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This document is part of the Academic Regulations, Policies and Procedures which govern the University's academic provision. Each document has a unique document number to indicate which section of the series it belongs to.

6F - Generic Assessment Criteria: Procedure

1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 This procedure is intended for Bournemouth University (BU) staff, students and external examiners. It outlines the generic assessment criteria against agreed statements of student performance that relate to the University's marking scale and grade bands for taught programmes and units at BU Level 0/3 and Levels 4-7.
- 1.2 The generic assessment criteria provide an essential frame of reference for the development, review and use of Faculties' assessment criteria and a means to measure student achievement against specified learning outcomes. As such, they offer a consistent vocabulary for providing feedback to students on their assessment performance. Additional 'feedforward' statements are presented alongside the generic assessment criteria to encourage further learning and academic development.
- 1.3 The generic assessment criteria are presented in tables in Appendix 1. Section 4 explains the marking scale and grade bands against which the criteria are set. Section 5 provides guidance on how staff, students and external examiners should use the criteria.

2. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 **Academic Standards and Education Committee (ASEC):** to consider the effectiveness of the implementation of the generic assessment criteria and approve new and revised procedures by exception.
- 2.2 **Faculties:** to use the generic assessment criteria in line with the University's requirements and as outlined in this procedure.
- 2.3 **Students:** to consider feedback and feedforward statements to reflect on learning to date and to improve future performance and grades.

3. LINKS TO OTHER BU DOCUMENTS

- 3.1 Other documents with direct relevance to this one are:
 - 6A – *Standard Assessment Regulations:*
 - [6A - Standard Assessment Regulations: Undergraduate Programmes](#)
 - [6A - Standard Assessment Regulations: Postgraduate Taught Programmes](#)
 - [6A - Standard Assessment Regulations: Foundation Degree Programmes](#)
 - [6A - Standard Assessment Regulations: Higher National Programmes](#)
 - [6A - Standard Assessment Regulations: Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma Programmes](#)
 - [6A - Standard Assessment Regulations: Integrated Masters Programmes](#)
 - [6A - Standard Assessment Regulations: Postgraduate Research Degrees](#)
 - [6C – Principles of Assessment Design: Policy](#)
 - [6D - Marking, Independent Marking and Moderation: Policy and Procedure](#)
 - [6E - Assessment Feedback and Return of Assessed Work: Policy and Procedure](#)
 - [5A - Welcome Guide and Programme Level Handbooks: Procedure](#)

4. BU MARKING SCALES AND GRADE BANDS

- 4.1 The University applies a pass mark of 40% to undergraduate provision (BU Level 0/3 and Levels 4-6) and 50% to postgraduate provision (Level 7) as outlined in the *Standard Assessment Regulations* for taught programmes. Assessments that contribute towards the award of credit ('summative assessments') are normally marked on a scale 0-100 to describe student performance above, at, and below the pass mark although a small number of assessments may be marked on a pass-fail basis where specified in the Programme Specification. 'Formative' assessments that do not contribute towards the award of credit but contribute towards learning may or may not be graded, though will receive written or verbal feedback.
- 4.2 The statements in Appendix 1 cover the full mark range from 0-100 and provide a description of students' assessment performance against the level of study and the same grade boundaries that are used to classify BU awards. The generic assessment criteria fall within the following bands:

Honours degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. High First (80% +) ii. First (70% - 79%) iii. Upper Second (60% - 69%) iv. Lower Second (50% - 59%) v. Third Class (40% - 49%) vi. Fail (30% - 39%) vii. Very weak Fail (0% - 29%)
Foundation Degree Higher National Certificate/Diploma Graduate Certificate/Diploma Foundation Year Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. High Distinction (80% +) ii. Distinction (70 - 79%) iii. Merit (60 - 69%) iv. Pass (40 - 59%) v. Fail (30 - 39%) vi. Very weak Fail (0 - 29%)
Masters Degree Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma Integrated Masters Degree*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. High Distinction/ *High First (80% +) ii. Distinction/ *First (70 - 79%) iii. Merit/ *Upper Second (60 - 69%) iv. Pass/ *Lower Second (50 - 59%) v. Fail (40 - 49%) vi. Very weak Fail (0 - 39%)

* The University uses Honours Classification to classify Integrated Masters Awards which have a pass mark of 50% at Level 7.

- 4.3 The statements have been organised into the following categories which are used to describe learning outcomes: subject knowledge and understanding; intellectual skills; subject-specific skills; and transferable skills. It should be noted though that not all performance criteria in each category apply equally in all subject areas or in every method of assessment.

