

Marking Scheme

Undergraduate Work

1st Class Standard (70% or more)

A 1st Class piece will display most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

- special signs of excellence such as unusual clarity, excellence of presentation, originality of argument
- comprehensive knowledge of the subject
- excellent understanding of issues and debates
- confidence in the selection and interpretation of materials/authority
- logical and convincing development of an argument
- written style appropriate to the level of the work
- fluent and articulate expression
- correct use of academic referencing
- evidence of independent thought and judgment in answering the question

2:1 Standard (60-69%)

A 2:1 piece will display most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

- a richer and more developed argument than a 2:2, with a clearly stated and well argued conclusion, showing the ability to range over appropriate areas of the subject matter with acuteness of analysis, intelligent challenges to the question set, and an abundance of appropriate authority or evidence intelligently applied
- thorough knowledge of the subject; few if any minor factual errors
- good understanding of issues and debates
- ability to select and interpret appropriate material/authority
- solid development of an argument
- a written style appropriate to the level of the work
- clear expression
- correct use of academic referencing
- a balanced and well considered answer to the question

2:2 Standard (50-59%)

A 2:2 piece will display most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

- a considered argument marshalling some of the advantages and disadvantages, where appropriate, with well selected authority or evidence
- adequate knowledge of the subject; few factual errors
- satisfactory understanding of issues and debates
- reasonable ability to select and interpret appropriate material/authority
- few flaws or gaps in the construction of an argument

3rd Standard (40-49%)

A piece in this grade band will display most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

- some signs of use of relevant evidence to tackle the question, even though treatment may be one sided or scant
- incomplete knowledge of the subject; some factual errors
- some understanding of issues or debates
- some difficulty with the selection and interpretation of appropriate material/authority
- some flaws or gaps in the construction of an argument
- a written style inappropriate for study at this level
- expression that is not always clear or consistent
- incorrect use of academic referencing
- a partial or incomplete answer to the question

Fail - 39% or below

A piece in this grade band will display most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

- irrelevant content, vagueness, error, general lack of understanding
- limited knowledge of the subject
- significant factual errors
- little understanding or actual misunderstanding of the issues and debates
- severe difficulty in selecting and interpreting material
- illogical or incomplete development of argument
- a written style entirely inappropriate for study at this level
- confused, muddled or misleading, or incoherent expression
- incorrect use or absence of academic referencing
- too short

Postgraduate (e.g. Masters Work)

All postgraduate work should display the following features, at any level:

- Demonstration of an in-depth of knowledge regarding the subject in question
- Ability to identify important questions and formulate essay titles around these
- Ability to identify key issues in a debate and critically assess, reflect upon and contextualise the evidence and arguments related to that debate
- Evidence of initiative, independent thought and, possibly, originality
- Content that appropriately addresses and maintain focus on the essay question/title
- Well structured work leading to a suitable conclusion (where applicable)

- Answer supported with well-chosen examples
- Demonstration of wide reading around the subject
- Demonstration of ability to find suitable and well-targeted sources using own initiative
- Demonstration of appropriate bibliographic and referencing skills, using the appropriate system
- Appropriate accompanying illustrations/appendix where appropriate, which are put to good use, suitably captioned and suitably referred to in the text
- Demonstration of suitable writing skills (i.e. is the work in a suitable academic style; are the grammar, spelling and punctuation correct; is the writing suitably concise and precise?)
- Work is well proof read
- Excellent standard of presentation

1st Class Standard/Masters Distinction (70% or more)

A 1st Class piece will display most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

- Exceptional level of English literacy
- Sophisticated range of appropriate vocabulary and structures
- Successful realisation of the task set with a flair that would not normally be seen at 2.1 (commendation) level
- Detailed, in-depth discussion, analysis and criticism
- Logical and skilful organisation of ideas
- Concepts linked coherently both at sentence and at text level
- Exceptionally skilful use of a wide range of material

A 1st class masters piece will demonstrate independence of thought , a high level of intellectual rigour and consistency, excellent academic/intellectual skills, and considerable creativity and originality.

2:1 Standard/Masters Commendation/Merit (60-69%)

A 2:1 piece will display most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

- a richer and more developed argument than a 2:2, with a clearly stated and well argued conclusion, showing the ability to range over appropriate areas of the subject matter with acuteness of analysis, intelligent challenges to the question set, and an abundance of appropriate authority or evidence intelligently applied
- thorough knowledge of the subject; few if any minor factual errors

- good understanding of issues and debates
- ability to select and interpret appropriate material/authority
- solid development of an argument
- a written style appropriate to the level of the work
- clear expression
- correct use of academic referencing
- a balanced and well considered answer to the question
- evidence of in-depth research, reading and analysis appropriate to masters level

2:2 Standard/Masters Pass (50-59%)

A 2:2 piece will display most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

- a considered argument marshalling some of the advantages and disadvantages, where appropriate, with well selected authority or evidence
- adequate knowledge of the subject
- satisfactory understanding of issues and debates
- reasonable ability to select and interpret appropriate material/authority
- evidence of in-depth research, reading and analysis appropriate to masters level

3rd Standard (40-49%)

A piece in this grade band will display most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

- some signs of use of relevant evidence to tackle the question, even though treatment may be one sided or scant
- incomplete knowledge of the subject; some factual errors
- some understanding of issues or debates
- some difficulty with the selection and interpretation of appropriate material/authority
- some flaws or gaps in the construction of an argument
- a written style inappropriate for study at this level
- expression that is not always clear or consistent
- incorrect use of academic referencing
- a partial or incomplete answer to the question
- evidence of research, reading and analysis but not at masters level and more akin to undergraduate work

Fail - 39% or below

A piece in this grade band will display most, if not all, of the following characteristics:

- irrelevant content, vagueness, error, general lack of understanding
- limited knowledge of the subject
- significant factual errors

- little understanding or actual misunderstanding of the issues and debates
- severe difficulty in selecting and interpreting material
- illogical or incomplete development of argument
- a written style entirely inappropriate for study at this level
- confused, muddled or misleading, or incoherent expression
- incorrect use or absence of academic referencing
- too short
- little or no evidence of researching, reading and analysis