

LJMU Grade Descriptors

Relevant to:	LJMU Staff and Students
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RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- Ofqual (2008) Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (Ofqual/08//3726).

RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS

LJMU grade descriptors

Grade descriptors are generic statements that describe students' achievement in assessment. They are expressed in a broad and non-specific manner so that they are applicable to a wide range of disciplines and assessment strategies. They confirm the breadth and depth of learning expected and the standard achieved in each grading band.

Grade descriptors clarify to students, staff and external stakeholders about the expectations at specific levels of study. They should be used by academic staff to generate assignment specific marking schemes and criteria. Therefore descriptors should inform, but not replace individual schemes or undermine professional autonomy.

Descriptors have been developed for levels 4-7 and are directly aligned to the QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). There are also descriptors for level 3, developed from Ofqual (2008) Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (Ofqual/08//3726).

The structure of the grade descriptors is based on around the notion of a threshold pass. This articulates the minimum expectation for successful student performance at each level of study. Performance that deviates from that (in either a positive or negative direction) is described using adjectives that have been chosen to represent varied degrees of attainment. These are informed by the language that is typically used to describe academic performance (see table 1).

Grade bands span the full mark range to encapsulate a wider performance range and encourage marking across the full scale of available marks.

Grade descriptors are presented in a bullet-pointed and consistent style to illustrate the developmental nature of performance. They include:

1. Level-specific statements that link directly to FHEQ, levels 4-7
2. Standard descriptors relating to:
 - Attainment of learning outcomes
 - Use of evidence
 - Accuracy
 - Argument

These are consistent across all levels, as performance against these will be dependent on the nature of the assessment task that is itself defined by level.

3. The development of academic skill relating to:
 - Writing style
 - Presentation
 - Referencing

This takes into account that these skills are not necessarily level-specific, but expectations regarding a student’s skill base will increase for higher levels of study. The focus is on written work, but it is envisaged that the standards implied in these can be translated to non-written tasks.

Grade band	Indicative language
90%-100%	exceptional, extraordinary, distinctive, remarkable
80%-89	authoritative, creative, exciting, illuminating, insightful, inspiring, outstanding, stimulating.
70%-79%	ambitious, convincing, critical, excellent, meticulous, original, persuasive, sophisticated, unexpected.
60%-69%	analytical, credible, fluent, precise, rigorous thorough.
50%-59%	accurate, careful, clear, coherent, congruent, confident, consistent, effective, good, thoughtful.
40%-49%	adequate, descriptive, satisfactory, straightforward, sufficient, unsophisticated.
30%-39%	contradictory, derivative, inadequate, incomplete, inconsistent, imprecise, inexplicit, limited, unconnected, tangential, superficial, vague.
20%-29%	ambiguous, erroneous, incoherent, inappropriate, insufficient, irrelevant, unstructured, misleading, wrong.
0%-19%	absent, below par, deficient, formless, lacking, missing.

There is no assumption that descriptors are weighted in any way (e.g. awarding a proportion of marks for referencing).

Table 1: Indicative language for describing academic performance (Adapted from ‘Policies and Procedures for the Management of Assessment: Assessment Grading, Criteria and Marking’. Manchester Metropolitan University)

Grade descriptors for Level 3 written work		
Mark range	characteristic	criteria
90-100	Exceptional Pass	<p>Exemplary attainment of all learning outcomes.</p> <p>Exceptional knowledge of the subject area to address well-defined problems that may be complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Offers a comprehensive exploration of the evidence base.</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and demonstrates an exceptional awareness of differing perspectives.</p> <p>The argument is sophisticated.</p> <p>The standard of writing is refined.</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system.</p> <p>Well presented and organised in an academic style.</p>
80 - 89	Outstanding Pass	<p>Excellent attainment of all learning outcomes, with some met to an exemplary standard.</p> <p>Outstanding knowledge of the subject area to address well-defined problems that may be complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Extends beyond expected levels of engagement with the evidence base.</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and demonstrates an outstanding awareness of differing perspectives.</p> <p>The standard of writing is advanced.</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system.</p> <p>Well presented and organised in an academic style.</p>
70 - 79	Excellent Pass	<p>Excellent attainment of all learning outcomes.</p> <p>Excellent knowledge of the subject area to address well-defined problems that may be complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Thorough use of the evidence base.</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and demonstrates an excellent awareness of differing perspectives.</p> <p>The argument is persuasive and there are perceptive elements.</p> <p>The standard of writing is clear and readable with some sophisticated phrasing.</p> <p>Only minor errors in the use of the specified referencing system.</p> <p>Well presented and organised in an academic style.</p>
60 - 69	Good Pass	<p>Good attainment of all learning outcomes.</p> <p>Good knowledge of the subject area to address well-defined problems that may be complex and non-routine.</p>

