

**UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX
PSYCHOLOGY**

MSc course

**The Social Psychology of Prejudice: 971C8
Autumn Term 2009**

Course Convenor: Professor Rupert Brown

**Office: Pevensey 1, 2B11 (Office hours: Mondays, 14.00-15.00,
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Objectives

This advanced level course aims to develop students' knowledge about prejudice by considering a number of current theoretical, empirical and policy issues within the social psychology of prejudice. Throughout the course there will be a continual emphasis on the application of theoretical models to particular social contexts so as to deepen students' understanding of the utility and the limitations of these models. By the end of the course students will be expected to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of social psychological processes underlying various forms of prejudice and their reduction
2. Demonstrate a critical appreciation of published material on prejudice and related topics
3. Communicate their knowledge about prejudice effectively both orally and in writing

Level and Duration

The course will last for one term and will be offered to Masters students in Psychology. It will assume some basic knowledge of intergroup processes gained from undergraduate degree courses.

Assessment

The course will be assessed through a 3000 word essay (80%), submitted at the end of this term, and a 10 minute presentation during the term (20%).

The deadline for the essay is published on Sussex Direct. It should be handed in at the Psychology Office in the normal way.

Teaching Methods

Teaching is through small group seminars. The group will meet weekly with the course teacher for a 2 hour seminar, in which each student (or set of students) takes responsibility for the preparation of particular aspects of that week's topic. Each topic will be concluded with the preparation by the seminar leader of a short 'memoire', identifying the main issues covered and summarising the conclusions of the group. This is made available on the course web page by the start of the following week's seminar.

Note, that there are no formal lectures for this course. This therefore puts a higher premium than usual on student preparation and active participation. What you will learn from this course will be in direct proportion to the amount of effort you are prepared to expend engaging with the course materials and the seminar discussions.

Course Texts

There is no one text for this course although my 1995 book (Brown, R. (1995) *Prejudice: its social psychology* Oxford: Blackwell) will be background reading for most seminars. It is, however, getting a little dated and so I have re-written the whole book (to appear in 2010). Draft chapters from this 2nd edition will be available on the

course web page. For a useful supplement, I have also suggested chapters from the recent volume edited by Dovidio et al. (2005). If you have not already bought them, you will find the following very useful as more extensive treatments of many of the issues to be covered:

- *Dovidio, J.F., Glick, P. & Rudman, L. (2005) (Eds) *On the Nature of Prejudice: fifty years after Allport*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Stangor, C. (2000) *Prejudice and Stereotypes: essential readings*. Hove: Psychology Press
- Hogg, M. A. & Abrams, D. (2001) *Intergroup relations: essential readings*. Hove: Psychology Press

In addition, you will find the following general references of great value as background or more detailed reading for particular topics. With the exception of Allport's classic and wonderfully readable book (easy and cheap to get on second-hand websites such as abebooks.com), I would not recommend buying them as they are mostly quite expensive.

- Allport, G.W. (1954) *The Nature of Prejudice*. Reading, Mass.: Addison Wesley.
- Brown, R. & Gaertner, S. (eds) (2001) *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Intergroup Processes*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Gaertner, S. L. & Dovidio, J. F. (2000) *Reducing Intergroup Bias: The common ingroup identity model*. Hove: Psychology Press

Seminar Topics and Reading Lists

Below are the seminar readings. For each topic there is an asterisked (*) essential background reading. **Everyone** should read this as a minimum requirement. Then there are several further readings, usually reports of empirical studies, that will be assigned to individuals to read and report back on to the rest of the group. The lists are extensive partly to ensure that everyone is able to read something for each week, and partly to assist you in preparing assignments. I have tried to ensure that all readings are available electronically through the library's on-line journals collection or through pdf files located on the course web-site. If you really cannot locate particular references, use your own initiative to find substitute papers on related topics. The Current Periodicals Section of the Library and PsychInfo are good places to browse for these. In other words, "I couldn't find the reading" is not an acceptable excuse for failing to prepare for a seminar!

The course is organised into two parts. The first focuses on prejudice mainly from an 'individual' perspective, where the emphasis is on personality and cognitive processes. The second is more 'social' in orientation since the emphasis is on how prejudice stems from and affects intergroup relations.

