

University Centre Colchester

Assessment Procedures 2023/2024

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Equality Impact Assessment Tool

Name of Policy: UCC Assessment Procedures 2023-24

		Yes/No	Comments
1	Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of:		
	Race or ethnicity	No	
	Disability	No	
	Gender	No	
	Religion or belief	No	
	Sexual orientation	No	
	Age	No	
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	No	
	Maternity and Pregnancy	No	
	Gender Reassignment	No	
2	Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?	No	
3	If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	N/A	
4	Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?	No	
5	If so, can the impact be avoided?	N/A	
6	What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?	N/A	
7	Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?	N/A	

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1. Assessment Procedures

- 1.1 A schedule showing the assessments for each module, together with the dates on which each shall be issued and on which each shall be required to be handed in, shall normally be issued to all students taking the module during the induction week at the start of the Semester. At latest, this schedule shall be provided by week three of the module delivery.
- 1.2 The submission of work for assessment is the sole responsibility of the student. Students are required to ensure that:
- assignments are submitted by electronic method (Moodle/ATS2) or physical hand-in by 12 noon on the due date;
 - hard copy physical hand-ins to be securely fastened with a University Centre Colchester (UCC) front cover assignment sheet;
 - for hard copy physical hand-ins they receive a University Centre Colchester (UCC) Assignment Receipt duly notarised and dated as proof of submission. University Centre Colchester will not be responsible for any assignment which goes missing without proof of submission. The assignment will be deemed a failure in this situation;
 - Students who have been assessed as having specific learning difficulties (dyslexia, dyspraxia or has a significant hearing impairment) should contact UCC Academic Services to be considered for Reasonable Adjustments including consideration for specialised marking polices.
- 1.3 All coursework deadlines are set by Schools. If a student is unable to meet a specified deadline, their work will be classified as 'late'. For students studying on a University of East Anglia, validated programme work submitted after the published deadline date but no more than 7 days late will be penalised and capped at a maximum mark of 40 (postgraduate submissions will be capped at a mark of 50). For students studying on a Pearson HNC/HND programme work submitted after the published deadline date, but no more than **14 days** late will be penalised and capped at a maximum mark of pass. It should be noted that no allowance will be made for UCC closure due to statutory holidays. For re-submissions there will be no late submission period and all work submitted after the published deadline will be awarded a zero or fail mark.
- 1.4 Where assignments are marked on a pass or fail basis, an assignment submitted after the published deadline date will be failed.
- 1.5 Students who submit their work late but within 7 days of the deadline (14 for students on Pearson HNC/HND programmes) may apply for their work to be uncapped. Further information on late submission requests can be found in section 2.6.
- 1.6 Work submitted more than one week after the published deadline date (two weeks for Pearson HNC/HND programmes) will not be accepted or marked.
- 1.7 Students are required to retain all marked written assignments together with cover sheets and tutor comments until the module has been considered by the Board of Examiners and the period of Appeal (four weeks after notification of results) has been completed.

2. Presentation of Assessed Work

2.1 Written Submissions

2.1.2 A word target, or equivalent, will be specified for all written assignments. Students must declare the actual word count on the title page of the submission. Assignments may not be marked where an actual word count is not clearly indicated.

2.1.3 Please note, the following contents of a written document **are excluded** from the word count:

- cover page;
- abstract (except undergraduate dissertation abstracts, which are included);
- contents page;
- headers and footers;
- headings;
- headings of charts and tables;
- appendices;
- reference list.

2.1.4 The following **are included** in the word count:

- citations (including 'indented quotes') and in text referencing
- footnotes and/or endnotes
- words contained within charts and tables.

2.1.5 The following features should be applied to ensure the marker can read written assignments clearly:

- Font style: Ariel, Calibri or New Times Roman;
- Font size: 11/12;
- Line spacing: 1.5;
- Page numbers.

2.1.6 The following information should be included to identify whose assignment it is and what module it relates to:

- Module title;
- Module code;
- Student number (work should be anonymised).

2.1.7 Appendices and footnotes/endnotes should only include material which markers are not required to read, but to which they may refer if they wish. Appendices therefore include information which supports the assignment, such as, for example, data sheets and anonymised survey feedback. Appendices must not be used as a device for extending the main text. Quotes from secondary sources can be used to illustrate or support the points of your assignments but should be referenced and included in the reference list.

2.2 Word Targets

2.2.1 Students may submit assignments with a variation of the required word target by plus or minus 10% without incurring any penalty.

2.2.2 A specified word target serves two purposes. Firstly, the upper end of the available word count range requires a writer to be selective in the information included and concise in the manner in which it is presented. Secondly, the lower end of the word count range is indicative of the detail required to respond satisfactorily to the assignment task.

2.2.3 Should an assignment fall outside the permitted variables of the specified word target, the marker will be required to deduct 3 percentage points from the mark awarded. (e.g. a mark of 50% will be reduced to 47%).

2.2.4 Should the 3% reduction of a mark result in the assignment's mark being below 40%, the penalty will be capped at 40%.

2.2.5 Direct citations should not make up more than 10% of your total word count.

2.3 Live and Pre-Recorded Performance/Presentation/Creative Work

2.3.1 Performance/presentation work at the UCC enables students to demonstrate their engagement with, and response to, a range of subject-specific tasks. Performance/presentation work should evidence the ability of the performer's/presenter's skills, as well as the ability to communicate the material in a professional way.

2.3.2 Framework for Performance Work

- The overall playing time of a performed programme, or recording, needs to adhere to the playing time stipulated in the respective module description.*
- Unless the module specification indicates otherwise, there is a permitted variation from the overall playing time of +- 10% of the stipulated requirement.
- If the playing time of performed or pre-recorded material does not fall within the +-10% regulation, the marker will be required to deduct 3% (out of 100%) from the mark awarded.
- In the case of over-long performances, the examiners are entitled to stop the performance when they have heard sufficient to form a judgment.

*This includes improvised material.

2.3.3 Framework for Presentation/Creative Work

- The overall delivery time of a presentation/creative work needs to adhere to the time stipulated in the respective module description.*
- Unless the module specification indicates otherwise, there is a permitted variation from the overall delivery time of +-10% of the stipulated requirement.
- If the presentation time does not fall within the +-10% regulation, the marker will be required to deduct 3% (out of 100%) from the mark awarded.
- In the case of over-long presentations/creative work, the markers are entitled to stop the delivery when they have heard enough to form a judgment.

2.3.4 Exceptions to the Above Regulations

- **Musical Theatre and Plays** - Please note that any assessed ensemble performance which is based on the staging of a complete play, or entire musical, is exempt from the above regulation because of the subject-specific expectation of staging a work in its entirety, albeit in edited form.
- **Films, Film Music, Computer Games** - These are likely to be made to a brief, which may or may not stipulate a duration. Where a precise duration is required, the student is expected to meet this requirement without deviating from the brief at all. The 3% (out of 100%) reduction applies, unless the brief is met precisely.
- Where the module specification suggests an indicative duration, the +- 10% clause applies, as does the 3% (out of 100%) reduction in the case of non-conforming to the submission requirement.

2.4 Mood Boards/Mind Maps/Sketch Books/Artifacts/Other Annotated Creative Work in Non-Essay Format

Neither the word target policy, nor the 3% (out of 100%) reduction applies to work of this nature, because the establishing of such parameters runs contrary to an element of the assignment itself, in which the identifying and applying of a format for a submission are deemed to be part of the assignment task.

2.5 Submission of Presentation Materials (Including Group Presentations)

2.5.1 Presentation assessments are defined as the physical presentation, and any supporting materials required to be submitted as per the assignment brief in the relevant module guide.

2.5.2 Submission deadlines for supporting materials should be prior to the physical presentation taking place.

2.5.3 Submission of the required supporting materials is a pre-requisite for marking. For students' work to be graded, both the physical presentation and the submission of supporting materials must have taken place. Failure to submit either will result in a grade of 0 being awarded for both. If supporting materials are submitted late, a student's grade will be capped accordingly.

2.5.4 All individual members of a group are expected to submit supporting materials independently of each other. It is the student's responsibility to submit their work to be considered for grading, including group presentations.

2.5.5 If one member of the group fails to submit supporting materials, or submits late, they will have their individual grade capped accordingly.

2.6 Making a late submission request

2.6.1 If you miss your coursework deadline and believe that you have extenuating circumstances, then you should submit your work within seven calendar days (fourteen for students on Pearson programmes) together with a late submission of coursework form detailing those circumstances and any relevant evidence. It is your responsibility to inform University Centre Colchester of your circumstances. Please note: The late submission of coursework form **should not** be uploaded with your work, but sent to UCCEC@colchester.ac.uk for processing.

2.6.2 University Centre Colchester has a Late Submissions Committee which will normally meet at least twice during the year. The Late Submissions Committee will decide whether your work should be uncapped and whether that uncapped mark will count towards your formal assessment (which means the mark will be instated). UCC Academic Services will advise you of the outcome.

2.7 What to include on your late submission of coursework form

You should include on the form details of the specific piece(s) of coursework affected by the circumstances that prevented timely submission of the work. Make sure you fully explain the impact these circumstances had on your ability to submit your coursework by the deadline. It is not the role of the Late Submissions Committee to seek further information on your behalf. Make your submission clear and include any relevant evidence. Late Submissions Committees will be determining whether the circumstances have significantly and legitimately affected your ability to submit work by the deadline.