5. USING THE GENERIC ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Staff

- 5.1 Staff should use the generic assessment criteria for a range of assessment-related activities:
- i. as marking criteria for BU Level 0/3 and Levels 4-7 which may be:
 - a. used as they stand;
 - b. adapted for specific subjects or assessment types in taught units of study (e.g. presentations, fieldwork or laboratory work). Where this is the case, the generic

assessment criteria in Appendix 1 must be used as a quality standard on which to base specific criteria.

- ii. as a means of measuring student achievement relative to the level and intended learning outcomes (ILOs);
 - iii. as a basis for written and oral comments on summative and formative assessments through:
 - a. **feedback** based on a consistent and transparent vocabulary for the description of students' performance against institutional standard;
 - b. **feedforward** statements that demonstrate how students might enhance their learning and improve their future performance and grades.
 - iv. as reference points for discussions about standards between internal assessors and with external examiners.
 - v. they are **not** intended to be the only form of feedback and feedforward provided to students. Academic staff undertaking assessment should provide additional context-specific feedback and feedforward which refers to the particular assignment task and which enable the student to identify which strengths can be built on.
- 5.2 **Generic assessment criteria should be made available to all students in BU Level 0/3 and Levels 4-7 programme handbooks/equivalent. Unit Leaders should also ensure that relevant assessment criteria, generic or adapted, are always made available to students at the appropriate time in advance of, or as part of, the assignment brief.**

Students

- 5.3 Students can use the generic assessment criteria in Appendix 1 of this document to understand the broad rationale for the mark awarded, develop their academic performance further and self-assess their assignment prior to submission. The statements in the Generic Assessment Criteria are not the only feedback and feedforward that will be made available by markers.

External examiners

- 5.4 Generic assessment criteria should be made available to external examiners for each level of award that they are appointed to consider and may be used as reference points for discussions about standards and student performance with internal assessors.

General

6. REFERENCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

- 6.1 This document is informed by the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) (QAA, May 2018),
This policy was reviewed according to the University's [Equality Analysis Procedure](#) in July 2019.

7. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Bournemouth University Generic Assessment Criteria

Appendix 1: Bournemouth University Generic Assessment Criteria (Academic Year 2019-20)

BU Level 0/3 Grade Range		Subject knowledge and understanding	Intellectual skills - including analysis, evaluation, and critical judgement	Subject-specific skills - including applications and problem solving	Transferable skills - including communication and presentation
High Distinction 80% + Exceptional work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates an exceptionally broad and detailed understanding of the subject at this level informed by extensive reading.	The work demonstrates exceptional handling of information. Information is fluently and insightfully selected and collated. Evidence of well-developed analysis and evaluation with clear argument.	The work demonstrates a range of very effective responses, and considerable insight for this level is demonstrated.	Exceptionally well-organised work with well-structured arguments which are communicated very well. Sentence structure and grammar indicate a high level of skill.
	Feedforward	Future work could offer even broader and deeper understanding.	Future work could offer a more extensive critical approach with further analysis and evaluation.	Future work could demonstrate even further insights.	Future work could offer even greater flow of ideas and structured arguments.
Distinction 70 - 79% Excellent work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates excellent understanding informed by wide reading.	There is clear evidence of analysis and evaluation using clear techniques and principles. Ideas and information are clearly collated with some analysis and evaluation. The work demonstrates a developing critical approach to information.	The work demonstrates an effective range of appropriate responses .	Excellent well-organised work in which the arguments are structured and communicated well. Sentence structure and grammar are well developed.
	Feedforward	Deeper reading and further research would help develop knowledge and understanding further.	Future work could offer a more critical stance in relation to information and its evaluation and analysis.	Future work could demonstrate further insight and innovation.	Future work could offer greater flow and progression with well-structured arguments.
Merit 60 - 69% Very good work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates very good understanding of the subject. There is evidence of wider reading which goes beyond class content.	The work demonstrates very good analysis and evaluation of information. Well argued with appropriate amount of evidence, substantiated opinions are given.	The work demonstrates the application of knowledge to different contexts and generates a range of responses.	The structure is clear and logical showing progression of the argument. There may be some minor mistakes in presentation or referencing.
	Feedforward	Future work should demonstrate wider reading and more developed understanding.	Future work should offer more detailed analysis and criticality.	Future work should demonstrate deeper insight.	Future work should demonstrate additional flow and progression, more developed sentence structure and accurate referencing.
Pass 50 - 59% Good work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates some good evidence that understanding from wider reading, but is limited to basic texts.	The work demonstrates some good understanding of the subject and some analysis of the information. On balance the work is descriptive.	The work demonstrates a good, if limited, attempt to apply understanding to other contexts.	Structure would benefit from more accurate communication and presentation.
	Feedforward	Future work should demonstrate wide reading and more developed understanding.	Future work should contain more clearly developed arguments, backed up with appropriate references from the literature.	Future work should demonstrate a more detailed application of knowledge to other contexts.	Future work should offer a clearer structure and/or more accurate references and language use.
Pass 40 - 49% A basic level of work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates a basic level of understanding of the subject. Reading/research appears limited to that gained through class content.	The work is mainly descriptive with opinions rather than academic argument. Logical development of an argument is lacking.	The work demonstrates only a limited attempt to apply knowledge across situations and/ or limited understanding of how to do so.	The structure of the work is weak. There are mistakes in grammar or sentence structure. References are not presented in the required referencing style.
	Feedforward	In future work further reading beyond the material covered in class is needed to develop	In future work more clearly developed arguments, backed up with appropriate	In future work clearer links between theory and practice are required beyond the limited	A clearer structure is needed, along with a more appropriate use of English. Developing