		<p>Good consideration of the evidence base that develops from recommended reading.</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and demonstrates a good awareness of differing perspectives.</p> <p>The argument is persuasive.</p> <p>The standard of writing is clear and readable.</p> <p>Some errors in the use of the specified referencing system.</p> <p>Generally well presented and organised, but does not always conform to conventions of academic presentation.</p>
50 - 59	Clear Pass	<p>Adequate attainment of all learning outcomes, with some met to a good standard.</p> <p>Clear knowledge of the subject area to address well-defined problems that may be complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Consideration of the evidence base, but little consideration beyond recommended reading.</p> <p>The material covered is mostly accurate and demonstrates an adequate awareness of differing perspectives.</p> <p>The argument is straightforward and relatively clear.</p> <p>The standard of writing is reasonable but there are areas of confusion and/or errors in spelling/grammar.</p> <p>Some errors in the use of the specified referencing system.</p> <p>Good presentation that may include some organisational errors and/or tendency not to conform to conventions of academic presentation.</p>
40 - 49	Threshold / Satisfactory Pass	<p>Adequate attainment of all learning outcomes.</p> <p>Meets threshold knowledge of the of the subject area to address well-defined problems that may be complex and non-routine.</p> <p>A basic consideration of the evidence base, but restricted to recommended reading.</p> <p>There are some inaccuracies or irrelevant materials, but there is sufficient accurate material to suggest a threshold level of understanding and awareness of differing perspectives.</p> <p>The argument is relatively clear, although some elements are difficult to understand.</p> <p>The standard of writing is acceptable but there are some areas of confusion and/or some errors in spelling/grammar.</p> <p>Attempts to use of the specified referencing system but there are systematic errors.</p> <p>Acceptable presentation that may include some organisational errors and does not to conform to conventions of academic presentation.</p>

30 - 39	Needs improvement	<p>Meets most, but not all learning outcomes.</p> <p>Insufficient knowledge of the of the subject area in addressing well-defined problems that may be complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Minor consideration of the evidence base, but inadequate use of recommended reading and no exploration outside that.</p> <p>Some material is accurate, but the amount of inaccurate or irrelevant materials indicates insufficient understanding of key concepts and differing perspectives.</p> <p>The argument is poor and inadequately defended.</p> <p>The standard of writing is weak.</p> <p>Attempts to use of the specified referencing system but there are significant errors.</p> <p>Generally weak or untidy presentation that may include some organisational errors and does not to conform to conventions of academic presentation.</p>
20 - 29	Needs significant revision	<p>Does not meet most learning outcomes.</p> <p>Poor knowledge of the subject area in addressing well-defined problems that may be complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Superficial consideration of the evidence base.</p> <p>There are major inaccuracies or significant amounts of irrelevant material and limited awareness of differing perspectives.</p> <p>The argument is very weak.</p> <p>The standard of writing is poor.</p> <p>Does not use the specified referencing system.</p> <p>Weak and untidy presentation.</p>

