

ARDEN UNIVERSITY QUALITY ASSURANCE DOCUMENT QA 62 – GENERIC GRADING CRITERIA

Assessment Criteria: Level 3

Level 3 prepares students to function effectively at Level 4. Criteria for assessment at Level 3 reflect the preparatory nature of these modules. Students are expected to demonstrate the acquisition of generic learning skills appropriate for self-managed learning in an HE context. Students are expected to demonstrate that they have acquired the underpinning discipline-specific skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to undertake a programme of higher education

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Grade	Mark Bands	Generic Assessment Criteria	Subject Specific Criteria: Knowledge and understanding	Subject Specific Criteria: Intellectual, Practical, Legal and Transferable Skills
First (1)	80%+	Outstanding performance which demonstrates an outstanding knowledge base, supported with wider reading and the ability to begin to analyse the subject area. The work draws widely on relevant theory and shows awareness of any relevant ethical considerations. The work shows an outstanding level of competence and confidence in managing appropriate sources and materials, initiative and excellent academic writing skills and professional skills (where appropriate). The work is accurately and consistently referenced throughout.		
	70-79%	Excellent performance which demonstrates an excellent		



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		knowledge base the		
		ability to begin to		
		analyse the subject.		
		The work draws on		
		relevant theory whilst		
		showing some		
		awareness of any		
		relevant ethical		
		considerations.		
		The work shows a high		
		level of competence in		
		managing sources and		
		materials, initiative		
		and excellent		
		academic writing skills		
		and professional skills		
		(where appropriate).		
		The work is		
		consistently		
		referenced		
		throughout.		
Upper	60-69%	Very good		
second		performance which		
(2:1)		demonstrates a sound		
		understanding of the		
		content and some		
		ability to analyse the		
		issues with reference		
		to theory. The work		
		shows a very good		
		level of competence in		
		managing sources and		
		materials and some		
		initiative. Academic		
		writing skills are very		
		good, and expression		
		remains accurate		
		overall. Very good		
		professional skills		
		(where appropriate).		
		The work is referenced		
		throughout.		
Lower	50-59%	A good performance		
second		which shows a decent		
(2:2)		understanding of the		
		content and makes		
		some reference to		
		theory. The work		
		shows a sound level of		



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		competence in		
		managing basic		
		sources and materials.		
		Academic writing skills		
		are generally good,		
		and expression		
		remains accurate		
		overall although the		
		piece may lack		
		structure. Good		
		professional skills		
		(where appropriate).		
		There is some attempt		
		to reference the work.		
Third	40-49%	A satisfactory level of		
(3)		understanding in		
		which there are some		
		gaps in knowledge of		
		the subject, its		
		underpinning theory,		
		and ethical		
		considerations. The		
		work shows a basic		
		use of sources and		
		materials. Academic		
		writing skills are		
		limited and there are		
		some errors in		
		expression and the		
		work may lack		
		structure overall.		
		There are some		
		difficulties in		
		developing		
		professional skills		
		(where appropriate).		
Marginal	30-39%	A limited level of		
Fail		knowledge in which		
		there are clear		
		omissions in		
		understanding the		
		subject, its		
		underpinning theory,		
		and ethical		
		considerations. The		
		work shows a limited		
		use of sources and		
		materials. Academic		
		writing skills are weak		



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		and there are errors in		
		expression and the		
		work may lack		
		structure overall.		
		There are difficulties in		
		developing		
		professional skills		
		(where appropriate).		
Clear fail	29% and	A poor performance in		
	below	which there are		
		substantial gaps in		
		knowledge and		
		understanding. The		
		work shows little		
		evidence in the use of		
		appropriate sources		
		and materials.		
		Academic writing skills		
		are very weak and		
		there are numerous		
		errors in expression.		
		The work lacks		
		structure overall.		
		Professional skills		
		(where appropriate)		
		are not developed. The		
		work is imitative.		



Level 4 is the first stage on the student journey into undergraduate study. At Level 4 students will be developing their knowledge and understanding of the discipline and will be expected to demonstrate some of those skills and competences. Student are expected to express their ideas clearly and to structure and develop academic arguments in their work. Students will begin to apply the theory which underpins the subject and will start to explore how this relates to other areas of their learning and any ethical considerations as appropriate. Students will begin to develop self-awareness of their own academic and professional development.