		knowledge and understanding.	references from the literature are required.	range presented here.	skills in referencing is strongly recommended.
Fail 30-39% Insufficient level of work overall	Feedback	The work shows an insufficient level of understanding of the subject. There is little evidence of reading beyond class content.	The work is almost entirely descriptive, showing little evidence of analysis and unsubstantiated opinions are present.	The link between theory and practice is very limited or absent.	The structure is very weak or lacking. There are many mistakes in grammar or sentence structure and the academic style is undeveloped. The references are not presented in the required referencing style.
	Feedforward	In future work the level of understanding needs to be strengthened. Further reading beyond class content is needed.	Future work needs to demonstrate less description and more analysis, backed up with the use of appropriate literature.	Future work needs to demonstrate clearer links between theory and practice.	A much clearer structure is needed, along with a more appropriate use of English. Developing skills in referencing is strongly recommended.
Poor Fail 0-29% A very insufficient level of work overall	Feedback	The work is largely inaccurate and/or contains much irrelevant material. There is little or no evidence of knowledge or understanding of the subject, or evidence of reading.	The work shows little or no evidence of analysis and contains unsubstantiated opinions.	The link between theory and practice is absent.	The work is unstructured and is written in inappropriate English. The references are presented incorrectly or are missing. The work may be incomplete or too brief.
	Feedforward	In future work, reading introductory texts will help to develop basic understanding which can then be built on.	Future work should demonstrate understanding through appropriate use of references to the literature.	Future work needs to demonstrate links between theory and practice.	A much clearer structure is needed, along with a more appropriate use of English. Developing skills in referencing is strongly recommended.

Level 4 Grade Range		Subject knowledge and understanding	Intellectual skills - including analysis, evaluation, and critical judgement	Subject-specific skills - including applications and problem solving	Transferable skills - including communication and presentation
High First 80% + Exceptional work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates an exceptionally broad factual and conceptual understanding of the subject informed by extensive reading.	The work demonstrates exceptional analysis and evaluation of information. Ideas and information are fluently, insightfully and critically selected and collated in support of analysis, evaluation and a sustained coherent argument.	The work demonstrates a range of very effective responses to given problems, some of which may demonstrate innovation and considerable insight	Exceptionally well-organised work in which the argument is well-structured and communicated very well. Sentence structure and grammar indicate a high level of skill.
	Feedforward	Future work could offer even broader and deeper understanding.	Future work could offer an even deeper and more extensive critical approach with deeper analysis and evaluation.	Future work could demonstrate even further innovation and insights.	Future work could offer even greater flow with the argument.
First 70 - 79% Excellent work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates excellent factual and conceptual understanding informed by extensive reading.	There is clear evidence of analysis and evaluation using defined techniques and principles. Ideas and information are selected and collated in support of analysis, evaluation and argument. The work demonstrates an early critical approach to information.	The work demonstrates the generation of a very effective range of appropriate responses to given problems, some of which may be innovative.	Excellent well-organised work in which the argument is structured and communicated well. Sentence structure and grammar are well developed.
	Feedforward	Deeper reading and research would help develop knowledge and understanding further.	Future work could offer a fluent and critical stance in relation to information and its evaluation and analysis.	Future work could demonstrate deeper insight and innovation.	Future work could offer flow and progression across well-structured arguments.
Upper Second 60 - 69% Very good work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates very good understanding of the subject. There is evidence of wider reading which goes beyond unit contact and draws on independent research.	The work demonstrates very good analysis and evaluation of information. Well argued with appropriate amount of evidence, substantiated opinions are given.	The work demonstrates the application of knowledge to different contexts and generates a range of responses.	The structure is clear and logical showing progression of the argument. There may be some minor mistakes in presentation or referencing.
	Feedforward	Future work should demonstrate wider reading and more developed understanding.	Future work should offer more detailed analysis and criticality.	Future work should demonstrate deeper insight along with innovative responses.	Future work should demonstrate additional flow and progression, well developed sentence structure and accurate referencing.
Lower Second 50 - 59% Good work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates some good evidence that understanding has been enhanced through wider reading, but is still limited to basic texts.	The work demonstrates some good understanding of the subject and some analysis of the information using simple reasoning. On balance the work is descriptive.	The work demonstrates a reasonable, if limited, attempt to apply understanding to other contexts.	Structure would benefit from more accurate communication and presentation.
	Feedforward	Future work should demonstrate wide reading and more developed understanding.	Future work should contain more clearly developed arguments, backed up with appropriate references from the literature.	Future work should demonstrate a more detailed application of knowledge to other contexts.	Future work should offer a clearer structure and/or more accurate references and language use.
Third Class 40 - 49% A basic level of work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates a basic level of factual and conceptual understanding of the subject. Reading/research appears limited to that gained through unit materials.	The work is mainly descriptive with opinions rather than academic argument. Logical development of an argument is lacking.	The work demonstrates only a limited attempt to apply knowledge across situations and/ or limited understanding of how to do so.	The structure of the work is weak. There are mistakes in grammar or sentence structure. References are not presented in the BU referencing style.
	Feedforward	In future work further reading and research beyond the material covered in the unit materials is needed to develop knowledge and understanding.	In future work more clearly developed arguments, backed up with appropriate references from the literature are required.	In future work clearer links between theory and practice are required beyond the limited range presented here.	A clearer structure is needed, along with a more appropriate use of English. Developing skills in referencing is strongly recommended.