2.8 Circumstances not taken into account

You should note that extenuating circumstances claims will only be considered in cases where you were affected by a circumstance or event that is beyond your control and could not reasonably have been anticipated. The following are examples of circumstances which are **not** considered to be relevant for failure to meet a deadline:

- minor ailments and illnesses on the day of coursework submission, such as colds, coughs, sprains, headache);
- personal disruptions or events which could have been anticipated, such as holidays, weddings, changing address or employment, religious holidays or festivals which are usually known in advance;
- study-related circumstances, such as computer failure, printing problems, unavailability of books, photocopying problems, as these problems should be factored into the organisation of your work load (in cases where there are serious failures of relevant computing resources, the department may schedule a general change in the deadline for all students affected); general pressure of work is not taken to be circumstances beyond your control, as you are expected to plan your work schedule;
- excessive demands on time or pressure of employment which could have been anticipated;
- financial constraints, as these are commonly experienced by students;
- misreading/confusing the coursework deadline;
- oversleeping on the day of the deadline;
- transport problems, such as car breaking down or delayed public transport It is not appropriate, nor possible, to list all of the potential extenuating circumstances that a student may encounter.

The list above should give you an indication of the types of circumstance that are not accepted.

2.9 Documentary evidence you need to provide

This will depend on the type of problems that you have experienced. Whilst documentary evidence is not always required, nor possible to obtain, the Late Submissions Committee reserves the right to reject cases where evidence is not provided. The committee expects to see documentary evidence that is proportional to the nature of your claim.

2.10 Circumstances of a non-medical nature

You should, if possible, submit appropriate third party evidence to support your claim. We realise that in some cases it may be difficult to do this, and Committees may accept claims which are not accompanied by documentary evidence. However, lack of third party evidence may weaken your claim. It is up to you to get this evidence, as the University Centre Colchester will not seek it on your behalf. University Centre Colchester reserves the right to check on the validity of the document(s) you submit by contacting the third party directly.

2.11 Circumstances of a medical nature

In the case of circumstances of a medical nature, please note that medical certification is helpful but not always necessary for this form of extenuating circumstances claim, and indeed most doctors will not issue medical certificates either for short-term or minor illnesses or during the year for single items of coursework. The Late Submissions Committee is concerned with evidence of the inability to complete and/or submit your work, rather than the nature and degree of the medical condition.

2.12 Longer term extenuating circumstances or non-submission of work

If you have experienced significant (longer term but no longer than the semester in question) extenuating circumstances that prevent you from submitting your work at all, or within fourteen days of the deadline, you should submit an [extenuating circumstances form](#) to UCC Academic Services for the Board of Examiners to consider when it meets at the end of the semester, which should clearly explain how your extenuating circumstances affected your ability to submit your work.

2.13 False claims

You should note that submitting a false claim or false documentation is a serious matter and would be regarded as an attempt to gain unfair advantage. This would be an academic offence and would be dealt with under the Academic Offences Procedures. University Centre Colchester reserves the right to check on the validity of the document(s) you submit by contacting the third party directly.

2.14 Data

Any Information provided on a late submission form may be stored on the students file. It will be used to make a decision about their claim, and will only be shared with individuals involved in the decision making process. It will be kept until the file is destroyed (which is normally 6 years after the year in which they graduate).

2.15 Equality Act 2010 and Guidance for Disabled Students

If a student has a disability which is preventing them from meeting published deadlines, they should contact UCC Academic Services to discuss this issue in advance of their submission dates.

3. Marking of Work

3.1 Marking should take into account University Centre Colchester policy and guidance on the use of assessment criteria and grade descriptors (as attached in Appendices B-E). All assessments should conform to the basic requirements of this UCC-wide policy, though particularisation and contextualisation to meet the local needs of programmes is encouraged.

3.2 Work should be marked within four weeks of its submission by the student.

3.3 Information relating to internal verification and second marking can now be found in the University Centre Colchester Internal Verification and Marking Policies.

4 University Centre Colchester Reassessment Policy

4.1 When designing reassessment instruments for validated provision programme teams should refer to the following University Centre Colchester policy on reassessment:

- i Reassessment should by default take the same form as the original mode of assessment.*
- ii Where this is not possible, the school/department must seek approval from the Dean/Deputy Dean of Partnerships of the validating organization (or equivalent) to offer a different form of reassessment setting out the reason why like-for-like reassessment is not possible.*
- iii Where approval has been given to offer a different form of reassessment, the school should normally operate a consistent approach across the modules for which approval has been given.*
- iv Notwithstanding iii, there should be consistency across University Centre Colchester in how certain modes of assessment are reassessed. Schools should consult UCC Academic Services for a list of approved modes of reassessment before requesting approval to offer a different form of reassessment.*
- v In respect of each of their modules, departments are required to publish information on reassessment. Normally, this will be done through module guides.*

4.2 Key Principles of Reassessment:

University Centre Colchester approves the use of original assessment instruments in the following contexts;

- Where the conditions of the original assessment instrument can be maintained;
- Where the original assessment instrument can be used in a reduced context or environment which does not negatively impact on the students' ability to meet the learning outcomes of the assessment.

University Centre Colchester does not approve the use of original assessment instruments in the following contexts;

- Where students are asked to retake a previously blind written examination.

If a reassessment is unable to meet the above criteria programme leaders will be required to submit a request for an alternative reassessment to UCC Academic Services for consideration by the Deputy Dean of Partnerships.

4.3 Requesting an Alternative Reassessment

Requests should be made prior to the start of the academic year, and explain the reasoning behind why the original assessment method cannot be used. Staff will be required to demonstrate how the reassessment assesses the learning outcomes of the original assessment without negatively impacting on either the students' ability to achieve or to reduce the validity of the assessment.

If an alternative reassessment request is approved, details of the reassessment should be included in module guides.

The process for requesting an alternative assessment as a Reasonable Adjustment for a student can be found in the **Code of Practice on Learning Support and Reasonable Adjustments**.

Appendix A: University Centre Colchester Policy on Assessment

- 1 All assignments should indicate the assessment **criteria that** are relevant to the assignment.
 - Assessment criteria should be categorised under the headings:
 - ❖ **knowledge** (subject specific);
 - ❖ **cognitive skills** (generic);
 - ❖ **practical skills** (subject specific);
 - ❖ and **key /transferable skills** (generic)
 - Particular assessment criteria for a modular assessment should be derived from the relevant programme outcomes detailed in the module map (found in the programme validation document);
 - Assessment criteria should be stated either on the assignment brief or on a marking sheet, if used;
 - Programme teams are encouraged to expand upon a criterion and describe it in particularised and contextualised terms. For example: *“You will be assessed on the extent to which you worked effectively with others in your committee meeting and met obligations to others (i.e. other committee members and relevant business stakeholders).”*
2. Assignments should indicate the relative weighting given to each assessment criterium:
 - Preferably, these should be stated in percentage terms;
 - This indication should be stated either on the assignment brief or on a marking sheet, if used.
3. Guided by University Centre Colchester guidelines on grade descriptors, each assignment should indicate what achievement / performance is required to attain a mark in a particular grade band:
 - The college wide guidelines on grade descriptors could be used, without adaptation, if appropriate;
 - Alternatively, grade descriptors could be stated in terms that are specific to the subject and the assignment.
4. Feedback / feed forward to students should be provided against each of the module outcomes.
 - Language used in feedback should be consistent with that used in the grade descriptors;
 - It is often helpful to indicate what the student needed to have done in order to gain a higher mark. Language used in such feed forward should be consistent with grade descriptors for higher mark bands;
 - This does not preclude general comments.
5. Marking should be guided by the stated grade descriptors. An overall mark will be calculated / derived according to the relative weighting given to each assessment criterion
 - If percentage weightings are used for assessment criteria, the overall mark will be a summation of the separate grades.
6. All work submitted is received on the understanding that it is the student’s own, except where references and citations are clearly identified. Any work submitted under the student’s name but of their authorship will lead be processed as suspected academic misconduct.