Grade	Mark Bands	Generic Assessment Criteria	Subject Specific Criteria: Knowledge and understanding	Subject Specific Criteria: Intellectual, Practical, Legal and Transferable Skills
First (1)	80%+	Outstanding performance which demonstrates the ability to analyse the subject area and to confidently apply theory whilst showing awareness of any relevant ethical considerations. The work shows an outstanding level of competence and confidence in managing appropriate sources and materials, initiative and excellent academic writing skills and professional skills (where appropriate). The work shows originality of thought.		
	70-79%	Excellent performance which demonstrates the ability to analyse the subject and apply theory whilst showing some awareness of any relevant ethical considerations.		



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		The work shows a high level of competence in managing sources and materials, initiative and excellent academic writing skills and professional skills (where appropriate). The work shows originality of thought.		
Upper second (2:1)	60-69%	Very good performance which demonstrates the ability to analyse the subject and apply some theory. The work shows a very good level of competence in managing sources and materials and some initiative. Academic writing skills are very good, and expression remains accurate overall. Very good professional skills (where appropriate). The work shows some original thought.		
Lower second (2:2)	50-59%	A good performance which begins to analyse the subject and apply some underpinning theory. The work shows a sound level of competence in managing basic sources and materials. Academic writing skills are good, and expression remains		



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		accurate overall although the piece may lack structure. Good professional skills (where appropriate). The work lacks some original thought.		
Third (3)	40-49%	Satisfactory level of performance in which there are some omissions in understanding the subject, its underpinning theory, and ethical considerations. The work shows a satisfactory use of sources and materials. Academic writing skills are limited and there are some errors in expression and the work may lack structure overall. There are some difficulties in developing professional skills (where appropriate). The work lacks original thought and is largely imitative.		
Marginal fail	30-39%	Limited performance in which there are omissions in understanding the subject, its underpinning theory, and ethical considerations. The work shows a limited use of sources		



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		and materials. Academic writing skills are weak and there are errors in expression and the work may lack structure overall. There are difficulties in developing professional skills (where appropriate). The work lacks original thought and is largely imitative.		
Clear fail	29% and below	A poor performance in which there are substantial gaps in knowledge and understanding, underpinning theory and ethical considerations. The work shows little evidence in the use of appropriate sources and materials. Academic writing skills are very weak and there are numerous errors in expression. The work lacks structure overall. Professional skills (where appropriate) are not developed. The work is imitative.		



Level 5 reflects the continuing development in knowledge, understanding and skills from Level 4. At Level 5, students are not expected to be fully autonomous but are able to take responsibility for their own learning with appropriate guidance and direction. Students are expected to further develop their theoretical knowledge within a more intellectual context and to demonstrate this through more complex forms of expression which move beyond the descriptive or imitative domain. Students are expected to demonstrate skills of analysis in both problem-solving and resolution.

Grade	Mark Bands	Generic Assessment Criteria	Subject Specific Criteria: Knowledge and understanding	Subject Specific Criteria: Intellectual, Practical, Legal and Transferable Skills
First (1)	80%+	An outstanding information base exploring and analysing the discipline, its theory and any associated ethical considerations. There is sophisticated use and management of learning resources, and a high degree of autonomy is demonstrated. Writing is outstandingly well structured and accurately referenced throughout. Where appropriate, outstanding professional skills are demonstrated. The work is original and with some additional effort could considered for internal publication.		
	70-79%	An excellent knowledge base within which the discipline is explored and analysed. There is a degree of originality in the approach. The work demonstrates		



confidence and autonomy and extends	
autonomy and extends	
ductionly and externas	
to consider ethical	
issues. Learning	
resources have been	
managed confidently.	
Writing is	
exceptionally well	
structured and	
accurately referenced	
throughout. Where	
appropriate, an	
excellent level of	
professional skills is	
demonstrated, and the	
work demonstrates a	
high level of	
intellectual and	
academic skills.	
Upper 60-69% A very good	
second knowledge base which	
(2:1) explores and analyses	
the discipline, its	
theory, and any	
associated ethical	
issues. There is	
evidence of some	
originality and	
independence of	
thought. A very good	
range of learning	
resources underpin	
the work and there is	
evidence of growing	
confidence and self-	
direction. The work	
demonstrates the	
ability to analyse the	
subject and apply	
theory with good	
academic and	
intellectual skills.	
Academic writing skills	
are very good,	
expression is accurate	
overall, and the work	
is consistently	
referenced	
throughout.	