Grade descriptors for Level 4 written work		
Mark range	characteristic	criteria
90-100	Exceptional Pass	<p>Exemplary attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Exceptional knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with the subject area</p> <p>Offers an exhaustive exploration of the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is highly sophisticated</p> <p>The standard of writing is refined</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style</p>
80-89	Outstanding Pass	<p>Excellent attainment of all learning outcomes, with some met to an exemplary standard</p> <p>Outstanding knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with the subject area</p> <p>Extends far beyond expected levels of engagement with the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is generally very astute</p> <p>The standard of writing is highly advanced</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style</p>
70-79	Excellent pass	<p>Excellent attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Excellent knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with the subject area</p> <p>Thorough use the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is persuasive and there are very perceptive elements</p> <p>The standard of writing is well clear and readable, with some sophisticated phrasing</p> <p>Only minor errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style</p>
60-69	Good Pass	<p>Good attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Good knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with the subject area</p> <p>Good consideration of the literature and evidence-base that develops from recommended readings</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is persuasive</p> <p>The standard of writing is clear and readable.</p> <p>Some errors in the use of the specified referencing system, but meets key principles</p> <p>Generally well presented and organised, but does not always conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>

50-59	Clear Pass	<p>Adequate attainment of all learning outcomes, with some met to an good standard</p> <p>Clear knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with the subject area</p> <p>Sufficient consideration of the literature and evidence-base, but little consideration beyond recommended readings</p> <p>The material covered is mostly accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is straightforward and relatively clear</p> <p>The standard of writing is reasonable and there are very few areas of confusion and/or errors in spelling/grammar.</p> <p>Some errors in the use of the specified referencing system, but meets key principles</p> <p>Good presentation that may include some organisational errors and/or tendency not to conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>
40-49	Threshold / satisfactory pass	<p>Adequate attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Meets threshold knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with the subject area</p> <p>Basic consideration of the literature and evidence-base, but restricted to recommended readings</p> <p>There are some inaccuracies or irrelevant materials, but there is sufficient accurate material to suggest a threshold level of understanding</p> <p>The argument is relatively clear, although some elements are difficult to understand</p> <p>Standard of writing is acceptable. The structure is reasonable, but there are some areas of confusion and/or some errors in spelling/grammar</p> <p>Attempts to use of the specified referencing system. Meets key principles, but there are systematic errors</p> <p>Acceptable presentation that may include some organisational errors and a tendency not to conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>
30-39	Needs improvement	<p>Meets most, but not all learning outcomes</p> <p>insufficient knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with the subject area</p> <p>Minor consideration of the literature and evidence-base, but inadequate use of recommended reading and no exploration outside that.</p> <p>Some materials is accurate, but the amount of inaccurate or irrelevant materials indicates insufficient understanding of key concepts</p> <p>The argument is poorly defined and defended</p> <p>Standard of writing tends to be weak. The structure is confused and/or there are numerous errors in spelling/grammar.</p> <p>Attempts to use the specified referencing system, but there are significant errors</p> <p>Generally weak or untidy presentation that may include some organisational errors and does not to conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>
20-29	Needs significant revision	<p>Does not meet most learning outcomes</p> <p>Poor knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with the subject area</p> <p>Superficial consideration of the literature and evidence-base</p>

		<p>There are major inaccuracies or significant amounts of irrelevant</p> <p>The argument is very weak</p> <p>Standard of writing is poor. The structure is disorganised and/or there are too many errors in spelling/grammar.</p> <p>Does not use the specified referencing system</p> <p>Weak or untidy presentation</p>
0-19	Needs substantial work	<p>Does not meet any learning outcomes</p> <p>Little or no knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with the subject area</p> <p>No engagement with the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is inaccurate or irrelevant</p> <p>The argument is incoherent</p> <p>Standard of writing is very poor. The structure is chaotic and/or there are far too many errors in spelling/grammar.</p> <p>Does not use specified referencing system</p> <p>Very poor presentation</p>