Appendix B: Sample of Assessment Grid

Assessment Criteria		Generic (G) or Subject- specific (SS)	Applicable?	Weighting
1. Knowledge and understanding	i. Knowledge base, including understanding and awareness of ethical issues	SS	✓	20%
2. Cognitive / intellectual skills	ii. Analysis and/or synthesis	G	✓	30%
	iii. Evaluation and/or application	G	✓	20%
3. Key/transferrable & practical skills	iv. Group working	G		
	v. Research, including use of learning resources and management of information	G	✓	20%
	vi. Self-evaluation	G		
	vii. Autonomy in learning and subject-specific skill use	G & SS		
	viii. Communications, including presentation skills	G	✓	10%
	ix. Problem-solving	G		
	x. Application of practical skills	SS		
				100%

Appendix C: Sample Level Descriptors – (Threshold Standards)

LEVEL DESCRIPTOR		LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6	LEVEL 7
i.	Knowledge base: including understanding and awareness of ethical issues	<p>Has a given factual and/or conceptual knowledge base with emphasis on the nature of the field of study and appropriate terminology;</p> <p>Can demonstrate awareness of ethical issues in current areas of study and is able to discuss these in relation to personal beliefs and values.</p>	<p>Has a detailed knowledge of major theories of the discipline(s) and an awareness of a variety of ideas, contexts and frameworks.</p> <p>Is aware of the wider social and environmental implications of area(s) of study and is able to debate issues in relation to more general ethical perspectives.</p>	<p>Has a comprehensive/detailed knowledge of a major discipline(s), with areas of specialisation in depth, and an awareness of the provisional nature of knowledge.</p> <p>Is aware of personal responsibility and professional codes of conduct and can incorporate a critical ethical dimension into a major piece of work.</p>	<p>Has depth and systematic understanding of knowledge in specialised/applied areas and/across areas and can work with theoretical/research-based knowledge at the forefront of their academic discipline.</p> <p>Has the awareness and ability to manage the implications of ethical dilemmas and work pro-actively with others to formulate solutions.</p> <p>Has a comprehensive understanding of techniques/ methodologies applicable to their own work (theory or research-based).</p>
ii.	Analysis and/or synthesis	<p>Can analyse with guidance using given classifications/principles.</p> <p>Can collect and categorise ideas and information in a predictable and standard format</p>	<p>Can analyse a range of information with minimum guidance using given classifications/principles and can compare alternative methods and techniques for obtaining data.</p> <p>Can reformat a range of ideas and information towards a given purpose.</p>	<p>Can analyse new and/or abstract data and situations without guidance, using a range of techniques appropriate to the subject.</p> <p>With minimum guidance, can transform abstract data and concepts towards a given purpose and design novel solutions.</p>	<p>With critical awareness, can undertake analysis of complex, incomplete or contradictory areas of knowledge communicating the outcome effectively.</p> <p>With critical awareness, can synthesise information in a manner that may be innovative, utilising knowledge or processes from the forefront of the discipline/practice.</p>

iii.	Evaluation and/or application	<p>Can evaluate the reliability of data using defined techniques and/or tutor guidance.</p> <p>Can apply given tools/methods accurately and carefully to a well defined problem and begin to appreciate the complexity of the issues</p>	<p>Can select appropriate techniques of evaluation and can evaluate the relevance and significance of the data collected.</p> <p>Can identify key elements of problems and choose appropriate methods for their resolution in a considered manner.</p>	<p>Can critically evaluate evidence to support conclusions/ recommendations, reviewing its reliability, validity and significance. Can investigate contradictory information/identify reasons for contradictions.</p> <p>Is confident and flexible in identifying and defining complex problems and can apply appropriate knowledge and skills to their solution.</p>	<p>Has a level of conceptual understanding that will allow her/him critically to evaluate research, advanced scholarship and methodologies and argue alternative approaches.</p> <p>Can demonstrate initiative and originality in problem solving.</p> <p>Can act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level, making decisions in complex and unpredictable situations.</p>
iv.	Group working	<p>Can work effectively with others as a member of a group and meet obligations to others (for example, tutors, peers, and colleagues).</p>	<p>Can interact effectively within a team/learning group, giving and receiving information and ideas and modifying responses where appropriate.</p>	<p>Can interact effectively within a team/learning/professional group, recognise, support or be proactive in leadership, negotiate in a professional context and manage conflict.</p>	<p>Can work effectively with a group as leader or member. Can clarify tasks and make appropriate use of the capacities of group members. Is able to negotiate and handle conflict with confidence</p>
v.	Research: including use of learning resources and management of information	<p>Can work within an appropriate ethos and can use and access a range of learning resources.</p> <p>Can manage information, collect appropriate data from a range of sources and undertake simple research tasks with external guidance.</p>	<p>Can manage learning using resources for the discipline. Can develop working relationships of a professional nature within the discipline(s).</p> <p>Can manage information; can select appropriate data from a range of sources and develop appropriate research strategies.</p>	<p>With minimum guidance can manage own learning using full range of resources for the discipline(s). Can work professionally within the discipline.</p> <p>Can select and manage information, competently undertaking reasonably straight-forward research tasks with minimum guidance.</p>	<p>Is able to use full range of learning resources.</p> <p>Can competently undertake research tasks with minimum guidance.</p>

vi.	Self-evaluation	Can evaluate own strengths and weakness within criteria largely set by others.	Can evaluate own strengths and weakness, challenge received opinion and develop own criteria and judgement.	Is confident in application of own criteria of judgement and can challenge received opinion and reflect on action. Can seek and make use of feedback.	Is reflective on own and others' functioning in order to improve practice.
vii.	Autonomy in learning and subject-specific skill use	Can take responsibility for own learning with appropriate support. With respect to subject-specific skill, is able to act with limited autonomy, under direction or supervision, within defined guidelines.	Can take responsibility for own learning with minimum direction. With respect to subject-specific skill, is able to act with increasing autonomy, with reduced need for supervision and direction, within defined guidelines.	Can take responsibility for own work and can criticise it. With respect to subject-specific skill, is able to act autonomously, with minimal supervision or direction, within agreed guidelines.	Is an independent and self critical learner, guiding the learning of others and managing own requirements for continuing professional development. Is able to exercise initiative and personal responsibility in professional practice.
viii.	Communications: including presentation skills	Can communicate effectively in a format appropriate to the discipline(s) and report practical procedures in a clear and concise manner.	Can communicate effectively in a manner appropriate to the discipline(s) and report practical procedures in a clear and concise manner in a variety of formats.	Can engage effectively in debate in a professional manner and produce detailed and coherent project reports.	Can engage confidently in academic and professional communication with others, reporting on action clearly, autonomously and competently
ix.	Problem-solving:	Can apply given tools/methods accurately and carefully to a well defined problem and begin to appreciate the complexity of the issues in the discipline.	Can identify key areas of problems and choose appropriate tools/methods for their resolution in a considered manner.	Is confident and flexible in identifying and defining complex problems and the application of appropriate knowledge, tools/methods to their solution.	Has independent learning ability required for continuing professional study, making professional use of others where appropriate.

x	Application of practical skills	Is able to act with limited autonomy, under direction or supervision, within defined guidelines.	Can operate in situations of varying complexity and predictability requiring application of a wide range of techniques.	Can operate in complex and unpredictable contexts, requiring selection and application from a wide range of innovative or standard techniques.	<p>Can operate in complex and unpredictable and/or specialised contexts, and has an overview of the issues governing good practice.</p> <p>Has technical expertise, performs smoothly with precision and effectiveness; can adapt skills and design or develop new skills and/or procedures for new situations.</p>
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Appendix D: Sample Grade Descriptors

A guide to grading assignments against set assessment criteria.

The following matrices provide college wide guidelines on grade descriptors that can be used, without adaptation, if appropriate for the three undergraduate levels and Masters level:

Level 4 (NQF 4), Level 5 (NQF 5) Level 6 (NQF 6) and Level 7 (NQF 7)

Grade descriptors can also be used in terms that are specific to the subject and the assignment. If utilised these grade descriptors must be published in module guides and made available to students at the start of the semester.

Approved course specific grade descriptors can also be found under the student advice section of the UCC student portal pages.

SAMPLE GRADE DESCRIPTORS FOR ASSESSMENT - LEVEL 4

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA		GRADE BANDS & GRADE DESCRIPTORS						
		0 -19%	20-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70% - 85%	86%+
		Significantly below pass mark	Below pass mark	Satisfactory pass	Sound pass	Good pass	Distinguished pass	Outstanding pass
i.	<p>Knowledge base: including understanding and awareness of ethical issues</p>	<p>Significantly fails to address a conceptual base of knowledge.</p> <p>No awareness of ethical issues.</p> <p>No evidence of being able to discuss ethical issues in relation to personal beliefs.</p>	<p>Fails to provide an adequate factual and/or conceptual base of knowledge.</p> <p>Fails to demonstrate adequate awareness of ethical issues in current areas of study and is unable to discuss these issues in relation to personal beliefs and values in a satisfactory manner</p>	<p>Provides an adequate factual and/or conceptual base of knowledge, though there may be some misunderstanding of key concepts and principles.</p> <p>Where appropriate, demonstrates adequate awareness of ethical issues in current areas of study and is able to discuss these issues in relation to personal beliefs and values, in a manner that is broadly satisfactory.</p>	<p>Provides a firm factual and/or conceptual base of knowledge that is mostly accurate, with no serious omissions or inaccuracies.</p> <p>Demonstrates a sound grasp of relevant principles and concepts.</p> <p>Where appropriate, demonstrates a firm awareness of ethical issues in current areas of study and is able to discuss these issues in relation to personal beliefs and values, in a sound manner.</p>	<p>Provides a strong factual and/or conceptual base of knowledge.</p> <p>Demonstrates a strong grasp of relevant principles and concepts.</p> <p>Where appropriate, demonstrates a strong awareness of ethical issues in current areas of study and is able to discuss these issues in relation to personal beliefs and values, in a commendable manner.</p>	<p>Provides a rigorous and broad factual and/or conceptual base of knowledge.</p> <p>Demonstrates a rigorous and broad grasp of relevant principles and concepts.</p> <p>Where appropriate, demonstrates a very strong awareness of ethical issues in current areas of study and is able to discuss these issues in relation to personal beliefs and values, in a distinguished manner.</p>	<p>Evidences outstanding knowledge of the subject.</p> <p>Demonstrates excellent understanding of ethical issues within the current area of study.</p> <p>Outstanding ability to discuss the link between personal values and beliefs and current ethical issues.</p>