Fail 30-39% Insufficient level of work overall	Feedback	The work shows an insufficient level of factual and conceptual understanding of the subject. There is little or no evidence of reading and research beyond unit contact.	The work is almost entirely descriptive, showing little or no evidence of analysis and unsubstantiated opinions are present.	The link between theory and practice is limited or absent.	The structure is very weak or lacking. There are many mistakes in grammar or sentence structure and the academic style is undeveloped. The references are not presented in the BU referencing style.
	Feedforward	In future work the level of factual and conceptual understanding needs to be strengthened. Further reading and research beyond unit contact is needed.	Future work needs to demonstrate less description and a greater level of analysis, backed up with the use of appropriate literature.	Future work needs to demonstrate clearer links between theory and practice.	A much clearer structure is needed, along with a more appropriate use of English. Developing skills in referencing is strongly recommended.
Poor Fail 0-29% A very insufficient level of work overall	Feedback	The work is largely inaccurate and/or contains much irrelevant material. There is little or no evidence of knowledge or understanding of the subject, or of reading/research.	The work shows little or no evidence of analysis and contains unsubstantiated opinions.	The work demonstrates little or no evidence of relating theory to practice.	The work is unstructured and is written in inappropriate English. The references are presented incorrectly or are missing. The work may be incomplete or too brief.
	Feedforward	In future work, reading introductory texts will help to develop basic understanding which can then be built on.	Future work should demonstrate understanding through appropriate use of references.	Future work needs to demonstrate links between theory and practice.	A much clearer structure is needed, along with a more appropriate use of English. Developing skills in referencing is strongly recommended.

