

APPENDIX 3: Criteria and Descriptors for Marking Scheme (University of Birmingham, 2015)

Level Criteria and Outcomes	Mark Range	Grade Descriptor
<p>Distinction Evidence of substantial preparation (reading, research, planning) Demonstrates an authoritative grasp of concepts, methodology and content Evidence of originality, insight and learning beyond the curriculum A sense of what is contextually appropriate Ability to sustain an argument or idea Ability to think analytically/critically & to synthesise material effectively Ability consistently to produce comprehensive & appropriate ranges of original & creative solutions to problems Excellent structured and articulated work, which communicates ideas coherently using a range of appropriate methods of presentation</p>	77% +	<p>Outstanding Performance Consistently outstanding Trivial Defects only Fulfils 'distinction' criteria to an exceptionally high standard</p>
	73–76%	<p>Excellent Outstanding in more respects Very few minor defects Displays all the 'distinction' criteria to a very high standard</p>
	70–72%	<p>Very good, some excellent Some outstanding and excellent work Some minor defects Displays all the 'distinction' criteria</p>
<p>Merit Evidence of use of a wide range of appropriate sources Demonstrates a sound, consistent and above average level of understanding of concepts, methodology and content appropriate to the subject Evidence of critical judgement and insight, ability to synthesise with some originality of thought Work demonstrates a very good degree of accuracy, clarity, critical analysis and some originality Ability to produce appropriate solutions to problems, showing some creativity Very well structured and good standard of presentation, which illustrates pertinent issues within a clear framework</p>	67-69%	<p>Very Good Work consistently of a very high standard Any defects minor Displays all 'merit' criteria with greater insight and originality</p>
	63-66%	<p>Good, some very good Work of a high standard Some defects Displays all 'merit' criteria</p>
	60-62%	<p>Good Work of a high standard Deficiencies more significant Displays all 'merit' criteria but with less originality & insight</p>
<p>Pass Achieves the relevant learning outcomes for that module but with some deficiencies/shortcomings Evidence of sound preparation and reading Sound understanding of key concepts, methodology and content appropriate to the subject Work demonstrates a good degree of accuracy, clarity, critical analysis and occasional originality Ability to produce appropriate solutions to problems, some of which may show creativity There should be no major omissions or misunderstandings Well structured, reasonable standard of presentation, which illustrates pertinent issues with a clear framework</p>	57-59%	<p>Satisfactory Sound work with few significant defects Demonstrates all pass' criteria with a reasonable degree of critical analysis and originality</p>
	54-56%	<p>Satisfactory, some weaknesses Sound work, but with some notable deficiencies Displays all 'pass' criteria</p>
	50-53%	<p>Significant weaknesses, but achieves relevant learning outcomes Work meets 'pass' criteria, but with some significant and/or recurring deficiencies</p>

Fail Does not achieve relevant learning outcomes Some evidence of sound preparation Some deficiencies or shortcomings Some understanding of key concepts, methodology and content appropriate to the subject Outcomes may be routine but work will demonstrate some degree of accuracy and clarity Ability to produce appropriate solutions to problems, but with little or no creativity Some major omissions or misunderstandings Reasonable presentation and organisational structure	47-49%	Marginal fail Just fails to achieve learning outcomes May demonstrate some critical analysis & originality, but with major omissions or misunderstandings
	43-46%	Fail Routine work, which may display some evidence of engagement with concepts and possibly with clear presentation, but with little critical analysis
	40-42%	Clear Fail Displays some evidence of engagement with concepts, but with defects in presentation & analysis
Bad Fail (cannot be 'excused' on averaging) Inadequate with major deficiencies and shortcomings Little evidence of preparation and reading Very little understanding of key concepts and methodology Little content relevant to the subject Major omissions and misunderstandings Poor structure and presentation with errors that interfere with communication of ideas	35-39%	Bad Fail Displays some evidence of engagement with concepts, but with serious defects
	30-34%	Weak Work demonstrates serious defects and misunderstandings
	<30%	Very weak Work does not meet basic requirements