even if your tutor knows that you have other work or is aware of your intentions these cannot be taken into account unless the evidence is present in your submission.

Your work is assessed against the three published learning outcomes (LOs) for the course. Markers will consider to what level you have achieved each LO and award a mark using the Edinburgh College of Art marking scheme described on page 33. Each LO is marked out of 100 and the resulting mark is weighted at 33.3% of the total for the assessment. The overall final agreed mark is an average of the three learning outcome marks. The final agreed grade is determined by the final mark.

Each submission is marked by two members of staff. One of these may be the tutor for the course although this is not always the case and is not a requirement. The second marker will be a member of staff with expertise in a relevant discipline.

The Programme Co-ordinator will moderate the marking to ensure that the process is carried out in line with university standards and is fair and consistent across the disciplines.

## Marking schemes for all Short Courses

Your assessment will be given a percentage mark, and you will be given an overall percentage and grade for the course. The table below shows the percentages, grades and descriptions used.

Assessment mark	Grade	Description
90 – 100%	A1	Excellent
80 – 89%	A2	Excellent
70 – 79%	A3	Excellent
60 – 69%	B	Very Good
50 – 59%	C	Good
40 – 49%	D	Pass
30 – 39%	E	Marginal Fail
20 – 29%	F	Clear Fail
10 – 19%	G	Bad Fail
0 – 9%	H	Bad Fail

Fuller descriptions for each of these grades are included in the extended common marking schemes used by Short Courses. The table below shows which scheme is used for each section. Please check with your tutor if you aren't sure which scheme is to be used for your course.

Section/Course	Extended common marking scheme to be used
Archaeology	Short Courses scheme
Art History	Short Courses scheme
Art and Design	Edinburgh College of Art marking scheme
Creative Writing	Creative Writing scheme
Film, Media & Contemporary Cultures	Short Courses scheme or Creative Writing scheme
History	History scheme
Literature	Literature scheme
Personal Development	Short Courses scheme
Philosophy	Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences scheme
Religion	Short Courses scheme
Psychology & Language Sciences	Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences scheme
Society & Politics	Short Courses scheme

## Appendix: Extended common marking schemes

### Short Courses 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
90 – 100	A1	An answer that fulfils all of the criteria for 'A 2' (see below) and in addition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows an exceptional degree of insight and independent thought</li> <li>• Demonstrates flair in tackling issues</li> <li>• Is of publishable quality, in terms of scholarship and originality.</li> </ul>
80 – 89	A2	An authoritative answer that provides a fully effective response to the question. It should <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show a command of the literature and an ability to integrate that literature and go beyond it</li> <li>• Achieve a high quality of analysis early on and sustain it through to the conclusion</li> <li>• Use sources accurately and concisely to inform the answer but not dominate it</li> <li>• Demonstrate a critical and committed argument, mindful of other interpretations but not afraid to question them</li> <li>• Be very well-written and presented – its use of English and presentation should be commensurate with the quality of the content.</li> </ul>
70 – 79	A3	A sharply-focused answer of high intellectual quality. An essay in this band should <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt a comprehensive approach to the question and maintain a sophisticated level of analysis throughout</li> <li>• Show a willingness to engage critically with the literature and move beyond it, using the sources creatively to arrive at its own independent conclusions</li> <li>• Be very well-written and presented.</li> </ul>
60 – 69	B	A very good answer that shows qualities beyond the merely routine or acceptable. Within this range a particularly strong answer will be given 67% or over; a more limited answer will be given 63% or under. An essay in this band should <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address the question and the sources directly and fully</li> <li>• Show a critical engagement with other authors' work and make effective use of the whole range of the literature</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contain no significant errors of fact or interpretation</li> <li>• Develop a coherent analysis/argument proceeding to a convincing conclusion</li> <li>• Be without major blemish in the quality of the writing and presentation (especially referencing).</li> </ul>
50 – 59	C	<p>A good answer with elements of the routine and predictable. Within this range a stronger answer will be given 57% or over; a weaker answer will be given 53% or under. An essay in this band</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should be generally accurate and firmly based in the reading</li> <li>• May draw upon a restricted range of sources but should not just re-state one particular source. Other authors should be presented accurately, if rather descriptively</li> <li>• Should demonstrate no serious weaknesses in the coverage of the topic and the relevance of the material</li> <li>• May contain occasional factual errors and misunderstandings of concepts but this should not be a dominant impression</li> <li>• Should show a generally good quality of writing, referencing and presentation.</li> </ul>
40 – 49	D	<p>A passable answer which understands the question, displays some academic learning and refers to relevant literature. Within this range a stronger answer will be given 47% or over; a bare pass will be given 43% or under. An essay in this band</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should be intelligible and in general factually accurate, but may well have deficiencies such as restricted use of sources or academic argument, over-reliance on lecture notes, poor expression, and irrelevancies to the question asked</li> <li>• May give a general impression of a rather poor effort, with weaknesses in conception or execution. It might also be the right mark for a short answer that at least referred to the main points of the issue.</li> </ul>
30 – 39	E	<p>An answer with evident weaknesses of understanding but conveying the sense that with a fuller argument or factual basis it might have achieved a pass. It might also be a short and fragmentary answer with merit in what is presented but containing serious gaps.</p>
20 – 29	F	<p>(20-29%) An answer showing seriously inadequate knowledge of the subject, with little awareness of the relevant issues or literature, major omissions or inaccuracies, and pedestrian use of inadequate sources.</p>
10 – 19	G	<p>An answer that falls far short of a passable level by some combination of short length, irrelevance, lack of intelligibility, factual inaccuracy and lack of acquaintance with reading or academic concepts.</p>
0 – 9	H	<p>An answer without any academic merit which usually conveys little sense that the course has been followed or of the basic skills of essay-writing.</p>