Level 5 Grade Range		Subject knowledge and understanding	Intellectual skills - including analysis, evaluation, and critical judgement	Subject-specific skills - including applications and problem solving	Transferable skills - including communication and presentation
High First 80% + Exceptional work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates outstanding knowledge of the subject through extensive reading/research. An exceptional conceptual understanding has been demonstrated.	The work demonstrates appropriate and effective techniques of evaluation and an exceptional ability to demonstrate logical and well-structured argument/reasoning. The work is cogently argued/reasoned using well selected, collated and presented evidence.	The work demonstrates an exceptional competence and confidence to apply an appropriate range of knowledge problems/situations. Appropriate responses to problems have been developed with considerable innovation and creativity.	The work is exceptionally well-organised. Arguments are well structured and rigorous. Sentence structure and grammar indicate excellent academic skills.
	Feedforward	Future work could offer even broader and deeper understanding.	Future work could offer an even deeper and more extensive critical approach with deeper analysis and evaluation.	Future work could demonstrate even further innovation and insights.	Future work could offer further well-structured arguments.
First 70 - 79% Excellent work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates a detailed knowledge of the subject informed by extensive reading/research. Excellent conceptual understanding is demonstrated.	A range of information has been analysed by applying main theories from the subject/discipline. Appropriate techniques of evaluation have been selected. Critically selected information supports logical and well-structured argument or reasoning.	The work demonstrates an excellent application of a range of knowledge competently address problems or situations. Appropriate responses are formulated and show innovation and creativity.	The work is very well-organised with structured and rigorous arguments. It is well communicated with few mistakes in presentation, grammar and sentence structure.
	Feedforward	Deeper reading and research could help develop subject knowledge and conceptual understanding further.	Future work could consider further techniques for analysis and evaluation with in-depth arguments more clearly expressed.	Future work could demonstrate further levels of innovation and creativity.	Future work could be highly organised with more effective grammar and sentence structure.
Upper Second 60 - 69% Very good work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates a very good understanding of the subject through wider reading/research. Sound conceptual understanding has been demonstrated.	The work demonstrates very good analysis and evaluation of the selected information in support of the argument. Discussion is logically developed from sequentially established facts. Assertions are well supported.	The work demonstrates a very good ability to apply an appropriate and selective range of knowledge to a range of problems/situations and contains appropriate responses which may show originality.	The work presents a logical structure and few mistakes are evident in grammar/sentence structure and the use of English. Presentational style is sound.
	Feedforward	Future work should demonstrate wider reading and more developed understanding.	Future work should offer more detailed analysis and criticality with clearly expressed reasoning.	Future work should demonstrate deeper insight along with innovative responses.	Future work should demonstrate additional flow and progression, well developed sentence structure and accurate referencing.
Lower Second 50 - 59% Good work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates some good understanding developed through reading and/or research of a limited range of sources, mainly drawn from unit contact.	The work demonstrates an emerging application of theory to practice and development of some analysis and evaluation of information. The work demonstrates some critical skills.	The work demonstrates some application of knowledge to different situations.	There is some attempt at structure and organisation but this is inconsistent. Presentation style and communication skills show some limitations.
	Feedforward	Future work should demonstrate wide reading and more developed understanding.	Future work should contain more clearly developed arguments and more critical analysis, backed up with references from the literature.	Future work should demonstrate a more detailed application of knowledge to other contexts.	Future work should contain a clearer structure and/or more accurate references and language use.
Third Class 40 - 49% A basic level of work	Feedback	The work demonstrates a basic knowledge and understanding of the subject or discipline. Reading or research appears limited. Knowledge has not been developed in depth and there are some difficulties with theories and concepts.	The work has demonstrated only a basic analysis of a range of information. Some basic evaluation is present and some unsubstantiated opinions.	The work shows limited application of ideas/knowledge to the set task and not all the material is relevant	The structure of the work is weak and/or inconsistent and not well organised. There are mistakes in grammar or sentence structure and the writing style needs development. References are poorly or inconsistently presented.

overall	Feedforward	In future work further reading and research is needed in order to develop subject knowledge and to present theories and concepts in more detail.	In future work more clearly developed analysis, backed up with references from the literature is required.	Clearer links between theory and practice are required in future work.	In future work a more developed structure is needed, along with a more accurate use of English. Developing referencing skills is strongly recommended.
Fail 30-39% Insufficient level of work overall	Feedback	The work shows an insufficient level of factual and conceptual understanding of the subject. There is little or no evidence of reading/research beyond a partial reproduction of information gained through unit contact.	The work is entirely or virtually entirely descriptive, showing little or no evidence of analysis. Unsubstantiated opinions may be common.	The link between theory and practice is poor or absent.	The structure is weak or lacking and the content is unclear. There are mistakes in sentence structure and grammar. Some references may be incorrect or missing.
	Feedforward	In future work factual and conceptual understanding needs to be strengthened. Much more reading and research beyond the material covered in unit contact is needed.	Future work needs to demonstrate critical analysis, not only description, backed up with the use of appropriate literature.	Future work needs to make some links between theory and practice.	In future work clear structure is needed, along with a more accurate use of English. Developing skills in referencing is strongly recommended.
Poor Fail 0-29% A very insufficient level of work overall	Feedback	The work shows little or no evidence of factual and conceptual understanding, or of relevant reading/research.	The work shows very insufficient evidence of appropriate analysis. Unsubstantiated opinions are present in the work.	The work shows very little, if any, evidence of relating theory to practice.	The work is unstructured and/or written in very poor English and/or an inappropriate style. References may be presented incorrectly or missing. The work may be incomplete and/or very brief.
	Feedforward	In future work, reading introductory texts may help to develop basic understanding of the ideas associated with the subject, which can then be built on.	Illustrating ideas with clear reference to the subject literature will help to demonstrate analysis.	Future work needs to demonstrate at least basic links between theory and practice.	In future work a much clearer structure is needed, along with a much more accurate use of English. Developing skills in referencing is strongly recommended.

