

GLOBAL STUDIES UNDERGRADUATE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: DISSERTATION OUTLINE

Descriptor	Grade Band	Mark Range	Typical Mark	Description
Outstanding (85-100)	1 st – Highest	93-100	93 or 100	Outstanding attainment of module and/or course learning outcomes. A dissertation outline in this category clearly and consistently surpasses normal expectations, in terms of scholarship, for the relevant level of study. Work in this category typically meets the expectations of ‘excellent’ work and also: introduces original ideas and insights; is comprehensive (relative to the level of study) in its identification of relevant (in terms of breadth or depth) literature; is uniquely perceptive at evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of its sources; integrates the student’s own approach within wider scholarly frameworks; is exceptionally well written; is referenced to a professional standard.
	1 st – Outstanding	85-92	88	
Excellent (70-84)	1 st – High	80-84	82	Excellent attainment of module and/or course learning outcomes. A dissertation outline in this category typically: clearly identifies excellent objectives and rationale for the proposed research, including any research questions, hypotheses or arguments; engages directly and in-depth with relevant themes from the module/course; ; has excellent structure and organisation of material; contextualises the proposed research in relation to existing literatures, whether theoretical or empirical; shows superior evidence of critical engagement with relevant literatures, issues or topics being analysed; makes excellent use of appropriate and detailed potential examples or case studies; clearly establishes a well thought-through research design, method and sources, and the proposed chapter structure for the dissertation; identifies the potential for an excellent argument of the student’s own; contains very few referencing errors; follows all presentation requirements; is clearly and fluently written.
	1 st – Mid	75-79	77	
	1 st – Low	70-74	72	
Good to Very Good (60-69)	2.1 – High	67-69	68	Good to very good attainment of module and/or course learning outcomes. A dissertation outline in this category typically: clearly identifies the objectives and rationale for the proposed research, including any research questions, hypotheses or arguments; shows a good level of knowledge and understanding of relevant themes from the module/course; has good structure and organisation of material; contextualises the proposed research in relation to existing literatures, whether theoretical or empirical; shows clear evidence of critical engagement with relevant literatures, issues or topics being analysed; clearly identifies relevant potential examples or case studies; clearly establishes the research design, method and sources, and the proposed chapter structure for the dissertation; identifies the potential for a clear argument of the student’s own; contains few referencing errors; follows all presentation requirements; is written clearly in a comprehensible way.
	2.1 – Mid	64-66	65	
	2.1 – Low	60-63	62	
Satisfactory (50-59)	2.2 – High	57-59	58	Satisfactory attainment of module and/or course learning outcomes. A dissertation outline in this category typically: identifies some objectives and rationale for the proposed research, including any research questions, hypotheses or arguments; reflects knowledge and understanding of relevant themes from the module/course; makes an attempt to structure and organise the material (which may be more effective at the higher end of the grade band and less effective at the lower end); makes an attempt to contextualise the proposed research in relation to existing literatures, whether theoretical or empirical (which may be more effective at the higher end of the grade band and less effective at the lower end); contains accurate discussion of some relevant sources; identifies some relevant potential examples or case studies, but these may not be very detailed; establishes the research design, method and sources, and the proposed chapter structure for the dissertation; directly or indirectly identifies some potential for argument of the student’s own; shows knowledge of appropriate referencing practice but this may be inconsistently applied; follows most presentation requirements; is written in a generally comprehensible way, though may contain writing errors.
	2.2 – Mid	54-56	55	
	2.2 – Low	50-53	52	

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Weak (40-49)	3 rd – High	47-49	48	Weak attainment of module and/or course learning outcomes. A dissertation outline in this category typically: outlines weak objectives and rationale for the proposed research, including any research questions, hypotheses or arguments; reflects limited knowledge and understanding of relevant themes from the module/course; has weak structure and organisation of material; identifies some relevant literature, whether theoretical or empirical, though there may be errors in accuracy; is limited in its discussion of some relevant sources; identifies potential examples or case studies, which may have limited relevance and/or be weakly developed; is limited in its research design, method and sources, and the proposed chapter structure for the dissertation; does not indicate a potential argument in a successful way; shows some knowledge of appropriate referencing practice; follows some presentation requirements; may be unclearly written.
	3 rd – Mid	44-46	45	
	3 rd – Low	40-43	42	

Poor (20-39)	Borderline Fail	35-39	37	Poor attainment of module and/or course learning outcomes. A dissertation outline in this category typically: does not outline objectives and rationale for the proposed research, including any research questions, hypotheses or arguments; reflects very limited knowledge and understanding of relevant themes from the module/course; is poorly structured and organized; identifies and discusses few relevant sources (and/or contains significant errors in accuracy and understanding); may contain a significant amount of irrelevant material; shows little awareness of relevant examples or case studies; is very limited in its research design, method and sources, and the proposed chapter structure for the dissertation; does not indicate a potential argument; may show limited knowledge of appropriate referencing practice; may be deficient in length against the word count to an extent that noticeably undermines its scholarly quality; may be extremely unclearly written and/or presented.
	Fail	20-34	30	
Very Poor (1-19)	Bad Fail	1-19	15	Very poor attainment of module and/or course learning outcomes. A dissertation outline in this category typically: does not outline the objectives and rationale for the proposed research, including any research questions, hypotheses or arguments; reflects almost no knowledge and understanding of relevant themes from the module/course; is very poorly structured and organized; identifies and discusses no relevant sources (and/or contains no significant evidence of accuracy and understanding); may contain a significant amount of irrelevant material; shows very poor awareness of relevant examples or case studies; has no research design, method and sources, or proposed chapter structure for the dissertation; may show very limited knowledge of appropriate referencing practice; may be deficient in length against the word count to an extent that significantly undermines its scholarly quality; may be extremely unclearly written and/or presented.
Absence of Positive Qualities (0)	Zero	0	0	No demonstrable attainment of module and/or course learning outcomes. A dissertation outline in this category typically: has not been submitted; is not the coursework that has been assigned; has been submitted after the late-penalty period has elapsed; and/or has had a penalty applied for major academic misconduct.

