

General assessment criteria for **essay answers** (NB. Referencing, citations, bibliography are not required in exam)

Level indicators L3, L4, L5 and L6: stratification of some criteria by level are given where appropriate, indicated by * and found at bottom of first section

Mark/ Class	Scientific content and understanding	Organisation and presentation of ideas	Scientific writing and tone “formal academic tone”	Referencing, citations, bibliography
80 - 100% 1st	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shows a full understanding of the subject area and the wider context that is evident of extensive reading and research around the subject area. 2. demonstrates a sophisticated level of independent judgement and critical analysis of the material presented** 3. comprehensively covers the required content and places it within the wider context 4. demonstrates consistent ability to think around the subject area with a creative integration of a wide range of material and sources 5. all introductory and background content is highly relevant and pertinent to the content. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. able to synthesize information from extensive range of sources, including the wider context,* to support all key ideas and arguments** 2. all ideas and arguments are presented in a clear, logical and coherent way 3. key ideas and arguments are purposefully developed with originality and imagination throughout the essay 4. all key ideas and arguments are presented with evidence, and evidence is systematically grouped with explicit conclusions, patterns or trends 5. all key ideas and arguments are presented eloquently such that the reader knows at all points where the argument is and where it is going 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. compelling but neutral academic tone with an air of informed balance* 2. sophisticated use of formal academic language and appropriate terminology 3. nuanced statements that distinguish between established facts and speculation are the mainstay of arguments 4. succinct, precise and accurate statements are persuasive and eloquent 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. discerning selection of references from within and beyond recommended sources 2. all key statements and ideas are validated with a relevant reference correctly acknowledged with appropriate balanced use of paraphrasing, summarising and quoting 3. original primary research studies are referenced in the main 4. each citation has a consistent format, punctuation and order in the proper academic form

Mark/ Class	Scientific content and understanding	Organisation and presentation of ideas	Scientific writing and tone “formal academic tone”	Referencing, citations, bibliography
	<p>L3 * broad knowledge and understanding of the main concepts and terminology in a defined area of study, ** shows awareness of current areas of debate in a defined area of study</p> <p>L4 *broad knowledge and understanding of main concepts and terminology, **shows awareness of ambiguities & limitations of knowledge (and that some areas are open to ongoing debate and reformulation)</p> <p>L5 *detailed knowledge and understanding of well-established material, concepts and theories, **shows awareness of the limitation of their knowledge and how this influences any analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge (and where the knowledge base is most/least secure)</p> <p>L6 *detailed systematic knowledge and understanding of the main theories/concepts of the discipline(s) and inter-relationships with other disciplines, **shows understanding and knowledge of current problems &/or new insights at forefront of field &/or in specialist areas &/or multiple perspectives possible, evident of extensive reading and research around the subject area..</p>	<p>L3 * collate and categorize information from defined sources, ** to support pre-defined or familiar arguments or ideas</p> <p>L4 *collect and categorise information from a variety of sources, **to support well-established/familiar arguments or ideas</p> <p>L5 *judiciously select information from a range of sources, **to support the development of new arguments or ideas</p> <p>L6 * judiciously select information from a range of sources, **to critically evaluate novel, contradictory or complex arguments or ideas</p>	<p>L3 *able to present competing views in a defined area of study</p> <p>L4 *able to present competing views in proportion to their representation in reliable or provided sources</p> <p>L5 *able to describe disputes impartially without engaging in dispute</p> <p>L6 *able to indicate the relative prominence of opposing arguments and the majority/minority viewpoints</p>	<p>Criteria applies to L3-L7 equally.</p>