Level 6 Grade Range		Subject knowledge and understanding	Intellectual skills - including analysis, evaluation, and critical judgement	Subject-specific skills - including applications and problem solving	Transferable skills - including communication and presentation
High First 80% + Exceptional work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates outstanding knowledge and understanding of the subject through wide reading. Significant up-to-date sources have been explored analytically. Conceptual understanding is highly developed, showing deep insight. The work is advanced, very original and imaginative.	The work demonstrates a very high level of critical appraisal and judgement in analysis, evaluation and synthesis of data and abstractions. The work demonstrates a wide range of techniques of analysis and a very high level of awareness of limitations and contradictions. The work is cogently argued/reasoned using a body of evidence which is very well selected, collated and presented.	The work demonstrates an ability to diagnose and apply appropriate and selective conceptual knowledge to a practical problem/situation to produce valid, creative/original solutions which are logical, meaningful and effective. The work shows exceptional evidence of critically evaluating the existing view of the subject and synthesis of ideas. Exemplary problem solving skills are evident.	Presentation and organisation is of a very high standard, likely to be highly stimulating and at the upper limits of what may be expected at undergraduate level. A tightly structured, rigorous argument showing flow and progression is presented.
	Feedforward	Future work could offer even further broader and deeper understanding.	Future work could offer an even deeper and more extensive critical approach with extended analysis, synthesis and evaluation.	Future work could demonstrate even more innovation and insights.	Future work could offer even further well-structured arguments.
First 70 - 79% Excellent work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates a very thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject through wide reading. Significant up-to-date sources have been effectively explored. Conceptual understanding is highly developed.	The work demonstrates a high level of critical appraisal and judgment in analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information. A wide range of analysis techniques are demonstrated with a high level of awareness of limitations and contradictions. It is clearly argued or reasoned using a well selected, collated and presented body of evidence.	The work demonstrates a high level of ability to diagnose and apply appropriate and selective conceptual knowledge to a practical problem or situation in order to produce valid, creative or original solutions which are logical, meaningful and effective and which demonstrate synthesis of ideas.	The presentation and organisation of work is of a very high standard, likely to be stimulating, showing a high level of academic skill and originality. A tightly structured, rigorous argument showing flow and progression is demonstrated.
	Feedforward	In future work a deeper analytical and critical approach will help to develop the conceptual understanding further.	Future work could offer more critical appraisal and judgement in the analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.	Future work could demonstrate a higher level of ability in problem solving, with higher level of creativity and originality.	Future work could be developed to be highly stimulating and original.
Upper Second 60 - 69% Very good work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject through wider reading. Significant and up-to-date sources have been identified and used effectively.	The work demonstrates a very good conceptual understanding with good skills of critical appraisal and evaluation of ideas. A range of techniques of analysis is applied with a good awareness of limitations and contradictions, and good evidence of independent thinking and synthesis of ideas.	The work demonstrates a very good ability to diagnose and apply conceptual knowledge to a new practical problem or situation and generate responses which are logical and meaningful and are likely to offer some originality and creativity.	The work has a logical structure showing flow and progression. Presentation and organisation of work is likely to show few mistakes or limitations. The appropriate academic style is demonstrated.
	Feedforward	Future work should demonstrate wider reading and more developed understanding using further up-to-date sources.	Future work should offer more detailed analysis, synthesis and criticality with clearly expressed reasoning.	Future work should demonstrate more synthesis, deeper insight and innovative responses to problems.	Future work should demonstrate additional flow and progression, well developed sentence structure and accurate referencing.
Lower Second 50 - 59%	Feedback	The work demonstrates the development of some good understanding of the subject or discipline. Reading of key texts may be limited. The ability to review and consolidate a basic	The work demonstrates a fair ability to analyse and evaluate the significance and meaning of information and its relevance to the argument. Some evidence of synthesis of ideas and	The work demonstrates a reasonably sound ability to apply diagnostic skills to a range of practical situations but does not demonstrate creativity and innovation. Problem solving is	There is an overall structure evident but it does not offer strong or consistent flow and progression. Presentation style and grammar may show limitations.