ii.	Analysis and/or synthesis	Significantly fails to provide any analysis or synthesis within the submission.	Fails to provide any adequate analysis or synthesis.	Primarily descriptive and/or derivative, but provides occasional and broadly satisfactory analyses, with guidance, using given classifications or principles. Collects and categorises ideas and information occasionally and in a predictable and standard format.	Primarily standard in exposition, but provides some evidence of an ability to analyse synthesise, evaluate and apply standard methods and techniques under guidance.	Provides clear evidence of strong and commendable analysis and synthesis.	Provides clear evidence of very strong and distinguished analysis and synthesis.	Provides evidence of outstanding analysis and synthesis
iii.	Evaluation and/or application	Significant failings in evaluation and extremely limited or no application of knowledge.	Fails to provide any adequate evaluation and application	Provides occasional and broadly satisfactory evaluations using defined techniques and/or tutor guidance. Applies given tools and/or methods to a well-defined problem in a broadly satisfactory manner, and begins to appreciate the complexity of issues	Provides some sound evaluations using defined techniques and/or tutor guidance. Applies given tools and/or methods to a well-defined problem in a sound manner, and demonstrates a firm appreciation of the complexity of issues	Clear evidence of strong and commendable evaluation and application. Applies defined tools and/or methods to a structured problem in a strong manner, and demonstrates a commendable appreciation of the complexity of issues	Demonstrates a sustained and distinguished ability for evaluation and application. Develops authoritative arguments and judgements through application appropriate to the field of study and assessment task.	Demonstrates outstanding ability for evaluation and application. Demonstrates excellence in constructing arguments and making judgements.
iv.	Group working	Displays an unwillingness to work with others or does not participate to a minimum standard of a group (does not meet the requirements of the task, does not work with others)	Fails to display an adequate ability to work with others as a member of a group and meet obligations to others (for example, tutors, peers, and colleagues)	Works with others as a member of a group and meet obligations to others (for example, tutors, peers, and colleagues), in a manner that is broadly satisfactory.	Works with others as a member of a group and meet obligations to others (for example, tutors, peers, and colleagues), in a sound manner.	Works with others as a member of a group and meet obligations to others (for example, tutors, peers, and colleagues), in a strong and commendable manner.	Works with others as a member of a group and meet obligations to others (for example, tutors, peers, and colleagues), in a very strong and distinguished manner.	Demonstrates an outstanding approach to, and effectiveness in, working with others.

v.	Research: including use of learning resources and management of information	<p>No evidence of engagement with a research ethos and inability to identify sources.</p> <p>Inability to reference in a recognisable format.</p> <p>Has not undertaken additional research task with extensive support.</p>	<p>Does not work within an appropriate ethos and/or fails to demonstrate an adequate ability to use and access learning resources.</p> <p>Fails to demonstrate an adequate ability to manage information (including referencing sources), collect appropriate data and undertake simple research tasks with external guidance.</p>	<p>Works within an appropriate ethos and can use and access learning resources in a manner that is broadly satisfactory.</p> <p>Manages information (including referencing sources), collects appropriate data from a range of sources and undertakes simple research tasks with external guidance, in a manner that is adequate but with some limitations</p>	<p>Works within an appropriate ethos and can use and access learning resources in a sound manner.</p> <p>Manages information (including referencing sources), collects appropriate data from a range of sources and undertakes standard research tasks with external guidance, in a sound manner.</p>	<p>Works within an appropriate ethos and can use and access learning resources in a commendable manner.</p> <p>Manages information (including referencing sources), collects appropriate data from a range of sources and undertakes structured research tasks with external guidance, in a commendable manner.</p>	<p>Works within an appropriate ethos and can use and access learning resources in a distinguished manner.</p> <p>Manages information (including referencing sources), collects appropriate data from a range of sources and undertakes structured research tasks with external guidance, in a distinguished manner.</p>	<p>Demonstrates an excellent approach to engaging with research ethos.</p> <p>Evidences outstanding ability to manage information and data. Undertakes structured research tasks with external guidance to produce an outstanding outcome.</p>
vi.	Self-evaluation	No significant ability to evaluate own strengths and weaknesses even with support.	Fails to demonstrate an adequate ability to evaluate own strengths and weaknesses adequately, within criteria set by others.	Evaluates own strengths and weaknesses adequately, within criteria largely set by others.	Offers, with guidance, a firm evaluation of own strengths and weaknesses.	Provides consistent evidence of an assured capability in self-evaluation.	Provides evidence of a sustained and distinguished capability in self-evaluation.	Demonstrates evidence of outstanding ability for self-evaluation.

vii.	Autonomy in learning and subject-specific skill use	No significant evidence of autonomy or willingness to take responsibility for own learning.	Fails to display adequate autonomy responsibility for own learning.	Displays responsibility for own learning with appropriate support and with limited autonomy. With respect to subject-specific skill, is able to act with limited autonomy, under direction or supervision, within defined guidelines.	Good evidence of an ability to take responsibility for own learning and operate with limited autonomy in predictable defined contexts.	Provides consistent evidence of an assured capability to work autonomously with guidance in varied structured contexts.	Provides evidence of a sustained and very strong ability to operate autonomously with guidance in varied structured contexts	Displays evidence of outstanding autonomous learning.
viii.	Communications: including presentation skills	Significant lapses in academic conventions that are reasonable expected in an academic of this level. Minimal attempts at presenting the work (written or verbal) in a satisfactory manner.	Fails to display satisfactory communication skills. Report practical procedures inadequately. Work is presented in a manner that is unsatisfactory.	Communicates in a broadly satisfactory manner in a format appropriate to the discipline(s). Reports practical processes in an adequately clear and concise manner. Presents work adequately.	Communicates effectively in a format appropriate to the discipline(s). Reports practical processes in a clear and concise manner. Presents work effectively.	Displays strong communication and presentation skills in a format appropriate to the discipline(s). Reports practical processes in a commendable manner.	Communicates effectively, accurately and reliably in a format appropriate to the discipline(s). Reports practical procedures in a distinguished manner.	Demonstrates excellent presentations skills in a format applicable to the discipline(s). Reports practical processes in an outstanding way.

ix.	Problem-solving:	Insufficient grasp of the problem and significant misunderstandings of the complexity of the issues within the disciplines.	Fails to display adequacy in the application of given tools and methods to a well-defined problem, and does not appreciate the complexity of the issues in the discipline.	Applies given tools and/or methods adequately to a well-defined problem, and begins to appreciate the complexity of the issues in the discipline.	Demonstrates a sound competence in applying given tools and/or methods to a structured problem, and appreciates the complexity of the issues in the discipline.	Demonstrates a commendable competence in the application of skills to the solution of a defined problem. Display a strong appreciation of the complexity of the issues in the discipline.	Demonstrates a distinguished competence problem-solving. Makes use of a range of specialised skills in the development and evaluation of problem-solving strategies. Display a very strong appreciation of the complexity of the issues in the discipline.	Demonstrates an outstanding approach to problem solving. Displays an excellent appreciation of complex issues.
x.	Application of practical skills	Significant gaps of knowledge in the application of practical skills.	Inadequate in the application of practical skills.	Applies practical skills adequately, under direction or supervision, within defined guidelines.	Applies practical skills firmly and soundly, under direction or supervision, within defined guidelines.	Applies practical skills commendably and in an assured manner, using effectively specified standard techniques in appropriate contexts.	Applies practical skills in a very assured and distinguished manner, using effectively specified discipline-related techniques in appropriate contexts.	Applies practical skills in highly distinguished manner.

