

Undergraduate Categorical Marking Scale and Assessment Description

Effective from 1st September 2025

Classification	Additional Description for First Class level only	Categorical Marking Scale	Detailed Assessment Description
Undergraduate Year 0, Level 4, 5 and 6			
First Classification	Outstanding First	100 Upper	<p>Learning Outcome: Exceptional in all aspects, substantially exceeding expectations for this level.</p> <p>Assessment Criteria: Inclusion of multiple elements beyond those required, demonstrating a mastery of the subject and an ability to engage with advanced concepts in an innovative way.</p> <p>Work that is typically characterised by evidence of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional level of knowledge and understanding of complex, cutting-edge issues, theories, and principles • Extensive and original independent thought, demonstrating deep and innovative critical engagement with the subject matter. • Exceptional synthesis of ideas, critically challenging conventional views or existing knowledge with fresh perspectives or approaches. • Novel insights or well-substantiated propositions that have the potential for publication. • Exceptionally well-structured and coherent argumentation, clearly demonstrating a deep understanding of the complexity of the topic and presenting it in a highly accessible manner. • Extensive use of a wide range of sources, incorporating both foundational and highly specialized materials to support arguments, accurately referenced and deeply integrated into the work
		95 Middle	
		92 Lower	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work's quality is at a level that is publishable or could meet professional standards for dissemination or implementation, potentially pushing the boundaries of the field. Excellent communication with clear, concise, and accurate expression that enhances the understanding of complex ideas.
First Classification	Publishable/ Professional standard	88 Upper	<p>Learning Outcome: Outstanding in most/all aspects, substantially exceeding expectations for this level.</p> <p>Assessment Criteria: Underpinned by originality and/or novel ideas in thinking and a strong critical appreciation of the topic. No improvement could reasonably be expected.</p> <p>Work that is typically characterised by evidence of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An outstanding level of knowledge and understanding of complex issues, key concepts and principles at the forefront of the discipline Outstanding awareness of subject and/or practice Outstanding evidence of original, independent and critical thought A strong, well-structured argument that is convincing and well supported by an outstanding range of sources and/or evidence Pushes the boundaries of existing knowledge Evidence of extensive and discriminating reading/use of source material, accurately used in support of the work Clearly structured, robust and persuasive arguments, lucidly written, uses clear and accurate expression
		85 Middle	
		82 Lower	

First Classification	Meets Criteria	78 Upper	<p>Learning Outcome: Excellent quality, exceeding expectations for this level in many aspects.</p> <p>Assessment Criteria: Inclusion of elements beyond those required.</p> <p>Work that is typically characterised by evidence of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good to excellent level of knowledge and understanding of complex issues, key concepts and principles at the forefront of the discipline • A very good to excellent awareness of subject and/or practice • Evidence of original, independent, and critical thought • A strong, well-structured argument that is convincing and well-supported by a wide range of sources and/or evidence • Explores the boundaries of existing knowledge • Evidence of extensive and discriminating reading/use of source material, accurately used in support of the work • Clearly structured, robust and persuasive arguments, lucidly written, uses clear and accurate expression
		75 Middle	
		72 Lower	

2.1 Classification		68 Upper	<p>Learning Outcome: Meets all the intended learning outcomes and exceeds the threshold expectations for this level in several of them.</p> <p>Assessment Criteria: Complete with no important omissions.</p> <p>Work that is typically characterised by evidence of the following:</p>
		65 Middle	

		62 Lower	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good or very good level of knowledge and understanding of key concepts and principles • Good or very good awareness of subject and/or practice • Able to describe and use a range of major concepts, theories and methodologies in a good or very good level of detail • Strong arguments which offer good analysis of key issues • Use of a broad/wide range of sources and/or evidence to support work • May contain some minor errors and/or minor areas for improvement • Clearly structured, robust and persuasive arguments, lucidly written, uses clear and accurate expression
2.2 Classification		58 Upper	Learning Outcome: Meets all the intended learning outcomes for this level and exceeds the threshold expectations for this level in some of them.
		55 Middle	Assessment Criteria: Addresses the question/assignment. Some omissions.
		52 Lower	<p>Work that is typically characterised by evidence of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A satisfactory level of knowledge and understanding of key concepts and principles • Sufficient awareness of the subject and/or practice • Able to describe and use a range of major concepts, theories and methodologies • Some critical judgement offered • Arguments offer some analysis of key issues, but they may lack coherence and / or supporting evidence

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of familiarity with the key sources and/or evidence but may contain questionable interpretation of critical materials • May contain some errors and/or areas for improvement • Organisation and clarity of writing are of sufficient standard for the reader to engage easily <p>Needs some improvement in one or more areas</p>
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3rd Classification		48 Upper	Learning Outcome: Meets all of the intended learning outcomes but rarely exceeds the threshold expectations for this level
		45 Middle	Assessment Criteria: Addresses some aspects of question/assignment, but with some important omissions.
		42 Lower	<p>Work that is typically characterised by evidence of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum threshold level of knowledge and understanding of a more restricted range of issues. • Demonstrates awareness of the subject but may not fully engage with all aspects of the task. • Demonstrates limited ability to critically evaluate key concepts or theories, with arguments that may be underdeveloped or simplistic. • Organisation and clarity are sufficient for the reader to follow most aspects of the work. • Some familiarity with basic reading material but little evidence of the use of sources and/or evidence, or overreliance on very basic resources

FAIL		38	<p>Learning Outcome: Fails to meet the majority or all of the intended learning outcomes and is inadequate for this level.</p> <p>Assessment Criteria: Fails to address much of the question/assignment. Lots of omissions.</p> <p>Unsatisfactory work e.g lacks coherent argument, contains major errors, and fails to engage with key concepts; that is typically characterised by evidence of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varying degrees of limited level of knowledge and understanding of a restricted range of issues. Poorly conceived and poorly directed to the question/task • Limited understanding of empirical or theoretical issues but is not able to develop them further • Limited evidence of argument and/or contains irrelevant or unrelated elements. • Limited familiarity with basic reading materials and little evidence of the use of sources and/or evidence, or overreliance on very basic resources • Likely to contain repetition, inconsistencies and/or some major errors • Organisation and clarity of writing may be limited but will be sufficient for the reader to engage with most aspects of the work • Needs significant improvement to meet pass threshold at undergraduate level
		35	
		32	
		28	
		25	
		22	
		15	
		10	
Non-submission or no adequate attempt		0	No submission, wrong answer, token submission (e.g. student number/date)