Mark/ Class	Scientific content and understanding	Organisation and presentation of ideas	Scientific writing and tone “formal academic tone”	Referencing, citations, bibliography
70-80% 1st	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. shows a full understanding of the subject area* 2. shows an independent and critical judgement of the material presented** 3. comprehensively covers all key points in answer to the essay question 4. demonstrates consistent ability to think around the subject area 5. no more than ~15% on introductory material &/or unnecessary background material 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. able to synthesize information from extensive range of sources* to support key ideas and arguments** 2. all ideas and arguments are presented in a clear, logical and coherent way 3. key ideas and arguments are developed throughout the essay, with each element building on the last 4. key ideas and arguments are presented with evidence, and evidence is grouped with explicit conclusions, patterns or trends 5. all key ideas and arguments have lead-ins such that the reader knows at all points where the argument is and where it is going 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. neutral academic tone with an air of informed balance* 2. consistent use of formal academic language without unnecessary jargon or colloquial expressions 3. statements of fact are the mainstay of argument 4. succinct, precise and accurate statements 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. outstanding breadth and depth of reading demonstrated and used with discrimination to support the answer 2. all key statements and ideas are validated with a relevant reference correctly acknowledged with appropriate balanced use of paraphrasing, summarising and quoting 3. original primary research studies are referenced in the main 4. each citation has a consistent format, punctuation and order in the proper academic form

Mark/ Class	Scientific content and understanding	Organisation and presentation of ideas	Scientific writing and tone “formal academic tone”	Referencing, citations, bibliography
60-69% 2(i)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. shows a good understanding of the subject area 2. demonstrates independent thought and some critical analysis of the material presented** 3. covers most key points in answer to the essay question 4. some ideas are introduced around the subject area 5. mostly pertinent content but with some repetition or unnecessary statements 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the ability to synthesize information from a range of sources is seen in some parts to support key ideas and arguments 2. clear, logical progression seen in most key points and arguments 3. Generally well structured to allow key ideas and arguments to flow logically in a suitable paragraph structure 4. most ideas are presented with evidence, some evidence is grouped with explicit conclusions, pattern or trends 5. some arguments missing logical steps or lead ins 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. mostly fair, unbiased and non-judgemental tone 2. some unnecessary jargon or colloquial expressions used in places 3. statements of fact are the mainly used in arguments 4. mostly succinct, precise and accurate statements used 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A good variety of reading demonstrated and used to support answer 2. most key statements and ideas are validated with a relevant reference and appropriately acknowledged 3. Mostly original primary research studies are referenced but some reviews are included where a primary source is appropriate. 4. consistent referencing format, punctuation and order applied with a few errors

Mark/ Class	Scientific content and understanding	Organisation and presentation of ideas	Scientific writing and tone “formal academic tone”	Referencing, citations, bibliography
50-59% 2(ii)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. shows a basic understanding of the subject area* 2. demonstrates engagement with literature and some further reading but relies more heavily on description than analysis** 3. covers at least 50% of the key points in answer to the essay question 4. limited scope, limited or no ideas around the subject area 5. generally pertinent content but with some repetition or unnecessary statements 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. information from various sources is sufficiently synthesized/integrated/linked up to support the general thrust of ideas or arguments 2. clear, logical progression seen in some key points and arguments 3. uneven structure to aid the reader, flow of ideas not always clear or logical 4. some ideas are not presented with evidence (argument consists of a series of assertions only), evidence is not generally grouped with explicit conclusions 5. some arguments are missing logical steps or lead ins 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. some bias &/or emotive language used, e.g. opinions asserted as facts &/or undue weight given to one viewpoint 2. the meaning of some statements are unclear, with unnecessary jargon or colloquial expressions used in places 3. statements of fact are included but not always used to support argument 4. some imprecise and inaccurate statements seen in places 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most key reading demonstrated and used to support answer 2. some key statements and ideas are not validated with a relevant reference or an inappropriate reference is given 3. some original primary research studies are correctly referenced but reviews or irrelevant/inappropriate/non-peer reviewed sources are cited in places 4. inconsistent referencing format, punctuation and order

