University of Edinburgh
Grade Descriptors

A1 Excellent (90-100%)
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. In courses involving classical languages the work shows, where appropriate, an exceptionally high level of linguistic competence.

A2 Excellent (80-89%)
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. In courses involving classical languages the work shows, where appropriate, a very high level of linguistic competence.

A3 Excellent (70-79%)
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. In courses involving classical languages the work shows, where appropriate, a high level of linguistic competence.

B Very Good (60-69%)
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. In courses involving classical languages the work shows, where appropriate, a sound grasp of the linguistic aspects of the subject.

C Good (50-59%)
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. In courses involving classical
languages the work shows, where appropriate, a fair understanding of the
central linguistic aspects of the subject.

**D Pass (40-49%)**
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. In courses involving classical languages the work shows, where
appropriate, a basic understanding of the principal linguistic features of the
subject.

**E Marginal Fail (30-39%)**
Work which is poorly structured and of very limited relevance to the question.
It may be distinguished by a lack of supporting evidence, misunderstandings,
a failure to address the question asked, substantial generalisation and the
lack of any real argument. In courses involving classical languages the work
approaches closely a basic understanding of the linguistic aspects of the
subject but is deficient in important respects.

**F Clear Fail (20-29%)**
Work which shows little or no real understanding of the question and which
displays little or no evidence of learning.

**G Bad Fail (10-19%)**
Work which fails on all criteria. It could also be the mark for a very short
answer with little relevant material.

**H Bad Fail (0-9%)**
Incomplete work, or work with absolutely no relevance to the question.