SAMPLE GRADE DESCRIPTORS FOR ASSESSMENT - LEVEL 5

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	GRADE BANDS & GRADE DESCRIPTORS						
	0-19%	20-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70% - 85%	86%+
	Significantly below pass mark	Below pass mark	Satisfactory pass	Sound pass	Good pass	Distinguished pass	Outstanding pass
<p>Knowledge base: including understanding and awareness of ethical issues</p>	<p>Draws on an extremely limited knowledge which is significantly below the required standard.</p> <p>A clear misunderstanding of key concepts and theories.</p> <p>No awareness of social and environmental of areas of study.</p>	<p>Fails to display an adequate knowledge of relevant theories, ideas, contexts and frameworks.</p> <p>Work contains an unacceptable level of misunderstanding of key concepts, principles and theories.</p> <p>Fails to demonstrate adequate awareness of the wider social and environmental implications of area(s) of study and is unable to debate these issues adequately.</p>	<p>Provides a broadly satisfactory, detailed knowledge of major theories of the discipline(s) and a broadly satisfactory awareness of a variety of ideas, contexts and frameworks.</p> <p>There may be some mis- understanding of key concepts, principles and theories.</p> <p>Where appropriate, demonstrates adequate awareness of the wider social and environmental implications of area(s) of study and is able to debate these issues in relation to more general ethical perspectives, in a manner that is broadly satisfactory.</p>	<p>Provides a firm and detailed knowledge of major theories of the discipline(s) and a sound awareness of a variety of ideas, contexts and frameworks, with no serious omissions or inaccuracies.</p> <p>Where appropriate, demonstrates a sound awareness of the wider social and environmental implications of area(s) of study and is able to debate these issues firmly in relation to more general ethical perspectives.</p>	<p>Provides a strong, detailed knowledge of major theories of the discipline(s) and an assured grasp of a variety of ideas, contexts and frameworks, with no serious omissions or inaccuracies.</p> <p>Where appropriate, demonstrates a commendable awareness of the wider social and environmental implications of area(s) of study and is able to debate these issues strongly in relation to more general ethical perspectives</p>	<p>Provides a rigorous, broad and detailed knowledge of major theories of the discipline(s) and a distinguished grasp of a variety of ideas, contexts and frameworks.</p> <p>Where appropriate, demonstrates a very strong awareness of the wider social and environmental implications of area(s) of study and is able to debate these issues strongly and competently in relation to more general ethical perspectives</p>	<p>Evidences outstanding knowledge of the subject and an excellent grasp of a variety of ideas, contexts and frameworks.</p> <p>Outstanding ability to discuss the societal and environmental link between personal values and beliefs and current ethical issues.</p>

ii.	Analysis and/or synthesis	Little or no awareness of analysis or synthesis of ideas, concepts and principles within the assessment.	Fails to provide an adequate level of analysis or synthesis.	<p>Work may be rather descriptive, but provides a broadly satisfactory analysis of a range of information, with minimum guidance using classifications / principles and can adequately compare alternative methods and techniques for obtaining information.</p> <p>Can adequately reformat a range of ideas and information towards a given purpose.</p>	Work may be rather standard and limited in theoretical grasp, but will be mostly accurate and display a sound ability to analyses and synthesise, and apply standard methods and techniques with minimal guidance.	Provides clear evidence of strong and considered analysis and synthesis.	Demonstrates strong and sustained ability to analyses and syntheses in a considered manner.	Demonstrates and outstanding ability for analysis and synthesis.
iii.	Evaluation and/or application	Little of no awareness of evaluation and application. Fails to identify key aspects of the problem and no made no attempts to resolve them.	Fails to provide an adequate level of evaluation and application.	<p>Selects appropriate techniques of evaluation and provides broadly satisfactory evaluations of the relevance and significance of collected data. Identifies key elements of problems, and chooses appropriate methods for their resolution, in a manner that is considered and broadly satisfactory.</p>	<p>Provides some sound evaluations and applications using a variety of standard techniques.</p> <p>Demonstrates a firm appreciation of the complexity of issues</p>	<p>Clear evidence of strong and considered evaluation and application.</p> <p>Demonstrates a commendable appreciation of the complexity of issues</p>	<p>Demonstrates strong, sustained ability to evaluate in a considered manner.</p> <p>Develops authoritative arguments and judgements through application appropriate to the field of study and assessment task.</p> <p>Demonstrates a distinguished appreciation of the complexity of issues</p>	Demonstrates outstanding ability for evaluation, identifying complex issues and the construction of effective arguments.

iv	Group working	Minimal attempts at team / learning group work. Cannot respond when prompted and significant failings in ability to give and receive information	<p>Fails to interact adequately within a team / learning group.</p> <p>Fails to display an adequate ability to give and receive information and ideas and, where appropriate, modify responses in an adequate manner</p>	<p>Interacts within a team / learning group in a manner that is broadly satisfactory.</p> <p>Gives and receives information and ideas and, where appropriate, modifies responses in an adequate manner</p>	<p>Interacts within a team / learning group in a competent manner.</p> <p>Gives and receives information and ideas and, where appropriate, modifies responses in a firm manner.</p>	<p>Interacts within a team / learning group in a commendable manner.</p> <p>Gives and receives information and idea and, where appropriate, modifies responses in a strong and commendable manner.</p>	<p>Interacts within a team / learning group in a very strong and distinguished manner.</p> <p>Gives and receives information and idea and, where appropriate, modifies responses in a very strong and distinguished manner.</p>	Displays excellent team working skills, and produces outstanding responses to receiving information.
v	Research: including use of learning resources and management of information	Insufficient use of discipline related resources. Clear failings in use of information, its presentation and no evidence of additional research tasks.	<p>Fails to manage learning, uses discipline-related resources, and develop discipline-related working relationships in an adequate manner.</p> <p>Fails to demonstrate an adequate ability to manage information (including referencing sources), collect appropriate data and undertake simple research tasks.</p>	<p>Manages learning, uses discipline-related resources, and develops discipline-related working relationships in a manner that is broadly satisfactory, but with some limitations.</p> <p>Manages information (including referencing sources), collects appropriate data from a range of sources and develops appropriate research strategies, in a manner that is adequate but with some limitations.</p>	<p>Manages learning, uses discipline-related resources, and develops discipline-related working relationships in a sound manner.</p> <p>Manages information (including referencing sources), collects appropriate data from a range of sources and develops appropriate research strategies soundly.</p>	<p>Manages learning, uses discipline-related resources, and develops discipline-related working relationships in a strong and commendable manner.</p> <p>Manages information (including referencing sources), collects appropriate data from a range of sources and develops appropriate research strategies commendably.</p>	<p>Works using and accesses learning resources in a confident and distinguished manner.</p> <p>Manages information (including referencing sources), collects appropriate data from a range of sources and develops appropriate research strategies in a distinguished manner.</p>	Displays outstanding ability to access and manage pertinent learning resources.

vi	Self-evaluation	No evidence of self-evaluation. No evidence of consideration for original thought and opinions	Fails to evaluate own strengths and weaknesses adequately. Fails to challenge received opinion and develop own criteria and judgement adequately.	Evaluates own strengths and weaknesses adequately. Challenges received opinion and develops own criteria and judgement in a manner that is broadly satisfactory.	Evaluates own strengths and weaknesses firmly. Challenges received opinion and develops own criteria and judgement in a sound manner.	Provides consistent evidence of an assured capability in self-evaluation. Challenges received opinion and develops own criteria and judgement in a commendable manner.	Provides evidence of a sustained and distinguished capability in self-evaluation. Challenges received opinion and develops own criteria and judgement in a distinguished manner.	Provides evidence of outstanding ability for self-evaluation. Works with and questions opinions highly effectively, leading to formulating own criteria.
vi i.	Autonomy in learning and subject-specific skill use	Fails to meet the requirements of the task with clear omissions and where applicable no application of subject specific skills.	Fails to display adequate autonomy responsibility for own learning. Fails to display an adequate use of subject specific skills with direct supervision.	Takes adequate responsibility for own learning adequately and with minimum direction. With respect to subject- specific skill, is able to act with reduced need for supervision and direction, within defined guidelines and predictable contexts.	Good evidence of an ability to take firm responsibility for own learning, with some capability to challenge received opinion and form own judgements.	Provides consistent evidence of an ability to take firm responsibility for own learning, and a capability to challenge received opinion and form own judgements.	Provides clear evidence of a sustained and very strong capability to operate autonomously with minimal guidance.	Provides outstanding evidence of autonomous learning with minimal guidance

vi ii.	Communications: including presentation skills	Clear omissions of academic conventions at the required level. Work is significantly below the	Fails to display satisfactory communication skills. Report practical procedures inadequately. Work is presented in a manner that is unsatisfactory.	Communicates in a broadly satisfactory way, in a manner that is appropriate to the discipline(s). Reports practical processes in an adequately clear and concise manner in a	Communicates competently in a manner appropriate to the discipline(s). Reports practical processes in a clear and concise manner.	Displays strong communication and presentation skills in a format appropriate to the discipline(s). Reports practical processes in a commendable	Outputs are communicated effectively, accurately and reliably in a format appropriate to the discipline(s). Reports practical processes in a	Demonstrates excellent presentations skills in a format applicable to the discipline(s). Reports practical processes in an outstanding way.
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		expected level of presentation.		variety of formats. Presents work in a manner that is broadly satisfactory.	Presents work effectively.	manner.	distinguished manner.	
ix.	Problem-solving:	Clear inability to identify and investigate problems to resolution.	Fails to identify key areas of problems and choose appropriate tools / methods for their resolution.	Identifies key areas of problems and chooses appropriate tools / methods for their resolution in a manner that is broadly satisfactory.	Demonstrates a sound competence in applying given tools and/or methods to a structured problem, and appreciates the complexity of the issues in the discipline.	Demonstrates a commendable competence in applying relevant tools and/or methods to a defined problem. Display a strong appreciation of the complexity of the issues in the discipline.	Demonstrates a distinguished competence in problem-solving. Provides strong evidence of competence in applying specialised skills to plan, develop and evaluate problem-solving strategies. Display a very strong appreciation of the complexity of the issues in the discipline.	Demonstrates an outstanding approach to problem solving. Displays an excellent appreciation of complex issues.
x.	Application of practical skills	Significant failings in the ability to display the required level of skills or techniques.	Fails to operate satisfactorily in situations of varying complexity and predictability, where the application of a range of techniques is required.	Operates in a broadly satisfactory manner in situations of varying complexity and predictability requiring application of a wide range of techniques.	Applies practical skills firmly and soundly, and with increased autonomy.	Applies practical skills commendably and in an assured manner, using effectively a range of techniques in situations of varying complexity and predictability.	Applies practical skills in a very assured and distinguished manner, using a range of techniques highly effectively, in situations of varying complexity and predictability.	Applies practical skills in outstanding manner, and in situations of varying complexity and predictability.