Mark/ Class	Scientific content and understanding	Organisation and presentation of ideas	Scientific writing and tone “formal academic tone”	Referencing, citations, bibliography
40-49% 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. shows some mis-understanding or limited understanding of the subject area* 2. demonstrates some familiarity with the issues raised by the material presented** 3. displays only partial grasp of the requirements of the question 4. limited scope, no ideas around the subject area 5. A mix of pertinent content, repetition, unnecessary statements and information irrelevant to question# <p># some marks may be given for irrelevant but correct information</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. information from various sources is not generally used to support ideas or arguments, e.g. reliant more on anecdotes or generalisations 2. some logical order of ideas seen in places, some minor errors, inconsistencies, omissions or irrelevancies 3. Poorly and/or ineffectively structured to aid the reader, flow of ideas not always clear or logical 4. many ideas are presented without evidence, lack many explicit conclusions 5. many arguments are missing logical steps or lead ins 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. essay lacks perspective with bias &/or emotive language common 2. the meaning of many statements are unclear, with unnecessary jargon &/or colloquial expressions common 3. statements of fact are included but not used to support argument or incorrect statements are used 4. many imprecise and inaccurate statements seen 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Limited reading demonstrated and some key sources omitted 2. Significant number of sources are not acknowledged or not acknowledged appropriately 3. many reviews, irrelevant or inappropriate sources are included 4. incorrect referencing format, punctuation and order in places

Mark/ Class	Scientific content and understanding	Organisation and presentation of ideas	Scientific writing and tone “formal academic tone”	Referencing, citations, bibliography
30-39% Fail	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shows significant mis-understanding of subject, with errors &/or omissions 2. Lacking any attempt at analysis or argumentation 3. Does not adequately answer the question 4. limited scope, no ideas around the subject area 5. Some pertinent content but mostly irrelevant to question# <p># some marks may be given for irrelevant but correct information</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information from various sources not used in any meaningful way to support ideas or arguments 2. lacking any logical order of ideas 3. No attempt made to structure the answer in any meaningful way. Line(s) of logic not clear at all 4. ideas are not usually presented with evidence, lack explicit conclusions 5. most arguments are missing logical steps or lead ins 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Widespread use of informal or unscientific language and personal opinion 2. Meaning of many statements are unclear or confusing 3. many incorrect statements are used 4. imprecise and inaccurate statements throughout 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. limited evidence of reading relevant to answer 2. Most sources are not acknowledged or acknowledged inappropriately 3. No original primary research studies are referenced. Mostly reviews, irrelevant or inappropriate sources cited. 4. incorrect referencing format, punctuation and order
15-29% Fail	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shows little understanding of subject, with errors &/or omissions 2. Failure to demonstrate knowledge of literature or give any perspective 3. Essay may be incomplete 4. no ideas around the subject area 5. major inaccuracies or mostly irrelevant to question# <p># some marks may be given for irrelevant but correct information</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. inappropriate or no information or examples provided to support any points made 2. fails to identify most relevant factors or inter-relationships 3. incoherent structure, a series of statements 4. poor use of evidence to support ideas, lack explicit conclusions 5. disorganised and unclear on what the argument is 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Superficial and misleading 2. Meaning of most statements are unclear or confusing 3. mostly incorrect statements are used 4. imprecise and inaccurate statements throughout 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. little evidence of reading relevant to answer 2. Most sources not acknowledged or acknowledged inappropriately 3. Mostly reviews, irrelevant or inappropriate sources cited. 4. incorrect referencing format, punctuation and order

Mark/ Class	Scientific content and understanding	Organisation and presentation of ideas	Scientific writing and tone “formal academic tone”	Referencing, citations, bibliography
0-14% Fail	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shows little understanding of subject, with errors, omissions 2. Failure to demonstrate knowledge of literature or give any perspective 3. No understanding of essay question 4. poor scope, with no ideas around the subject 5. major inaccuracies with repetition or unnecessary statements <p># some marks may be given for irrelevant but correct information</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. inappropriate or inaccurate use of information to support points 2. incoherent or no discernible argument 3. incoherent and disorganised structure, a series of unconnected statements 4. poor or no use of evidence to support ideas, lack any conclusions 5. disorganised and unclear on what the argument is 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Superficial and misleading 2. Meaning of most statements are unclear or confusing 3. mostly incorrect statements are used 4. imprecise and inaccurate statements throughout 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. no evidence of reading relevant to answer 2. Sources not acknowledged or acknowledged inappropriately 3. No serious attempt to cite 4. incorrect referencing format, punctuation and order