[A] INDIVIDUAL

1. The prejudiced personality

- *Brown, R. (1995) *Prejudice: its social psychology*. Chs. 1 & 2. (N.B., revised versions of these chapters are available as pdf files on the course website).
- *Dovidio, J.F., Glick, P. & Rudman, L. (2005) (Eds) *On the Nature of Prejudice: fifty years after Allport*. Ch. 24. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Duckitt, J. (2006). Differential effects of right-wing authoritarianism and social dominance orientation on outgroup attitudes and their mediation by threat from and competitiveness to outgroups. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32, 684-696.
- Guimond, S., Dambrun, M., Michinov, N., & Duarte, S. (2003). Does social dominance generate prejudice? Integrating individual and contextual determinants of intergroup cognitions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 697-721 (especially, Introduction, Studies 1 & 2 & General Discussion).
- Sidanius, J., Pratto, F., van Laar, C., & Levin, S. (2004). Social Dominance Theory: its agenda and method. *Political Psychology*, 25, 845-880 [esp. pp 845-863]
- Turner, J. C., & Reynolds, K. J. (2003). Why social dominance theory has been falsified. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 42, 199-206.
- Verkuyten, M., & Hagendoorn, L. (1998). Prejudice and self-categorization: the variable role of authoritarianism and in-group stereotypes. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 24, 99-110 (especially Introduction, Study 1 & Discussion).

2. Categorization processes and prejudice

- *Brown, R.J. (1995) *Prejudice*, Ch 3. [revised version available as pdf on course website]
- *Dovidio, J.F., Glick, P. & Rudman, L. (2005) (Eds) *On the Nature of Prejudice: fifty years after Allport*. Ch. 3. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Blascovich, J. et al (1997) Racism and racial categorization. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 72, 1364-1372.
- Crisp, R. J., Hewstone, M., & Rubin, M. (2001). Does multiple categorization reduce intergroup bias? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27, 76-89.
- Guinote, A., Judd, C.M. & Brauer, M. (2002) Effects of power on perceived and objective group variability: evidence that more powerful groups are more variable. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82, 708-721.
- Pendry, L. & Macrae, C.N. (1996) What the disinterested perceiver overlooks: goal directed social categorization. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 22, 249-256.
- Macrae, N. et al (1995) The dissection of selection in person perception: inhibitory processes in social stereotyping. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 397-407.

3. Stereotypes and prejudice

- *Brown, R.J. (1995) *Prejudice*, Ch 4. [revised version available as pdf on course website]
- *Dovidio, J.F., Glick, P. & Rudman, L. (2005) (Eds) *On the Nature of Prejudice: fifty years after Allport*. Chs. 11 & 13. Oxford: Blackwell.

- Brown, R. & Smith, A. (1989) Perceptions of and by minority groups: the case of women in academia. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 19, 61-75. **pdf on course webpage)**
- Chen, M. & Bargh, J.A. (1997) Non-conscious behavioural confirmation processes: The self-fulfilling consequences of automatic stereotype activation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 33, 541-560.
- Epley, N., & Kruger, J. (2004). When what you type isn't what they read: the perseverance of stereotypes and expectancies over email. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 41, 414-422.
- Hoffman, C. & Hurst, N. (1990) Gender stereotypes: perception or rationalization. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 58, 197-208.
- Payne, B. K. (2001) Prejudice and Perception: the role of automatic and controlled processes in misperceiving a weapon. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81, 181-192.

4. Automatic and controlled aspects of prejudice

- *Brown, R.J. (1995) *Prejudice*, Ch 4, 7. [**revised versions available as pdf on course website; see especially ch. 4, sections 2.2, 3; and ch.7, section 3**]
- *Dovidio, J.F., Glick, P. & Rudman, L. (2005) (Eds) *On the Nature of Prejudice: fifty years after Allport*. Ch. 20. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Devine, P. G. et al (2002) The regulation of explicit and implicit race bias: the role of motivations to respond without prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82, 835-848.
- Dovidio, J.F. et al (2002) Implicit and explicit prejudice and interracial interaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82, 62-82.
- Greenwald, A.G., McGhee, D.E. & Schwartz, J.L.K. (1998) Measuring individual differences in implicit cognition: the Implicit Association Test. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 1464-1480 [also try out this test for yourself by logging onto their website which contains a DIY version: <http://www.yale.edu/implicit>].
- Karpinksi, A. & Hilton, J. L. (2001) Attitudes and the implicit association test. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81(5), 774-788 .
- Kawakami, K., Dovidio, J., & van Kamp, S. (2005). Kicking the habit: effects of nonstereotypic association training and correction processes on hiring decisions. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 41, 68-75.
- Macrae, N. et al (1994) Out of mind but back in sight: stereotypes on the rebound. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67, 808-817.