SAMPLE GRADE DESCRIPTORS FOR ASSESSMENT – LEVEL 6

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA		GRADE BANDS & GRADE DESCRIPTORS						
		0-19%	20-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70% -85%	86%+
		Significantly below pass mark	Below pass mark	Satisfactory pass	Sound pass	Good pass	Distinguished pass	Outstanding pass
i.	Knowledge base: including understanding and awareness of ethical issues	<p>The student has shown significant and consistent failings in key areas.</p> <p>The student has shown a clear lack of understanding of subject specific paradigms, concepts and principles.</p>	<p>The student's knowledge and understanding of the subject is inadequate, without the required breadth or depth, with deficiencies in key areas.</p> <p>The student has demonstrated inadequate understanding of subject-specific theories, paradigms, concepts and principles, including their limitations and ambiguities.</p>	<p>The student has demonstrated a depth of knowledge and understanding in key aspects of their field of study, sufficient to deal with terminology, facts and concepts.</p> <p>The student has demonstrated an understanding of subject specific theories, paradigms, concepts and principles.</p>	<p>The student has demonstrated a sound breadth and depth of subject knowledge and understanding, if sometimes balanced towards the descriptive rather than the critical or analytical.</p> <p>The student has consistently demonstrated an understanding of subject-specific theories, paradigms, concepts and principles as well as more specialised areas.</p>	<p>The student has demonstrated sophisticated breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding, showing a clear, critical insight.</p> <p>The student has demonstrated a thorough understanding of subject-specific theories, paradigms, concepts and principles, and a sound understanding of more specialised areas.</p>	<p>The student has shown exceptional knowledge and understanding, significantly beyond the threshold expectation of a graduate at this level and beyond what has been taught.</p> <p>The student has demonstrated an exceptional understanding of subject-specific theories, paradigms, concepts and in-depth knowledge, if not mastery of a range of specialised areas.</p>	<p>The student has shown outstanding, and publishable, knowledge and understanding, significantly beyond the threshold expectation of a graduate at this level and beyond what has been taught.</p> <p>The student has demonstrated an outstanding understanding of subject-specific theories, paradigms, concepts and principles, and in-depth knowledge, if not scholarly command of a range of specialised areas.</p>

ii.	Cognitive skills to include analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis	<p>The student has failed to make adequate use of set sources. They have significant failing in the ability to select and evaluate reading and research.</p> <p>There is no structure to the students arguments and no attempts to critically evaluate or analyse arguments. Work is purely descriptive in nature.</p>	<p>The student has displayed an over-reliance on set sources.</p> <p>They have not demonstrated an adequate ability to select and evaluate reading and research.</p> <p>The student's arguments and explanations are weak and/or poorly constructed, and they are not able to critically evaluate the arguments of others or consider alternative views.</p>	<p>The student has demonstrated the ability to select, evaluate and comment on reading, research and primary sources.</p> <p>The student has shown the ability to devise and sustain an argument, with some consideration of alternative views, and can explain often complex matters and ideas.</p>	<p>The student has selected, evaluated and commented on reading, research and primary sources, sometimes beyond the set range.</p> <p>The student has argued logically, with supporting evidence, and has demonstrated the ability to consider and evaluate a range of views and information.</p> <p>They have clearly and consistently explained complex matters and ideas.</p>	<p>The student has thoroughly selected, critically evaluated and commented on reading, research and primary sources, usually beyond the set range.</p> <p>The student has demonstrated the ability to make coherent, substantiated arguments, as well as the ability to consider, critically evaluate and synthesise a range of views and information.</p> <p>They have demonstrated a thorough, perceptive and thoughtful interpretation of complex matters and ideas.</p>	<p>The student has demonstrated an exceptional ability to select, consider, evaluate, comment on and synthesise a broad range of research, primary sources, views and information and integrate references.</p> <p>The student has made consistent, logical, coherently developed, and substantiated arguments, and demonstrated the ability to systematically consider, critically evaluate and synthesise a wide range of views and information.</p> <p>They have demonstrated sophisticated perception, critical insight and interpretation of complex matters and ideas.</p>	<p>The student has demonstrated an outstanding ability to select, consider, evaluate, comment on and synthesise a broad and highly pertinent range of research, primary sources, views and information and integrate references.</p> <p>The student has made consistent, logical, coherently developed, and substantiated arguments, and demonstrated the ability to systematically consider, critically evaluate and synthesise a wide range of views and information, leading to evidence-based own ideas.</p> <p>They have demonstrated sophisticated perception, critical insight and interpretation of complex matters and ideas.</p>
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iii.	Group working	The student has consistently not contributed to group discussions and/or project work at the required standard	The student has made infrequent contributions to group discussions and/or project work.	The student has demonstrated a capability of making useful contributions to group discussions and/or project work.	The student has consistently demonstrated the capability to make coherent and constructive contributions to group discussions and/or project work.	The student has demonstrated the capability to make strong, valuable contributions to group discussions and/or project work, with an understanding of team and leadership roles	The student has demonstrated the capability to make clear, authoritative and valuable contributions to group discussions and/or project work, with exceptional teamwork and leadership skills	The student has demonstrated the capability to make outstanding, authoritative and valuable contributions to group discussions and/or project work, with exceptional teamwork and leadership skills
iv.	Research: including use of learning resources and management of information	Minimal evidence with significant failings of background investigation, analysis, research, enquiry.	The student has not produced sufficient evidence of background investigation, analysis, research, enquiry and/or study.	The student has conducted general background investigation, analysis, research, enquiry and/or study using established techniques, with the ability to extract relevant points.	The student has conducted background investigation, analysis, research, enquiry and/or study using established techniques accurately, and can critically appraise academic sources.	The student has conducted thorough background investigation, analysis, research, enquiry and/or study using established techniques accurately, and possesses a well-developed ability to critically appraise a wide range of sources	The student has conducted independent, extensive and appropriate investigation, analysis, research, enquiry and/or study well beyond the usual range, together with critical evaluation, to advance work and/or direct arguments	The student has conducted independent, extensive, outstanding and appropriate investigation, analysis, research, enquiry and/or study well beyond the usual range, together with critical and scholarly evaluation, to advance work and/or direct arguments.