## Edinburgh College of Art marking scheme for Art and Design

Mark	Grade	Description
90 – 100	A1	In addition to the attainment at A, below, the student has made an original contribution to the discipline, by questioning or challenging prevailing paradigms.
80 – 89	A2	In addition to the attainment at A, below, the student has made a significant contribution to the discipline within the limits of established paradigms.
70 – 79	A3	The student has theorised, generalised and hypothesised in the context of their discipline and its relationship with other disciplines in ways appropriate to the problem, situation or theme of enquiry. Connections have been made both within and beyond the brief. Learning can be applied to unfamiliar situations or problems and may extend current theory. It is questioning, speculative and reflective.
60 – 69	B	The student has analysed, evaluated and /or applied a range of concepts and theories to familiar, and a few unfamiliar situations, problems or themes of enquiry. Resolutions and conclusions are mainly complex, and result from understanding in depth. Learning demonstrates a fully integrated and /or contextualised knowledge structure.
50 – 59	C	The student has demonstrated an ability to visualise, describe and /or combine established concepts and theories. Learning makes several varying relationships and connections. A few resolutions and conclusions may be complex and original, and result from understanding in depth. However, learning does not demonstrate a fully integrated and /or contextualised knowledge structure.
40 – 49	D	The student has demonstrated that the intended learning outcomes have been acquired at a threshold level. However, only a few simple relationships and connections have been made. A deeper theoretical understanding or contextual awareness does not support learning.
30 – 39	E	The student has acquired some disconnected fragments of learning, which make little structural sense. In this state, they do not overall, address the problem, situation or theme of enquiry and therefore do not demonstrate that the intended learning outcomes have been acquired.
20 – 29	F	The student has not addressed the problem, situation or theme of enquiry and therefore, has not acquired the intended learning outcomes.
10 – 19	G	As above in F, with the addition that the student has not evidenced that they have engaged in 100 effort hours.
0 – 9	H	Bad Fail

## Creative Writing extended common marking scheme

Mark	Grade	Description
90 – 100	A1	Fulfils all criteria for A2. In addition, work shows exceptional originality and imaginative development, technical skills and insight.
80 – 89	A2	Excellent work which displays insight, technical skills and significant development of material. Displays strong individuality of expression and treatment, and imaginative energy. All elements of the work successfully synthesised.
70 – 79	A3	Focused and very well-structured work. Displays individuality and imaginative energy. Material effectively and convincingly realised. Demonstrates excellent understanding of form and concepts. Skilful and imaginative use of language. Excellent presentation and editing.
60 – 69	B	Very good range, technical ability and imaginative energy. Displays control over and development of material. Effective and apt use of language. Demonstrates firm grasp of most formal and structural elements. Good presentation and editing.
50 – 59	C	Good knowledge of form and structure. Good application of key concepts. Evidence of control of structure and expression. Imaginative development, technique and attention to detail could be improved.
40 – 49	D	Satisfactory knowledge of the form and application of key components but likely to display significant deficiencies in structure and expression. Control over material could be improved.
30 – 39	E	Marginal Fail. Poor understanding of structure and technique. Poor awareness of contributing components. Poor technical skills. Insufficient development of themes. Expression and presentation likely to be weak.
20 – 29	F	Clear Fail. Very poor understanding of structure and technique. Little awareness of relevant concepts and major lack of coherence and control of expression.
10 – 19	G	Bad Fail. Insufficient in length, unclear, structurally flawed. Lack of understanding of key requirements of the form.
0 – 9	H	Bad Fail. No understanding of key requirements. No indication that the course has been followed.

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