5. “Modern” forms of prejudice

- *Brown, R.J. (1995) *Prejudice*, Ch 7, sections 1-2. (**revised version available as pdf on course website**)
- *Dovidio, J.F., Glick, P. & Rudman, L. (2005) (Eds) *On the Nature of Prejudice: fifty years after Allport*. Chs. 7 & 21. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Abrams, D., Viki, G.T., Masser, B. & Böhner, G. (2003) Perceptions of stranger and acquaintance rape: the role of benevolent and hostile sexism in victim blame and rape proclivity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 111-125. [**esp. Studies 1 & 2, General Discussion**]
- Brief, A. P. et al. (2000) Just doing business: modern racism and obedience to

- authority as explanations for employment discrimination. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 81, 72-97.
- Glick, P., & Fiske, S. T. (2001). An ambivalent alliance: Hostile and benevolent sexism as complementary justifications for gender inequality. *American Psychologist*, 56, 109-118 (+ commentaries by Petrocelli, J. V. (2002). *American Psychologist*, 57(6-7), 443-444, and Sax, L. (2002). *American Psychologist*, 57(6-7), 444).
- Hebl, M.R., et al. (2002) Formal and Interpersonal Discrimination: A Field Study of Bias Toward Homosexual Applicants. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28, 815 - 825.
- Lambert, A. J., et al. (1996) Private vs Public expressions of racial prejudice. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 32, 437-459.
- Pettigrew, T. F., & Meertens, R. W. (1995). Subtle and blatant prejudice in western Europe. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 25, 57-75 (**pdf on course webpage**).

[B] SOCIAL

6. Developmental aspects of prejudice

- *Brown, R.J. (1995) *Prejudice: its social psychology*. Ch 5. (**revised version available as pdf on course website**)
- *Dovidio, J.F., Glick, P. & Rudman, L. (2005) (Eds) *On the Nature of Prejudice: fifty years after Allport*. Ch. 19. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Bar-Haim, Y., Ziv, T., Lamy, D., & Hodes, R. M. (2006). Nature and Nurture in own-race face processing. *Psychological Science*, 17, 159-163.
- Bennett, M. et al (2004) Young children's evaluations of the ingroup and of outgroups: a multi-national study. *Social Development*, 13, 124-141.
- Nesdale, D. et al. (2005) Group norms, threat and children's racial prejudice. *Child Development*, 76, 652-663.
- Powlisha, K.K., Serbin, L.A., Doyle, A. & White, D.R., (1994) Gender, ethnic and body-type biases: The generality of prejudice in childhood. *Developmental Psychology*, 30, 526-536.
- Rutland, A., Cameron, L., Milne, A., & McGeorge, P. (2005). Social norms and self-presentation: children's implicit and explicit intergroup attitudes. *Child Development*, 76, 451-466.
- Castelli, L., Zogmaister, C. & Tomelleri, S. (2009) The transmission of racial attitudes within the family. *Developmental Psychology*, 45(2), 586-591.

7. Prejudice from the "victim's" perspective

- *Brown, R. (2010) *Prejudice: its social psychology*, 2nd edition. Ch. 8. (**available as pdf on course website**)
- *Dovidio, J.F., Glick, P. & Rudman, L. (2005) (Eds) *On the Nature of Prejudice: fifty years after Allport*. Chs. 9 & 10. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Cohen, G. L., Garcia, J., Apfel, N., & Master, A. (2006). Reducing the racial achievement gap: a social-psychological intervention. *Science*, 313, 1307-1310.
- Crocker, J., Cornwell, B., & Major, B. (1993). The stigma of overweight: affective consequences of attributional ambiguity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 64, 60-70.

- Ruggiero, K. M. & Taylor, D.M. (1997) Why minority members perceive or do not perceive the discrimination that confronts them: the role of self esteem and perceived control. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 373-389.
- Schmitt, M.T. & Branscombe, N. R. (2002) The internal and external causal loci of attributions to prejudice. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28, 620-628.
- Steele, C. M. & Aronson, J. (1995) Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African Americans. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 797-811.