v.	Self-evaluation	Minimal evidence of reflective practice and self-evaluation. No use of recognized model of reflection and/or self-evaluation.	Did not consistently demonstrate ability to reflect on their work.	Demonstrated some ability to reflect on their work.	Demonstrated an ability to reflect on their work.	Demonstrated an ability to reflect critically on their work.	Consistently demonstrated ability to reflect critically and independently on their work.	Consistently demonstrated an outstanding ability to reflect critically and independently on their work
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vi.	Autonomy in learning and subject-specific skill use	<p>Minimal attempts of initiative and significant failings of personal responsibility.</p> <p>With respect to subject-specific skills requires constant supervision and/or direction in order to complete the set task.</p>	<p>Did not consistently demonstrate adequate initiative and personal responsibility.</p> <p>With respect to subject-specific skills requires a high level of supervision and/or direction. The student has shown little or no real creativity.</p>	<p>Demonstrated initiative and exercised personal responsibility consistently</p> <p>With respect to subject-specific skill, can act with an adequate degree of autonomy, under minimal supervision or direction, and within agreed guidelines.</p> <p>The student has produced some creative work.</p>	<p>Demonstrated initiative and personal responsibility</p> <p>Good evidence of an ability to take firm responsibility for own learning, with some capability to challenge received opinion and form own judgements.</p> <p>The student has consistently demonstrated creativity.</p>	<p>Demonstrated good initiative and personal responsibility</p> <p>Provides consistent and strong evidence of a commendable ability to take firm responsibility for own learning, challenge received opinion, and form own judgements.</p> <p>The student has shown a high level of creativity and originality throughout their work.</p>	<p>Demonstrated exceptional initiative and personal responsibility</p> <p>Provides sustained and very strong evidence of a distinguished ability to take firm responsibility for own learning, challenge received opinion, and form own judgements.</p> <p>The student has demonstrated exceptional creative flair and originality.</p>	<p>Demonstrated outstanding initiative and personal responsibility, combined with the highest levels of originality of thought.</p>
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vii.	<p>Communications: including presentation skills</p>	<p>There are significant failings in the presentation of the work.</p> <p>There is insufficient processing and interpretation of data.</p>	<p>The student has not presented their research findings clearly or effectively, and their gathering, processing and interpretation of data is unsatisfactory.</p> <p>The student is not able to sufficiently express ideas and convey clear meaning verbally, electronically and/or in writing, uses inaccurate terminology, with many errors in spelling, vocabulary and syntax.</p> <p>They have been unable to demonstrate consistently basic numeracy and digital literacy skills.</p>	<p>The student has presented their research findings, in several formats, and has gathered, processed and interpreted data effectively.</p> <p>The student can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions verbally, electronically and in writing, with clear expression and style.</p> <p>They have also demonstrated numeracy and digital literacy skills.</p>	<p>The student has consistently presented their research findings effectively and appropriately in many formats, and has gathered, processed and interpreted data efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>The student can consistently and confidently communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions verbally, electronically and in writing.</p> <p>They show a clear, coherent, expressive style, with a range of vocabulary. They have consistently demonstrated strong numeracy and digital literacy skills.</p>	<p>The student has presented thorough research findings perceptively and appropriately in a wide range of formats, and has gathered, processed and interpreted a wide range of complex data efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>The student can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions with a high-degree of proficiency verbally, electronically and in writing.</p> <p>They have a clear, fluent and expressive style with appropriate vocabulary. They have a high standard of numeracy and digital literacy skills.</p>	<p>The student has presented research findings perceptively, convincingly and appropriately in a wide range of formats, and has gathered, processed and interpreted a wide range of complex data efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>The student can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to an accomplished level verbally, electronically and in writing.</p> <p>They have shown an accurate, fluent, sophisticated style.</p> <p>They possess exceptional numeracy and digital literacy skills.</p>	<p>The student has presented outstanding research findings perceptively, convincingly and appropriately in a wide range of formats, and has gathered, processed and interpreted to the highest standard a wide range of complex data efficiently and effectively.</p> <p>The student can communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to an outstanding level verbally, electronically and in writing.</p> <p>They have shown an accurate, fluent, sophisticated, and potentially publishable style.</p> <p>They possess outstanding numeracy and digital literacy skills.</p>
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viii	Problem-solving:	The student has shown minimal attempts at problem solving and/or decision making.	The student has shown a limited ability to solve problems and/or make decisions.	The student has demonstrated an ability to solve problems, applying a range of methods to do so, and the ability to make decisions in complex and unpredictable circumstances.	The student has consistently solved complex problems, selecting and applying a range of appropriate methods, and can make decisions in complex and unpredictable circumstances.	The student has demonstrated thorough problem-solving skills, selecting and justifying their use of a wide-range of methods, and can make decisions in complex and unpredictable circumstances with a degree of autonomy.	The student has demonstrated a wide range of extremely well-developed problem-solving skills, as well as a strong aptitude for decision-making with a high degree of autonomy, in the most complex and unpredictable circumstances.	The student has demonstrated an outstanding range of extremely well-developed problem-solving skills, as well as a highly distinguished aptitude for decision-making with a high degree of autonomy, in the most complex and unpredictable circumstances.
ix.	Application of practical skills	The students attempted practical tasks without a set procedural or mechanistic formula with multiple errors with no independence. Significant omissions of technical, creative and/or artistic skills in most areas.	The student has attempted practical tasks/processes but followed a limited, procedural or mechanistic formula, and they contain errors, with little or no independence. The student has demonstrated a lack of technical, creative and/or artistic skills in most, or key, areas.	The student has completed practical tasks and/or processes accurately and with a degree of independence. The student has demonstrated technical, creative and/or artistic skills.	The student has consistently completed practical tasks/processes mainly independently in an accurate, well-coordinated and proficient way. The student has consistently demonstrated well-developed technical, creative and/or artistic skills.	The student has performed practical tasks and/or processes autonomously, with accuracy and coordination. The student has a thorough command of highly-developed relevant technical, creative and/or artistic skills.	The student has autonomously completed practical tasks and/or processes with a high degree of accuracy, coordination and proficiency. The student has a full range of exceptional technical, creative and/or artistic skills.	The student has autonomously completed practical tasks and/or processes with an exceptional degree of accuracy, coordination and proficiency. The student has a full and sophisticated range of exceptional technical, creative and/or artistic skills.

SAMPLE GRADE DESCRIPTORS FOR ASSESSMENT – LEVEL 7

GRADE BANDS AND GRADE DESCRIPTIONS						
	FAIL		PASS	MERIT	DISTINCTION	DISTINCTION
	0-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-85%	86-100%
ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	Work that falls well short of the threshold standards	Work that contains significant limitations	<p>Capable quality</p> <p><i>Informal description: ‘a passable submission evidencing the application of L7 reading, writing, and thinking’</i></p> <p><i>Key words: satisfactory, appropriate</i></p>	<p>Commendable quality</p> <p><i>Informal description: ‘a good-very good L7 submission in which the author goes beyond the minimum pass standard expected’</i></p> <p><i>Key words: good, commendable</i></p>	<p>Excellent quality</p> <p><i>Informal description: ‘an excellent submission; potentially suitable for eventual use in a non-peer reviewed publication’</i></p> <p><i>Key words: excellent, clear</i></p>	<p>Distinguished quality</p> <p><i>Informal description: ‘a distinguished submission; likely to be suitable for eventual use in a published peer reviewed format’</i></p> <p><i>Key word: distinguished</i></p>
XI Knowledge base: including understanding and awareness of ethical issues	<p>Fails to display adequate understanding of knowledge in the specialised area of study. Fails to display a satisfactory awareness of current issues.</p> <p>Displays a very limited ability to work with theoretical/research-based knowledge at the forefront of their academic discipline.</p>	<p>Demonstrates some understanding of knowledge in the specialised area of study, but with significant limitations.</p> <p>Demonstrates some awareness of current issues, but with significant limitations.</p> <p>Displays a limited ability to work with theoretical/research-based knowledge at the forefront of their</p>	<p>Demonstrates an appropriate level of understanding of knowledge in the specialised area of study.</p> <p>Displays a critical awareness of current issues and some ability to work with theoretical/research-based knowledge at the forefront of their academic discipline.</p> <p>Displays a broadly sound understanding of techniques and methodologies applicable to their</p>	<p>Demonstrates a detailed and systematic understanding of knowledge in the specialised area of study.</p> <p>Displays a good critical awareness of current issues and a commendable ability to work with theoretical/research-based knowledge at the forefront of their academic discipline.</p> <p>Displays a good comprehensive understanding of</p>	<p>Demonstrates an excellent, in-depth and systematic understanding of knowledge in the specialised area of study.</p> <p>Displays a highly critical awareness of current issues and an excellent ability to work with theoretical/research-based knowledge at the forefront of their academic discipline.</p> <p>Displays an excellent understanding of</p>	<p>Demonstrates a distinguished, in-depth and research-informed understanding of knowledge in the specialised area of study.</p> <p>Displays a highly critical awareness of current issues and a distinguished ability to work with theoretical/research-based knowledge at the forefront of their academic discipline.</p> <p>Displays a distinguished understanding of techniques and</p>

	<p>Fails to display an adequate understanding of techniques and methodologies applicable to their own work.</p> <p>Fails to demonstrate an adequate awareness of the implications of ethical dilemmas.</p>	<p>academic discipline.</p> <p>Displays some understanding of techniques and methodologies applicable to their own work, but with significant limitations. Show some awareness of, but displays a limited ability to manage the implications of ethical dilemmas.</p>	<p>own work.</p> <p>Is aware of, and displays an ability to manage the implications of ethical dilemmas and work actively with others to formulate solutions.</p>	<p>techniques and methodologies applicable to their own work.</p> <p>Is aware of, and displays a commendable ability to manage the implications of ethical dilemmas and work actively with others to formulate solutions.</p>	<p>techniques and methodologies applicable to their own work.</p> <p>Is strongly aware of, and displays an excellent ability to manage the implications of ethical dilemmas and work pro-actively with others to formulate solutions.</p>	<p>methodologies applicable to their own work.</p> <p>Is very strongly aware of, and displays a distinguished ability to manage the implications of ethical dilemmas and work pro-actively with others to formulate solutions.</p>
<p>XII</p> <p>Analysis and/or synthesis</p>	<p>Fails to display adequate skills of analysis and/or synthesis.</p>	<p>Demonstrates some ability for systematic analytical and synthetic engagement, but with significant limitations.</p>	<p>Demonstrate a sound capability for synthesis and analysis of knowledge.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a good ability to integrate skills of advanced analysis and synthesis with critical awareness.</p> <p>Provides a commendable analysis of a number of areas of knowledge.</p>	<p>Demonstrates an ability to work with creativity and using insights at the forefront of the area of study.</p> <p>Demonstrates excellent skills in the analysis of complex, incomplete or contradictory areas of knowledge.</p>	<p>Demonstrates an ability to work with creativity and originality using insights at the forefront of the area of study.</p> <p>Demonstrates distinguished advanced skills in the analysis of complex, incomplete or contradictory areas of knowledge.</p>
<p>XIII</p> <p>Evaluation and/or application</p>	<p>Demonstrates a seriously limited ability to engage in an adequate level of evaluation and application.</p>	<p>Provides some evidence of an ability to evaluate research, advanced scholarship and methodologies, but with significant limitations.</p>	<p>Provides satisfactory evidence of an ability to evaluate research, advanced scholarship and methodologies.</p> <p>Demonstrates satisfactory initiative and originality in</p>	<p>Provides evidence of a commendable ability to critically evaluate research, advanced scholarship and methodologies, and argue alternative approaches.</p> <p>Demonstrates</p>	<p>Provides clear evidence of an excellent ability to critically evaluate research, scholarship and methodologies, and argue alternative approaches.</p> <p>Demonstrates</p>	<p>Provides clear evidence of a distinguished ability to critically evaluate research, advanced scholarship and methodologies, and argue persuasively alternative approaches.</p> <p>Demonstrates</p>

