

### Assessment criteria for first and second year practical reports

Marks	Classification	Practical report
90, 95, 100	1 <sup>st</sup>	This write-up is close to the standard of articles found in academic journals. It is an outstanding study and write-up that shows initiative, flair and originality. The write-up is exceptional in terms of clarity, organisation of material and the correct use and reporting of descriptive and inferential statistics. The introduction and discussion show a firm understanding of the theoretical issues underlying the research. In particular the introduction is a focused account of relevant work leading up to the study conducted, and the discussion demonstrates an insightful grasp of the theoretical implications of the work. The student shows a high level of ability to criticise constructively both past research and the research that they have performed (both on methodological and theoretical grounds) and makes insightful and worthwhile suggestions for future research. There is evidence of wide, independent reading of relevant research (from up to date journal articles and books) and faultless adherence to project format conventions. Where students have been required to design the study from scratch, the design is outstanding in terms of originality, methodological rigour and theoretical significance.
82, 85	1 <sup>st</sup>	The study and write-up show initiative and originality. The write-up is well organised, and clearly written. There is good use of appropriate inferential and descriptive statistics. The introduction and discussion show an excellent understanding of the issues underlying the research, and there is some evidence that the student understands the theoretical implications of their work. The introduction is fairly focused and there is little evidence of wandering off on tangents. The student shows an excellent ability to criticise constructively both past research and the research that has been performed (both on methodological and theoretical grounds) and to make insightful and worthwhile suggestions for future research. There is some evidence of independent reading of relevant research (from up to date journal articles and books) and there are few errors in adherence to project format conventions. Where students have been required to design the study from scratch, the design is very good in terms of originality, methodological rigour and theoretical significance.
72, 75, 78	1 <sup>st</sup>	The study and write-up show some degree of originality and invention. The write-up is well organised and clearly written, and the student demonstrates a reasonable understanding of theoretical and methodological issues. Appropriate inferential and descriptive statistics are competently conducted and reported (although some small errors may be acceptable). The introduction may be slightly less focused than for higher marking bands but largely avoids mentioning work not directly relevant to the current research. The discussion shows a good understanding of the theoretical issues underlying the research. The student shows some ability to make non-trivial criticisms of past research and of their own study (both on methodological and theoretical grounds) and to make insightful and worthwhile suggestions for future research. There is evidence of some independent reading of relevant research (from up to date journal articles and books), supplementing references already provided on the reading list. There can be minor errors in terms of adherence to project format conventions. Where students have been required to design the study from scratch, the design is good in terms of originality, methodological rigour and theoretical significance.

62, 65, 68	2.1	This is a basically sound project. The write-up is fairly well organised, and clearly written (possibly with some minor lapses of clarity). The introduction may not be as focused as in higher marking bands but the key relevant material is included. Results are presented and analysed properly (appropriate statistical tests, clear descriptive statistics) although there may be some trivial errors. The discussion includes a competent attempt to relate the findings to previous theoretical and empirical research; however, the exposition of theoretical implications is less than in higher bands. The student makes some attempt to criticise constructively their own and past research (both on methodological and theoretical grounds) but these may contain some trivial observations. Sensible suggestions for future research are made. Background material used for introduction and discussion does not go substantially beyond that mentioned on the reading list. Some errors in adherence to project format guidelines will be tolerated. Where students have been required to design the study from scratch, the student has produced a competently designed, methodologically rigorous study.
52, 55, 58	2.2	This is an adequately organized and moderately competent project, but it may contain some of the following limitations: lack of adherence to standard format; poor organisation of material; inappropriate statistical analysis for the study in question; poor description of results; limited attempt to relate the study to previous work (theoretical and empirical); poor or clumsy expression; an inability to constructively criticise their own or past research (either on methodological and theoretical grounds) or to suggest worthwhile future research; background material used for introduction and discussion that is limited to textbooks. Where students have been required to design the study from scratch, the design is adequate in terms of methodological rigour.
42, 45, 48	3 <sup>rd</sup>	This is a perfunctory attempt at writing up the project. Some of the following problems may apply: little attention to comprehensiveness or clarity in describing the procedures used or the results obtained; possible errors in analysis; inappropriate statistical analysis for the study in question; little attempt to relate the results to relevant theoretical background material; little evidence of any ability to evaluate the theoretical or methodological limitations of the study performed; scrappy presentation. Where students have been required to design the study from scratch, the design is deficient in the sense of containing major methodological flaws or limitations that could have been foreseen and avoided.
30, 38	Fail	This is an unacceptable piece of work with some of the following deficiencies: incomplete or badly written up; very little effort put into describing the method, results and relevant background theory and research; serious errors in analysis; incoherence in presentation of background material, procedures or analysis; very poor presentation; complete lack of theoretical insight. Where students have been required to design the study from scratch, the design is inadequate to address the research issue.
0, 10, 20	Fail	The project is severely deficient in all respects. There is only a perfunctory attempt to mention relevant background theory and research, and to describe the method and results. Where students have been required to design the study from scratch, either no study was conducted or it was so poorly conceived as to be of no consequence whatsoever for the research issue.