8. Prejudice as a response to perceived social disadvantage and threat

- *Brown, R.J. (1995) *Prejudice*, Ch 6 & Ch 8 (section 2.3) (**revised version available as pdf on course website**)
- *Dovidio, J.F., Glick, P. & Rudman, L. (2005) (Eds) *On the Nature of Prejudice: fifty years after Allport*. Chs. 6 & 14. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Branscombe, N. R., Schmitt, M. T. & Schiffhauer, K. (2007) Racial attitudes in response to thoughts of white privilege. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 37, 203-215.
- Curseu, P. L., Stoop, R., & Schalk, R. (2007). Prejudice towards immigrant workers among Dutch employees: integrated threat theory revisited. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 37, 125-140.
- Esses, V. M., Dovidio, J. F., Jackson, L. M. & Armstrong, T. L. (2001) The immigration dilemma: the role of perceived group competition, ethnic prejudice, and national identity. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57, 389-412.
- Guimond, S. & Dambrun, M. (2002) When prosperity breeds intergroup hostility: the effects of relative deprivation and relative gratification on prejudice. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28, 900-912.
- Jost, J.T., et al. (2003) Social inequality and the reduction of ideological dissonance on behalf of the system: evidence of enhanced system justification among the disadvantaged. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 33, 13-36 (**pdf on course web-page**).
- Maass, A. et al. (2003) Sexual harassment under social identity threat: the computer harassment paradigm. *Journal of Personality of Social Psychology*, 85, 853-870.

9. Prejudice and intergroup emotions

- *Brewer, M.B. (1999) The psychology of prejudice: ingroup love or outgroup hate? *Journal of Social Issues*, 55, 429-444.
- *Dovidio, J.F., Glick, P. & Rudman, L. (2005) (Eds) *On the Nature of Prejudice: fifty years after Allport*. Ch. 22. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Batson, D. et al. (1997) Empathy and attitudes: can feeling for a member of a stigmatized group improve feelings toward the group? *Journal of Personality of Social Psychology*, 72, 105-118.
- Brown, R. et al. (2008) Nuestra Culpa: collective guilt and shame as predictors of reparation for historical wrongdoing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 94, 75-90.

- Cotrell, C. A., & Neuberg, S. L. (2005). Differential emotional reactions to different groups: a socio-functional threat-based approach to prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 88, 770-789.
- Kanyangara, P., Rimé, B., Philippot, P. & Yzerbyt, V. (2007) Collective rituals, emotional climate and intergroup perception: participation in “Gacaca” Tribunals and assimilation of the Rwandan genocide. *Journal of Social Issues*, 63, 387-403.
- Landau, M. J. et al. (2004) Deliver us from evil: the effects of mortality salience and reminders of 9/11 on support for President George W. Bush. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30, 1136-1150.

10. Reducing prejudice

- *Brown, R.J. (2010) *Prejudice: its social psychology*, 2nd edition. Ch. 9 [**version available as pdf on course website**].
- *Dovidio, J.F., Glick, P. & Rudman, L. (2005) (Eds) *On the Nature of Prejudice: fifty years after Allport*. Chs. 16, 17, & 26. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Binder, J., Zagefka, H., Brown, R., Funke, F., Kessler, T., Mummendey, A., et al. (2009). Does Contact Reduce Prejudice or Does Prejudice Reduce Contact? A Longitudinal Test of the Contact Hypothesis Amongst Majority and Minority Groups in Three European Countries. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96, 843-856.
- Cameron, L., Rutland, A., Brown, R., & Douch, R. (2006). Changing children's intergroup attitudes towards refugees: testing different models of extended contact. *Child Development*, 77, 1208-1219.
- Dovidio, J. F., Gaertner, S. L., Validic, A., Matoka, K., Johnson, B., & Frazier, S. (1997). Extending the benefits of re-categorization: Evaluations, self-disclosure and helping. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 33, 401-420.
- Ensari, N & Miller, N. (2002) The outgroup must not be so bad after all: the effects of disclosure, typicality and salience on intergroup bias. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83, 313-329.
- Paluck, E. L. (2009). Reducing intergroup prejudice and conflict using the media: a field experiment in Rwanda. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96, 574-587.
- Turner, R. N., Hewstone, M., & Voci, A. (2007). Reducing explicit and implicit outgroup prejudice via direct and extended contact: the mediating role of self-disclosure and intergroup anxiety. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 93, 369-388.