Grade descriptors for Level 5 written work

Mark range	characteristic	criteria
90-100	Exceptional Pass	Exemplary attainment of all learning outcomes Demonstrates an exceptional grasp of key concepts with comprehensive application to a specific area of study Offers an exhaustive exploration of the literature and evidence-base The material covered is accurate and relevant The argument is highly sophisticated The writing style is refined No errors in the use of the specified referencing system Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style
80-89	Outstanding Pass	Excellent attainment of all learning outcomes, with some met to an exemplary standard Demonstrates an outstanding grasp of key concepts with comprehensive application to a specific area of study Extends far beyond expected levels of engagement with the literature and evidence-base The material covered is accurate and relevant The argument is generally very astute The writing style is refined No errors in the use of the specified referencing system Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style
70-79	Excellent pass	Excellent attainment of all learning outcomes Demonstrates an excellent grasp of key concepts with wide-ranging application to a specific area of study Thorough use the literature and evidence-base The material covered is accurate and relevant The argument is persuasive and there are very perceptive elements The writing style is highly advanced Only minor errors in the use of the specified referencing system Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style
60-69	Good Pass	Good attainment of all learning outcomes Demonstrates a good grasp of key concepts with generally sound application to a specific area of study Good consideration of the literature and evidence-base that develops from recommended readings The material covered is accurate and relevant The argument is persuasive The writing style is well clear and readable, with some sophisticated phrasing Only minor errors in the use of the specified referencing system Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style
50-59	Clear Pass	Adequate attainment of all learning outcomes, with some met to an good standard

		<p>Demonstrates a good grasp of key concepts with limited application to a specific area of study</p> <p>Sufficient consideration of the literature and evidence-base, but little consideration beyond recommended readings</p> <p>The material covered is mostly accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is straightforward and relatively clear</p> <p>The writing style is clear and readable.</p> <p>Some errors in the use of the specified referencing system, but meets key principles</p> <p>Generally well presented and organised, but does not always conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>
40-49	Threshold / satisfactory pass	<p>Adequate attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates a reasonable grasp of key concepts with limited application to a specific area of study</p> <p>Basic consideration of the literature and evidence-base, but restricted to recommended readings</p> <p>There are some inaccuracies or irrelevant materials, but there is sufficient accurate material to suggest a threshold level of understanding</p> <p>The argument is relatively clear, although some elements are difficult to understand</p> <p>The writing style is reasonable and there are very few areas of confusion and/or errors in spelling/grammar.</p> <p>Some errors in the use of the specified referencing system, but meets key principles</p> <p>Good presentation that may include some organisational errors and/or tendency not to conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>
30-39	Needs improvement	<p>Meets most, but not all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates a reasonable grasp of key concepts, but no application to a specific area of study</p> <p>Minor consideration of the literature and evidence-base, but inadequate use of recommended reading and no exploration outside that.</p> <p>Some materials is accurate, but the amount of inaccurate or irrelevant materials indicates insufficient understanding of key concepts</p> <p>The argument is poorly defined and defended</p> <p>Writing style is acceptable. The structure is reasonable, but there are some areas of confusion and/or some errors in spelling/grammar</p> <p>Attempts to use of the specified referencing system. Meets key principles, but there are systematic errors</p> <p>Acceptable presentation that may include some organisational errors and a tendency not to conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>
20-29	Needs significant revision	<p>Does not meet most learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates a poor grasp of key concepts with no application to a specific area of study</p> <p>Superficial consideration of the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>There are major inaccuracies or significant amounts of irrelevant</p> <p>The argument is very weak</p>

		<p>Writing style tends to be weak. The structure is confused and/or there are numerous errors in spelling/grammar.</p> <p>Attempts to use the specified referencing system, but there are significant errors</p> <p>Generally weak or untidy presentation that may include some organisational errors and does not conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>
0-19	Needs substantial work	<p>Does not meet any learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates a fundamentally flawed understanding of key concepts</p> <p>No engagement with the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is inaccurate or irrelevant</p> <p>The argument is incoherent</p> <p>Writing style is poor. The structure is disorganised and/or there are too many errors in spelling/grammar.</p> <p>Does not use specified referencing system</p> <p>Weak or untidy presentation</p>