Good work overall		knowledge base is present.	independence of thought and some awareness of limitations and contradictions shown.	still stronger when applied to routine or standard problems previously encountered.	
	Feedforward	Future work should demonstrate wide reading of more up to date sources and a more developed understanding.	Future work should contain more clearly developed arguments and more critical analysis, backed up with references from the literature.	Future work should demonstrate a more detailed application of knowledge to other contexts, with creativity and innovation.	Future work should contain a clearer structure, consistent flow and development along with more accurate references and sentence structure.
Third Class 40 - 49% A basic level of work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates a sufficient knowledge base of the subject/discipline. Some important or current writings and issues have not been explored. The work presents a limited depth of knowledge/understanding in an area of specialisation.	The work demonstrates some critical appraisal and evaluation of new information, though with limited techniques of analysis, and limited awareness of any limitations and contradictions. Unsubstantiated opinions may be evident with limited logical development of an argument.	The work may show limited applications and a limited ability to apply diagnostic and creative skills to a range of practical situations. Problem solving is more successful when applied to routine or standard problems, previously encountered. Logical and effective novel solutions are not present.	Structure of work is weak or inconsistent. Presentation details may be basic and show limitations, for example sentence structure and grammar require development.
	Feedforward	In future work extended reading of key sources is needed in order to develop subject knowledge and understanding, and to present theories and concepts in more detail.	In future work it is important to provide more clearly developed analysis and critical appraisal, backed up with references from the literature.	In future work more clearly developed links between theory and practice are required.	A clearer structure is needed in future along with a more accurate use of the conventions of English. Developing further the skills in referencing is strongly recommended.
Fail 30-39% Insufficient level of work overall	Feedback	The work shows an insufficient level of factual and conceptual understanding of the subject. There is little or no evidence of reading or research.	The work is too descriptive, and needs to demonstrate critical analysis, backed up with the use of appropriate literature.	The link between theory and practice is poor or absent and the work needs to make stronger links between the two.	The structure is weak and/or inconsistent with mistakes in grammar or sentence structure. References are poorly or inconsistently presented.
	Feedforward	In future work significant further reading and research is needed.	In future work analysis and critical appraisal, backed up with references from the literature, is required.	In future work links between theory and practice are required.	A much clearer structure is needed, along with a more accurate use of English. Developing skills in referencing is strongly recommended.
Poor Fail 0-29% A very insufficient level of work overall	Feedback	The work shows limited or no evidence of factual and conceptual understanding, or of reading/research.	The work shows no evidence of appropriate analysis. Unsubstantiated opinions are present in the work.	The work shows little or no evidence of relating theory to practice.	The work is poorly structured using poor English and/or an inappropriate style. References may be presented inaccurately or missing. The work may be incomplete or too brief.
	Feedforward	In future work, reading core texts may help to develop understanding of the ideas associated with the subject, which can then be built on.	Clear references to the subject literature will help to demonstrate understanding. Analysis rather than description is required.	Future work needs to demonstrate at least basic links between theory and practice.	In future work a much clearer structure is needed, along with a much more accurate use English. Developing skills in referencing is strongly recommended.

Level 7 Grade Range Masters Level		Subject knowledge and understanding	Intellectual skills - including analysis, evaluation, and critical judgement	Subject-specific skills - including applications and problem solving	Transferable skills - including communication and presentation
High Distinction 80%+ Exceptional work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates an exceptional in-depth knowledge across specialised and applied areas. There is clear evidence of very extensive independent study and thinking. The work is informed by the forefront of theoretical understanding in this field of study. Shows considerable mastery of facts and concepts.	The work demonstrates an outstanding ability to deal with complexity, contradictions and incomplete information. Independent critical analysis of current research/knowledge and cogently argued alternative approaches are present. Confident and independent assessment, with clear justifications, effective synthesis and sound judgement, is demonstrated.	The work demonstrates independent synthesis of information and ideas to create new insights or original responses to problems that may expand or redefine existing knowledge and/or develop new approaches to unpredictable situations. The work demonstrates clear ability to undertake further specialist research and make significant contributions to the subject. Outstanding problem solving skills.	The work is effectively communicated to specialist and non-specialist audiences. The work is tightly structured, highly stimulating, and contains rigorous arguments that are likely to be at the upper limits of what is expected at this level.
	Feedforward	Future work could offer even further broader and deeper understanding.	Future work could offer an even deeper and more extensive critical approach with extended analysis and evaluation.	Future work could demonstrate even further synthesis and additional innovation and insights.	Future work could offer even further well-structured and well-communicated arguments.
Distinction 70-79% Excellent work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates excellent in-depth knowledge across specialised and applied areas. There is clear evidence of extensive independent study and thinking. The work is at, or informed by, the forefront of theoretical understanding in the field of study.	The work demonstrates a high level of confidence in dealing effectively with complexity, contradictions and incomplete information. The work shows evidence of synthesis, independent critical analysis of current research/knowledge, clearly argued alternative approaches, and the ability to reason in a clear and effective manner. The ability to independently assess own and others' work with very clear justifications and sound judgement is demonstrated.	The work demonstrates an ability to independently synthesise information and ideas, to create a range of new insights/original responses to problems that may expand or redefine existing knowledge and/or develop new approaches to unpredictable situations. The work demonstrates a clear ability to undertake further specialist research. Outstanding problem solving skills are demonstrated.	The work demonstrates an ability to present confident, tightly structured, stimulating, and rigorous arguments that show a high level of academic ability.
	Feedforward	A deeply analytical and critical approach to reading and research could help develop subject knowledge and conceptual understanding further.	In future work further synthesis and critical analysis could be demonstrated, along with providing further evidence of the ability to handle complexity.	Future work could demonstrate further insights and innovative and original responses, along with higher levels of problem solving.	Future work could demonstrate very tightly structured, highly stimulating and very rigorous arguments and reasoning.
Merit 60-69% Very good work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates a very good in-depth knowledge across specialised and applied areas. There is clear evidence of extensive independent study and thinking, and of working at, or informed by, the forefront of theoretical understanding in this field of study.	The work demonstrates a very good ability to deal effectively with complexity, contradictions and incomplete data. Independent critical analysis of current research/knowledge and synthesis is demonstrated, and arguments consider alternative approaches. Assessment of own and others' work with clear justification and sound judgement is evident.	Independent synthesis of information and ideas is evident with new insights/original responses to problems and/or development of new approaches to unpredictable situations. The work demonstrates an ability to undertake further specialist research.	The work is clearly communicated to specialist and non-specialist audiences, with tightly structured, rigorous arguments which show a high level of academic development.
	Feedforward	In future work extensive knowledge could be demonstrated with even greater consistency to	Future work could demonstrate confidence in handling complex ideas and contradictions.	In future work extensive synthesis is needed, with highly developed problem solving skills	In future work could be communicated in a stimulating and rigorous style which