Essay titles

1. What role do personality variables play in genesis of prejudice?
2. Discuss the role of categorization processes as both a cause of and a cure for prejudice.
3. How extensive and compelling is the evidence for the self-fulfilling prophetic nature of stereotypes?
4. How important are automatic processes in the manifestation of prejudice in everyday life?
5. What is gained theoretically and practically by all the 'new' conceptualizations of prejudice?
6. What can the study of prejudice in children tell us about its adult manifestations?
7. Belonging to a group that is discriminated against has been likened to having a 'stigma'. Discuss competing analyses of this process of stigmatization and reactions to it.
8. Discuss the view that prejudice is a largely a reaction to perceived threats of different kinds.
9. Why is the study of *intergroup* emotions so critical for understanding prejudice?
10. Assess the potential contribution of social psychology to governmental policies on social inclusion and exclusion.

Assessment Criteria for Assessed Presentations

Presentations are assessed on each of the following 7 criteria:

1. Exposition and Understanding,
2. Analysis,
3. Content,
4. Structure,
5. Discussion,
6. Delivery
7. Materials.

The seven areas of assessment are emphasised differently in distinguishing between different classes of marks for presentation. For example, the quality of analysis, exposition and discussion is likely to distinguish between a Distinction and Merit presentation; whereas content and structure are more prominent when differentiating Merit and Pass presentations. The following criteria must be interpreted with some flexibility – for example, an innovative approach to delivery or discussion may compensate for weaknesses elsewhere in a presentation

70% and above DISTINCTION

Distinction level presentations will demonstrate competence in all of the 7 areas specified above, with excellence in some (5 or more). Marks will increase as the number of areas in which the standard of performance is high increases. Such presentations are likely to show originality in exposition as well as clarity, accuracy and thoroughness. Effort will have been made to stimulate discussion. Appropriate analysis will have been applied to the material presented, and clear and well-organised overhead transparencies and/or handouts will have been utilised. The presentation will be well structured and skilfully delivered.

60-69% MERIT

Presentations at this level will show competence in 5-6 of the 7 areas of assessment (with excellence in one or two areas for marks of 68 and over). Marks will rise from 60-69% as presentations satisfy the requirement of competence more comfortably. Merit level presentations should have appropriate contents and a logical structure (introduction, development, conclusion). There should be a clear and focused exposition of the chosen material, with no major omissions. Presentations should be delivered clearly, using adequate overhead transparencies or handouts. Analysis of key conceptual and empirical issues will be evident, evidence will be used to support or illustrate theoretical points and interpretations. Some attempt will be made at promoting discussion (for example by making use of pre-prepared discussion points).

40-59% PASS

Presentations at this level will show competence in only 3-4 of the seven specified areas. Typical presentations will comprise a predictable and unimaginative overview. They are likely to suffer from omission of key material and/or sub-optimal structure. Source material is unlikely to be organised conceptually, e.g. it is presented paper-by-paper, or as listed in sources. There is unlikely to be much attempt at original analysis. Visual aids may be poor or absent, exposition is likely to lack clarity and focus and may reflect lack of understanding of more complex arguments or evidence. Irrelevant material may be included. However, a basic, if perhaps unsophisticated, grasp of the topic area will be evident.

<40% FAIL

Presentations at this level are likely to be very basic in terms of topic coverage and are unlikely to contain information beyond that available from lecture notes or basic textbook review chapters. They are likely to be under-researched and inadequately prepared. Misunderstandings, omissions or errors are likely to combine with poor structure and lack of clarity. Alternatively, they may be highly derivative of one or two textbook review chapters. Delivery is likely to be poor, reflecting lack of preparation. In other words, Failing presentations are likely to be characterised by confusion, either on the part of the presenter due to lack of understanding, or on part of the audience due to failure in communication. However, some understanding of the key issues will be evident.

GUIDE TO ESSAY ASSESSMENT

1. Below are key questions which guide the assessment of your essay:

Structure and Quality of Argument

- Is the essay plan stated in the introduction?
- Is the overall structure of the argument clear and coherent?
- Are the points made in a logical sequence?
- Is the argument sufficiently analytical?
- Is the argument marred by inappropriate personal opinions and bias?
- Is there a conclusion?
- Does the conclusion address the essay question directly?
- Is the conclusion adequately supported by the preceding argument?