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Lower	50-59%	A good understanding		
second		of the discipline which		
(2:2)		begins to analyse the		
		subject and apply		
		some underpinning		
		theory. There may be		
		reference to some of		
		the ethical		
		considerations. The		
		work shows a sound		
		level of competence in		
		managing basic		
		sources and materials.		
		Academic writing skills		
		are good and accurate		
		overall, and the work		
		is planned and		
		structured with some		
		though. Professional		
		skills are good (where		
		appropriate). The work		
		lacks original thought,		
		but academic and		
		intellectual skills are		
		moving into the critical		
		domain. The work is		
		referenced		
		throughout.		
Third	40-49%	Satisfactory level of		
(3)		performance in which		
		there are some		
		omissions in		
		understanding the		
		subject, its		
		underpinning theory,		
		and ethical		
		considerations. There		
		is little evidence of		
		independent thought,		
		and the work shows a		
		basic use of sources		
		and materials.		
		Academic and		
		intellectual skills are		
		limited. The work may		
		lack structure overall.		
		There are some		
		difficulties in		
		developing		



			IVERSITY	
		professional skills		
		(where appropriate).		
		There is an attempt to		
		reference the work.		
Marginal	30-39%	A limited piece of work		
Fail		in which there are		
-		clear gaps in		
		understanding the		
		subject, its		
		underpinning theory,		
		and ethical		
		considerations. The		
		work shows a limited		
		use of sources and		
		materials. Academic		
		and professional skills		
		are weak and there are		
		errors in expression		
		and the work may lack		
		structure overall.		
		There are difficulties in		
		developing		
		professional skills		
		(where appropriate).		
		The work lacks original		
		thought and is largely		
		imitative.		
Clear	29% and	A poor performance in		
Fail	below	which there are		
-		substantial gaps in		
		knowledge and		
		understanding,		
		underpinning theory		
		and ethical		
		considerations. The		
		work shows little		
		evidence in the use of		
		appropriate sources		
		and materials.		
		Academic writing skills		
		are very weak and		
		there are numerous		
		errors in expression.		
		The work lacks		
		structure overall.		
		Professional skills		
		(where appropriate)		
		are not developed. The		
		work is imitative.		
	I			



Level 6 study represents the student's increasing autonomy and independence in relation to their knowledge, understanding and skills. At Level 6, students are expected to demonstrate problem solving skills in both practical and theoretical contexts. This should be supported by an understanding of appropriate theory, creativity in expression and thought based on independent but informed judgments. Students should demonstrate the ability to seek out, invoke, analyse, and evaluate competing theories and claims to knowledge and work in a critically constructive manner. Work at this level is articulate, coherent, and skilled.

Grade	Mark Bands	Generic Assessment Criteria	Subject Specific Criteria: Knowledge and understanding	Subject Specific Criteria: Intellectual, Practical, Legal and Transferable Skills
First	80%+	An outstanding		
(1)		knowledge base		
		exploring and		
		analysing the		
		discipline, its theory,		
		and any associated		
		ethical		
		considerations.		
		The work		
		demonstrates		
		outstanding		
		independence of		
		thought and		
		originality.		
		There is outstanding		
		I management of		
		learning resources,		
		and a high degree of		
		autonomy is		
		demonstrated which		
		goes above and		
		beyond the brief.		
		The work		
		demonstrates		
		intellectual		
		originality and		



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	ativity. Writing is
exc	ceptionally well
str	uctured and
aco	curately
ref	erenced
thr	oughout.
Wł	nere appropriate,
	tstanding
	ofessional skills
	demonstrated.
	e work is original
	d with some ditional effort
	uld be considered
	internal
	blication.
	excellent
inf	ormation base
wit	hin which the
dis	cipline is explored
	d analysed.
	ere is
	nsiderable
	ginality in the
	proach and the
	rk demonstrates
	nfidence and
	tonomy and
	ends to consider
	nical issues.
	arning resources
	ve been managed
	h exceptional
	nfidence and the
	rk exceeds the
	essment brief.
	iting is
	ceptionally well
	uctured and
acc	curately