Grade descriptors for Level 6 written work

Mark range	characteristic	criteria
90-100	Exceptional Pass	<p>Exemplary attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates a systematic understanding of subject specific material with evidence of highly sophisticated analysis of concepts</p> <p>Wide-ranging emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Offers an exhaustive exploration of the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is highly sophisticated</p> <p>The writing style is refined</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style</p>
80-89	Outstanding Pass	<p>Excellent attainment of all learning outcomes, with some met to an exemplary standard</p> <p>Demonstrates a systematic understanding of subject specific material with evidence of thorough analysis of concepts</p> <p>Wide-ranging emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Extends far beyond expected levels of engagement with the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is generally very astute</p> <p>The writing style is refined</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style</p>
70-79	Excellent pass	<p>Excellent attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates a systematic understanding of subject specific material with evidence of thorough analysis of concepts</p> <p>Strong emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Thorough use the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is persuasive and there are very perceptive elements</p> <p>The writing style is refined</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style</p>
60-69	Good Pass	<p>Good attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates a systematic understanding of subject specific material with evidence of good analysis of concepts</p> <p>Good emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Good consideration of the literature and evidence-base that develops from recommended readings</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p>

		<p>The argument is persuasive</p> <p>The writing style is highly advanced</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style</p>
50-59	Clear Pass	<p>Adequate attainment of all learning outcomes, with some met to an good standard</p> <p>Demonstrates a logical understanding of subject specific material with evidence of some analysis of concepts</p> <p>Some emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Sufficient consideration of the literature and evidence-base, but little consideration beyond recommended readings</p> <p>The material covered is mostly accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is straightforward and relatively clear</p> <p>The writing style is well clear and readable, with some sophisticated phrasing</p> <p>Only minor errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style</p>
40-49	Threshold / satisfactory pass	<p>Adequate attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates a logical understanding of subject specific material with evidence of some analysis of concepts</p> <p>Some emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Basic consideration of the literature and evidence-base, but restricted to recommended readings</p> <p>There are some inaccuracies or irrelevant materials, but there is sufficient accurate material to suggest a threshold level of understanding</p> <p>The argument is relatively clear, although some elements are difficult to understand</p> <p>The writing style is clear and readable.</p> <p>Some errors in the use of the specified referencing system, but meets key principles</p> <p>Generally well presented and organised, but does not always conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>
30-39	Needs improvement	<p>Meets most, but not all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates understanding of subject specific material, but with little analysis of concepts</p> <p>Little emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Minor consideration of the literature and evidence-base, but inadequate use of recommended reading and no exploration outside that.</p> <p>Some materials is accurate, but the amount of inaccurate or irrelevant materials indicates insufficient understanding of key concepts</p> <p>The argument is poorly defined and defended</p> <p>The writing style is reasonable and there are very few areas of confusion and/or errors in spelling/grammar.</p>

		<p>Some errors in the use of the specified referencing system, but meets key principles</p> <p>Good presentation that may include some organisational errors and/or tendency not to conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>
20-29	Needs significant revision	<p>Does not meet most learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates understanding of subject specific material, but no analysis of concepts</p> <p>Little or no emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Superficial consideration of the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>There are major inaccuracies or significant amounts of irrelevant</p> <p>The argument is very weak</p> <p>Writing style is acceptable. The structure is reasonable, but there are some areas of confusion and/or some errors in spelling/grammar</p> <p>Attempts to use of the specified referencing system. Meets key principles, but there are systematic errors</p> <p>Acceptable presentation that may include some organisational errors and a tendency not to conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>
0-19	Needs substantial work	<p>Does not meet any learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates confusion over subject specific material and no analysis of concepts</p> <p>No emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>No engagement with the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is inaccurate or irrelevant</p> <p>The argument is incoherent</p> <p>Writing style tends to be weak. The structure is confused and/or there are numerous errors in spelling/grammar.</p> <p>Attempts to use the specified referencing system, but there are significant errors</p> <p>Generally weak or untidy presentation that may include some organisational errors and does not to conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>

Grade descriptors for Level 7 written work – 2016-17

Please note that these level 7 descriptors apply to programmes validated for a 2016 – 17 start when level 7 modules will have a pass mark of 50% (including those that form part of UG Masters programmes).