		<p>Demonstrates limited initiative and originality in problem-solving and application. Can act with only a limited degree of autonomy in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.</p> <p>Displays significant limitations in making decisions in complex and unpredictable situations.</p>	<p>problem-solving and application.</p> <p>Can act with a satisfactory degree of autonomy in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level, making decisions in a range of situations.</p>	<p>commendable initiative and in problem- solving and application.</p> <p>Can act with a good degree of autonomy in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level, making decisions in a range of situations.</p>	<p>excellent initiative and some originality in problem- solving and application.</p> <p>Can act with a high degree of autonomy in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level, making some decisions in complex and unpredictable situations.</p>	<p>distinguished initiative and originality in problem- solving and application.</p> <p>Can act with a very high degree of autonomy in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level, making decisions successfully in complex and unpredictable situations.</p>
XIV Group-working	<p>Fails to demonstrate an adequate ability to: work effectively with a group; to clarify tasks and make appropriate use of the capabilities of group members; and to negotiate and handle conflict.</p>	<p>Demonstrates some capability to work with a group, as leader or member, but with significant limitations.</p> <p>Displays some capability to clarify tasks and make appropriate use of the capabilities of group members, but with significant limitations.</p> <p>Displays a limited</p>	<p>Demonstrates capability to work effectively with a group, as leader or member.</p> <p>Displays ability to clarify tasks and make appropriate use of the capabilities of group members.</p> <p>Displays a capability to negotiate and handle conflict</p>	<p>Demonstrates a commendable and professional ability to work effectively with a group, as leader or member.</p> <p>Displays a good ability to clarify tasks and make appropriate use of the capabilities of group members.</p> <p>Displays a commendable ability to negotiate and handle conflict.</p>	<p>Demonstrates an excellent and highly professional ability to work effectively with a group, as leader or member.</p> <p>Displays an excellent ability to clarify tasks and make appropriate use of the capabilities of group members.</p> <p>Displays an excellent ability to negotiate and handle conflict.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a distinguished and highly professional ability to work effectively with a group, as leader or member.</p> <p>Displays a distinguished ability to clarify tasks and makes appropriate use of the capabilities of group members.</p> <p>Displays a distinguished and highly confident ability to negotiate and handle conflict.</p>

		capability to negotiate and handle conflict.				
XV Research: including use of learning resources and management of information	Fails to displays ability to undertake research tasks with minimum guidance. Does not make use of an adequate range of learning resources.	Displays some ability to undertake research tasks, but with significant limitations and the requirement of guidance. Uses a limited range of learning resources.	Displays a sound ability to undertake research tasks with minimum guidance. Demonstrates ability to make use of a full range of learning resources.	Displays a good ability to undertake research tasks with minimum guidance. Demonstrates confidence and a commendable ability to make use of a full range of learning resources.	Displays an excellent ability to undertake advanced research tasks with minimum guidance. Demonstrates a high degree of confidence and an excellent ability to make use of a comprehensive range of learning resources.	Displays an excellent ability to undertake advanced research tasks with minimum guidance. Demonstrates a high degree of confidence and a distinguished ability to make use of a comprehensive range of learning resources.
XVI Self-evaluation	Fails to demonstrate adequate ability to reflect on own and others functioning in order to improve practice.	Demonstrates some ability to reflect on own and others functioning, but with significant limitations in process and outcomes.	Demonstrates a satisfactory ability to reflect on own and others functioning in order to improve practice.	Demonstrates a good ability to reflect on own and others functioning in order to improve practice.	Demonstrates an excellent ability to reflect on own and others functioning in order to make tangible improvements in practice.	Demonstrates a highly developed ability to reflect on own and others functioning in order to make significant improvements in practice.
XVII Autonomy in learning and subject-specific skill use	Fails to display adequate ability to operate as an independent and self-critical learner. Does not exercise measured judgement. Inadequate initiative and personal responsibility in professional practice.	Displays some ability to operate as an independent and self-critical learner, but with significant limitations. Exercises a less than satisfactory level of initiative and personal responsibility in professional practice.	Displays a satisfactory ability to operate as an independent and self-critical learner, guiding the learning of others and managing own requirements for continuing professional development. Exercises some satisfactory judgement.	Displays a commendable ability to operate as an independent and self-critical learner, guiding the learning of others and managing own requirements for continuing professional development. Exercises good measured judgement. Exercises a commendable level of	Displays effective evidence of an excellent ability to operate as an independent and self-critical learner, guiding the learning of others and managing own requirements for continuing professional development. Exercises excellent measured judgement. Exercises a high level	Displays sustained evidence of an excellent ability to operate as an independent and self-critical learner, guiding the learning of others and managing own requirements for continuing professional development. Exercises distinguished measured judgement. Exercises an extremely high level of initiative and

			Exercises a satisfactory level of initiative and personal responsibility in professional practice.	initiative and personal responsibility in professional practice.	of initiative and personal responsibility in professional practice.	personal responsibility in professional practice.
XVIII Communications: including presentation skills	Fails to demonstrate an adequate level of confidence in academic and professional communication with others. Reports on action are unclear and less than competent.	Demonstrates a less than satisfactory level of confidence in academic and professional communication with others. Displays some ability to report on action, but with significant limitations.	Demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to engage in academic and professional communication with others, reporting on action with some clarity, and a satisfactory level of competence.	Demonstrates a commendable capacity to engage in academic and professional communication with others, reporting on action clearly, and with a good degree of competence.	Demonstrates an excellent capacity to engage confidently in academic and professional communication with others, reporting on action clearly, autonomously and with a high degree of competence.	Demonstrates a distinguished capacity to engage confidently in academic and professional communication with others, reporting on action clearly, autonomously and with a very high degree of competence.
XIX Problem-solving:	Fails to provide evidence of adequate judgement in complex and unpredictable professional situations. Does not demonstrate the level of independent learning ability required for continuing professional study.	Provides evidence of appropriate judgement in some professional situations, but with significant limitations in others. Demonstrates a less than satisfactory level of independent learning ability required for continuing professional study.	Provides evidence of satisfactory judgement in complex and unpredictable professional situations. Demonstrates a satisfactory level of independent learning ability required for continuing professional study, making professional use of others where appropriate.	Provides evidence of good judgement in complex and unpredictable professional situations. Demonstrates commendable independent learning ability required for continuing professional study, making good professional use of others where appropriate.	Provides evidence of confident, autonomous operation and judgement in complex and unpredictable professional situations. Demonstrates excellent independent learning ability required for continuing professional study, making excellent professional use of others where appropriate.	Provides sustained evidence of confident, autonomous operation and judgement in complex and unpredictable professional situations. Demonstrates distinguished independent learning ability required for continuing professional study, making excellent professional use of others where appropriate.

<p>XX</p> <p>Application of practical skills</p>	<p>Fails to display an adequate level of ability to operate in complex and unpredictable and/or specialised contexts, and lacks an adequate overview of the issues governing good practice.</p> <p>Fails to demonstrate an adequate level of technical expertise to professional standards.</p> <p>Does not display an ability to perform smoothly with precision and effectiveness.</p> <p>Does not display an ability to adapt skills and design or develop new skills and/or procedures for new situations.</p>	<p>Displays a limited ability to operate in complex and unpredictable and/or specialised contexts, and lacks a satisfactory overview of the issues governing good practice.</p> <p>Demonstrates a less than satisfactory level of technical expertise to professional standards.</p> <p>Displays a limited ability to perform smoothly with precision and effectiveness.</p> <p>Demonstrates a less than satisfactory ability to adapt skills and design or develop new skills and/or procedures for new situations.</p>	<p>Operates in challenging and/or specialised contexts, and has an overview of the issues governing good practice.</p> <p>Demonstrates a sound level of technical expertise to professional standards.</p> <p>Demonstrates a satisfactory ability to adapt skills and design or develop new skills and/or procedures for new situations</p>	<p>Operates well in challenging and/or specialised contexts, and has a commendable overview of the issues governing good practice.</p> <p>Demonstrates a commendable level of technical expertise to professional standards.</p> <p>Demonstrates a commendable ability to adapt skills and design or develop new skills and/or procedures for new situations.</p>	<p>Operates excellently in challenging and/or specialised contexts, and has an excellent overview of the issues governing good practice.</p> <p>Demonstrates an excellent level of technical expertise to high professional standards.</p> <p>Demonstrates an excellent ability to adapt skills and design or develop new skills and/or procedures for new situations.</p>	<p>Operates with distinction in challenging and/or specialised contexts, and has an exceptional overview of the issues governing good practice.</p> <p>Demonstrates a distinguished level of technical expertise to high professional standards.</p> <p>Demonstrates a distinguished ability to adapt skills and design or develop new skills and/or procedures for new situations.</p>
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