Use of Evidence

- Are the points made supported by evidence from cited sources?
- Are the sources drawn on sufficient and appropriate?
- If empirical evidence is used, is it described clearly and in appropriate detail?
- Does the evidence presented support the conclusions reached?
- Is the interpretation of the evidence presented appropriately qualified (i.e. avoiding overgeneralisations and sweeping statements)?

Contents

- Are the sources used subjected to analysis and critical reflection?
- Has the student researched the topic sufficiently?
- Are there any important omissions?
- Has the student thought about what they have read or simply reproduced material from sources?
- Is there evidence of critical thinking or an original synthesis?
- Has the student gone beyond the essential reading?

Writing and Presentation Skills

- Is the essay referenced correctly, with a clear distinction between primary and secondary sources?
- Are quotations identified and fully referenced?
- Are the ideas presented fully credited?
- Is there any evidence of plagiarism?
- Is the essay fluent and readable?
- Is the grammar and spelling adequate?
- Has the writer avoided sexist, racist or other discriminatory language?
- Has the writer made an effort to use their own words?

Assessment criteria for Assessed essays

Essays are assessed according to the following qualities:

Content

- Breadth of research; independent research, going beyond core reading.
- Novelty of argument; going beyond 'standard' treatments, synthesising relevant material from different topic areas
- Use of evidence. Argument must be backed up by relevant empirical findings or theoretical ideas. Appropriate interpretation of empirical evidence.
- Quality of argument.
- Independence of thought. Extent and depth of analysis and critical reflection.

Structure

- Introduction. Introduction sets out the argument to follow.
- Material presented in a logical order.

Writing and technical skills

- Style. Fluency, liveliness and readability.
- Grammar, spelling and punctuation
- Consistent referencing system, preferably APA style.
- Avoidance of derivative writing. Ideas expressed in the author's own words.

Marks of 70% or above: **Distinction**

Tutors should not be reluctant to award marks in the 80s or even the 90s in the case of really excellent work, although grades in the 90s should be reserved for work deemed to be outstanding. Students will have read widely around the topic and will show a thorough understanding and appreciation of the material. The essay will have a clear structure and will develop a coherent argument which shows signs of original or critical thought. The standard of English should be good with few errors of spelling or grammar, and the essay should be well presented and properly referenced. Essays in this band of marks will be exciting to read; they should stand out from most of the others. Students may have taken a risk and gone out on a limb to make a point about the topic or to challenge some accepted position, but they must be able to back up their argument with sound resort to evidence or to theoretical sources. The defining feature of essays marked in this band is that they show flair, maturity and confidence.

Marks between 60% and 69%: **Merit**

Students should have read a diversity of material from the reading list and should show a clear understanding of the issues raised by their reading. All important material on the topic should be covered in the essay, and the essay should be well structured, clearly written and well presented. The essay should show evidence that the student has thought about the topic and has not simply reproduced standard arguments or evidence from major sources. Particularly in marks at the higher end of this band, essays will show confidence in handling complex material. There should be no major omissions in the coverage of the topic, nor should the essay contain any significant errors of understanding or interpretation. The standard of English should be good, and spelling and grammar should be reasonable. At this level of marking, the student should seem at ease in handling empirical data and/or theoretical ideas as appropriate. All sources should be properly cited in a bibliography or in references.

Marks between 40% and 59%: **Pass**

Essays should show evidence that the student has read the basic material for the topic and has a reasonable understanding of it. There should be a proper bibliography or other referencing system. There may be some signs of weakness, such as confusion about debates and arguments or misinterpretation of some evidence, but overall the grasp of the topic should be sound. The essay should be reasonably well structured and the material should be coherently presented. The student should have avoided heavy reliance on any one source unless this is in the nature of the topic. Essays marked in this band will probably be either reasonably competent but somewhat predictable and lacking in liveliness, or will show signs of an attempt at originality which is nevertheless insufficiently grounded in a thorough appreciation of the material. The standard of English should be reasonably competent, although problems in spelling or grammar may be tolerated provided they do not produce unintelligibility.

Marks below 40%: **Fail**

They will be substantially below average. Students will probably have done only basic reading and will show little or no appreciation of the debates or the different interpretations which might be drawn from particular evidence. The essay will indicate a very basic understanding of the topic, but will not have gone beyond this, and there may well be signs of confusion. The standard of English may leave something to be desired, but the essay should make sense and should show some sign of structure and organisation. Material should be properly referenced, although there may be few references with quite heavy reliance on just one or two sources.