Mark range	characteristic	criteria
90-100	Exceptional Pass	<p>Exemplary attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates an outstanding synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area</p> <p>Wide-ranging emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Offers an exhaustive exploration of the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is highly sophisticated</p> <p>The standard of writing is refined</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style.</p>
80-89	Outstanding Pass	<p>Excellent attainment of all learning outcomes, with some met to an exemplary standard</p> <p>Demonstrates a comprehensive synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area. Wide-ranging emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Extends far beyond expected levels of engagement with the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is generally very astute</p> <p>The standard of writing is refined</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style.</p>
70-79	Excellent pass	<p>Excellent attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates a thorough synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area</p> <p>Strong emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Thorough use the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is persuasive and there are very perceptive elements</p> <p>The standard of writing is refined</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style.</p>

60-69	Good Pass	<p>Good attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates detailed synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area</p> <p>Good emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Good consideration of the literature and evidence-base that develops from recommended readings</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is persuasive</p> <p>The standard of writing is refined</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style.</p>
50-59	Pass	<p>Adequate attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates a limited, but sufficient, synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area</p> <p>Some emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Sufficient consideration of the literature and evidence-base, but little consideration beyond recommended readings</p> <p>The material covered is mostly accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is straightforward and relatively clear</p> <p>The standard of writing is well clear and readable, with some sophisticated phrasing</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style.</p>
40-49	Needs some improvement	<p>Meets most, but not all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates limited synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area</p> <p>Less than expected emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Basic consideration of the literature and evidence-base, but restricted to recommended readings</p> <p>Some inaccuracies or irrelevant materials that suggest confusion and misunderstanding</p> <p>The argument is relatively clear, although some elements are difficult to understand</p> <p>The standard of writing is well clear and readable, but overly simplistic</p> <p>Minor errors in the use of the specified referencing system, but meets key principles</p> <p>Well-presented and organised in an appropriate academic style.</p>
30-39	Needs major improvement	<p>Approximately half the learning outcomes are met</p> <p>Demonstrates very little synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area</p> <p>Little emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Minor consideration of the literature and evidence-base, with inadequate use of recommended reading and no exploration outside that</p>

		<p>Some materials is accurate, but the amount of inaccurate or irrelevant materials indicates insufficient understanding of key concepts</p> <p>The argument is poorly defined and defended</p> <p>The standard of writing is mostly clear and readable</p> <p>Some errors in the use of the specified referencing system, but meets key principles</p> <p>Generally well presented and organised, but does not always conform to conventions of academic presentation.</p>
20-29	Needs significant revision	<p>Most learning outcomes are not met</p> <p>Demonstrates no synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area</p> <p>Little or no emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Superficial consideration of the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>There are major inaccuracies or significant amounts of irrelevant material</p> <p>The argument is very weak</p> <p>The standard of writing is reasonable and there are very few areas of confusion and/or errors in spelling/grammar</p> <p>Attempts to use of the specified referencing system. Meets key principles, but there are systematic errors</p> <p>Good presentation that may include some organisational errors and/or tendency not to conform to conventions of academic presentation.</p>
0-19	Needs substantial work	<p>Does not meet any learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates misunderstanding of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area</p> <p>No emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>No engagement with the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is inaccurate or irrelevant</p> <p>The argument is incoherent</p> <p>Standard of writing is acceptable. The structure is reasonable, but there are some areas of confusion and/or some errors in spelling/grammar</p> <p>Attempts to use the specified referencing system, but there are significant errors</p> <p>Acceptable presentation that may include some organisational errors and a tendency not to conform to conventions of academic presentation.</p>