		show detailed understanding of the current knowledge in this field of study.	Extensive skills of analysis and synthesis could be developed along with well-evaluated assessment of own and others' work.	and new solutions or ideas in relation to complex situations.	demonstrates a high level of academic skill.
Pass 50-59% Good work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates some in-depth knowledge across specialised and applied areas. There is some evidence of extensive independent study and thinking. In places the work is informed by current understanding in their field of study.	The work demonstrates some limited ability to deal with some complexity, contradictions and incomplete information in the knowledge base. There is evidence of some independent analysis of current research/knowledge, synthesis of information and alternative approaches. Some independent assessment of own and others' work with justification and appropriate judgement is demonstrated.	The work demonstrates independent synthesis of information and ideas and occasionally offers new insights and/or original responses to problems and/or develops new approaches to unpredictable situations.	The work effectively communicates ideas to specialist and non-specialist audiences. It presents structured arguments that show a level of development.
	Feedforward	In future work more detailed knowledge needs to be demonstrated with greater consistency to demonstrate understanding of the current knowledge in the field of study.	Future work should demonstrate further ability to deal with complex ideas and contradictions. Skills of analysis and synthesis need to be developed along with well-judged assessment of your work and that of others.	In future work more consistent synthesis is needed, with further new solutions or ideas demonstrated in relation to complex situations.	In future work more clearly structured and effectively communicated ideas are needed to demonstrate a higher level of academic skill.
Fail 40-49% Basic work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates a lack of in-depth knowledge across specialised and applied areas. There is insufficient evidence of extensive independent study and thinking. The work is not at the forefront of theoretical understanding in this field of study.	The work has demonstrated insufficient ability to deal with complexity, contradictions and incomplete information in the knowledge base. Independent critical analysis of current research/knowledge and alternative approaches is limited, as is the ability to synthesise ideas and assess own and others' work with justification.	The work does not demonstrate sufficient independent synthesis of information and ideas and offers few new insights/original responses to problems that expand or redefine existing knowledge. New approaches to unpredictable situations are not developed.	The work does not communicate the content effectively. The work is poorly structured or limited arguments may be present.
	Feedforward	Further reading, research and independent study and thinking are needed to develop future work and demonstrate the work is at the forefront of theoretical understanding in the field of study.	Future work needs to demonstrate a greater level of critical analysis, backed up with the appropriate use of literature.	Future work needs to make much clearer links between theory and practice.	A clearer structure is needed, along with a more appropriate use of English. Developing skills in referencing is strongly recommended
Poor fail 0-39% Insufficient work overall	Feedback	The work demonstrates limited or no evidence of understanding of the subject. There is little or no evidence of extensive independent study and thinking, or relevant reading or research. The work demonstrates limited evidence of being at the forefront of theoretical understanding in this field of study.	The work demonstrates limited or no evidence of appropriate analysis. Current research/knowledge does not appear to be independently critically analysed. The work contains little or no synthesis and contains unsubstantiated opinions that appear to reflect a lack of familiarity with key concepts.	The work demonstrates limited or no evidence of the synthesis of ideas and placing them within an appropriate context. There are no original ideas or insights evident.	The work is very poorly structured and presented in inappropriate English. References may be presented poorly or missing. The work may be incomplete or too brief.
	Feedforward	In future work significant further reading, research and independent study and thinking are needed to develop and demonstrate detailed theoretical understanding in the field of study.	Future work needs to demonstrate a much greater level of critical analysis, backed up with the appropriate use of literature.	In future work clear links between theory and practice are needed.	In future work a much clearer structure is needed, along with a more accurate use of English. Developing skills in referencing is strongly recommended.