Grade descriptors for Level 7 written work		
These apply to L7 programmes where delivery of the programme of study began prior to 2016-17.		
Mark range	characteristic	criteria
90-100	Exceptional Pass	<p>Exemplary attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates an outstanding synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area.</p> <p>Wide-ranging emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Offers an exhaustive exploration of the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is highly sophisticated</p> <p>The standard of writing is refined</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and formatted in an appropriate academic style</p>
80-89	Outstanding Pass	<p>Excellent attainment of all learning outcomes, with some met to an exemplary standard</p> <p>Demonstrates a comprehensive synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area. Wide-ranging emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Extends far beyond expected levels of engagement with the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is generally very astute</p> <p>The standard of writing is refined</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and formatted in an appropriate academic style</p>
70-79	Excellent pass	<p>Excellent attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates a thorough synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area. Strong emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Thorough use the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is persuasive and there are very perceptive elements</p> <p>The standard of writing is refined</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and formatted in an appropriate academic style</p>
60-69	Good Pass	<p>Good attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates detailed synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area.</p> <p>Good emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Good consideration of the literature and evidence-base that develops from recommended readings</p>

		<p>The material covered is accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is persuasive</p> <p>The standard of writing is refined</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and formatted in an appropriate academic style</p>
50-59	Moderate Pass	<p>Adequate attainment of all learning outcomes, with some met to an good standard</p> <p>Demonstrates a limited, but sufficient, synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area. However, some of these are subject to a more comprehensive analysis</p> <p>Some emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Sufficient consideration of the literature and evidence-base, but little consideration beyond recommended readings</p> <p>The material covered is mostly accurate and relevant</p> <p>The argument is straightforward and relatively clear</p> <p>The standard of writing is highly advanced</p> <p>No errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and formatted in an appropriate academic style</p>
40-49	Threshold pass	<p>Adequate attainment of all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates a limited, but sufficient synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area</p> <p>Some emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Basic consideration of the literature and evidence-base, but restricted to recommended readings</p> <p>There are some inaccuracies or irrelevant materials, but there is sufficient accurate material to suggest a threshold level of understanding</p> <p>The argument is relatively clear, although some elements are difficult to understand</p> <p>The standard of writing is well clear and readable, with some sophisticated phrasing</p> <p>Only minor errors in the use of the specified referencing system</p> <p>Well-presented and formatted in an appropriate academic style</p>
30-39	Needs improvement	<p>Meets most, but not all learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates very little synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area.</p> <p>Little emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Minor consideration of the literature and evidence-base, but inadequate use of recommended reading and no exploration outside that.</p> <p>Some materials is accurate, but the amount of inaccurate or irrelevant materials indicates insufficient understanding of key concepts</p> <p>The argument is poorly defined and defended</p> <p>The standard of writing is clear and readable</p>

		<p>Some errors in the use of the specified referencing system , but meets key principles</p> <p>Generally well presented and formatted, but does not always conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>
20-29	Needs significant revision	<p>Does not meet most learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates no synthesis of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area.</p> <p>Little or no emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>Superficial consideration of the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>There are major inaccuracies or significant amounts of irrelevant</p> <p>The argument is very weak</p> <p>The standard of writing is reasonable and there are very few areas of confusion and/or errors in spelling/grammar.</p> <p>Attempts to use of the specified referencing system. Meets key principles, but there are systematic errors</p> <p>Good presentation that may include some formatting errors and/or tendency not to conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>
0-19	Needs substantial work	<p>Does not meet any learning outcomes</p> <p>Demonstrates misunderstanding of varied theoretical positions in the analysis of key issues in the subject area.</p> <p>No emphasis on knowledge and ideas that are at the forefront of the discipline</p> <p>No engagement with the literature and evidence-base</p> <p>The material covered is inaccurate or irrelevant</p> <p>The argument is incoherent</p> <p>Standard of writing is acceptable. The structure is reasonable, but there are some areas of confusion and/or some errors in spelling/grammar</p> <p>Attempts to use of the specified referencing system , but there are significant errors</p> <p>Acceptable presentation that may include some formatting errors and a tendency not to conform to conventions of academic presentation</p>