			VERSITY	
		referenced		
		throughout.		
		Where appropriate,		
		an excellent level of		
		professional skills		
		are demonstrated		
		and the work		
		demonstrates a high level of intellectual		
		and academic skills.		
Upper	60-69%	A very good		
second	00 00 /0	knowledge base		
(2:1)		which explores and		
		-		
		analyses the		
		discipline, its theory,		
		and any associated		
		ethical issues.		
		There is evidence of		
		some originality and		
		independence of		
		thought.		
		A very good range of		
		learning resources		
		underpin the work		
		and there is clear		
		evidence of self-		
		directed research.		
		The work		
		demonstrates the		
		ability to analyse the		
		subject and apply		
		theory with good		
		academic and		
		intellectual skills.		
		Academic writing		
		skills are very good,		
		expression is		
		accurate overall, and the work is		
		consistently		
	1	consistently		



			VERSITY	
		referenced		
Lower	50-59%	throughout. A good		
second	50-59%	-		
(2:2)		understanding of the		
()		discipline which		
		supports some		
		analysis, evaluation		
		and problem-solving		
		within the discipline.		
		There may be		
		reference to some of		
		the ethical		
		considerations.		
		The work shows a		
		sound level of		
		competence in		
		managing basic		
		sources and		
		materials.		
		Academic writing		
		skills are good and		
		accurate overall, and		
		the work is planned		
		and structured with		
		some thought.		
		Professional skills		
		are good (where		
		appropriate).		
		The work may lack		
		originality, but		
		academic and		
		intellectual skills are		
		moving into the		
		critical domain.		
		The work is		
		referenced		
		throughout.		
Third	40-49%	Satisfactory level of		
(3)		performance in		
• •				



Marginal 30-39% A limited piece of work in which there are some omissions in the understanding of the subject, its underpinning theory, and ethical considerations. Three is little evidence of independent thought, and the work shows a basic use of sources and materials. Academic and intellectual skills are limited. The work may lack structure overall. There are some difficulties in developing professional skills (where appropriate). There is nattempt to reference the work. Marginal Fail 30-39% A limited piece of work in which there are clear gaps in understanding the subject, its underpinning theory, and ethical considerations. The work shows a limited use of sources and materials.		I		VERSITY	
Marginal 30-39% A limited piece of work in which three are clear gaps in understanding the subject, its underpinning theory, and ethical considerations. There is little evidence of independent thought, and the work shows a basic use of sources and materials. Academic and intellectual skills are limited. The work may lack structure overall. There are some difficulties in developing professional skills (where appropriate). There is an attempt to reference the work. A limited piece of work in which there are clear gaps in understanding the subject, its underpinning theory, and ethical considerations. The work shows a limited use of sources and Subject, its underpinning the work shows a limited use of sources and					
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Marginal Fail developing professional skills (where appropriate). There is an attempt to reference the work.			There are some		
professional skills (where appropriate). There is an attempt to reference the work.Marginal Fail30-39%A limited piece of work in which there are clear gaps in understanding the subject, its underpinning theory, and ethical considerations. The work shows a limited use of sources and			difficulties in		
Marginal Fail(where appropriate). There is an attempt to reference the work.Image: Construct or efference the work.Marginal Fail30-39%A limited piece of work in which there are clear gaps in understanding the subject, its underpinning theory, and ethical considerations.Image: Construct or effective theory and ethical considerations.The work shows a limited use of sources andImage: Construct or effective theory and ethical theory and e			developing		
Marginal Fail(where appropriate). There is an attempt to reference the work.Image: Construct or efference the work.Marginal Fail30-39%A limited piece of work in which there are clear gaps in understanding the subject, its underpinning theory, and ethical considerations.Image: Construct or effective theory and ethical considerations.The work shows a limited use of sources andImage: Construct or effective theory and ethical theory and e			professional skills		
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Marginal Fail30-39%A limited piece of work in which there are clear gaps in understanding the subject, its underpinning theory, and ethical considerations.Image: Consideration of the work shows a limited use of sources and					
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Failwork in which there are clear gaps in understanding the subject, its underpinning theory, and ethical considerations.Imited use of sources and					
are clear gaps in understanding the subject, its underpinning theory, and ethical considerations. The work shows a limited use of sources and	-	30-39%	-		
understanding the subject, its underpinning theory, and ethical considerations. The work shows a limited use of sources and	Fail		work in which there		
subject, its underpinning theory, and ethical considerations. The work shows a limited use of sources and			are clear gaps in		
underpinning theory, and ethical considerations. The work shows a limited use of sources and			understanding the		
theory, and ethical considerations. The work shows a limited use of sources and			subject, its		
considerations. The work shows a limited use of sources and			underpinning		
The work shows a limited use of sources and			theory, and ethical		
limited use of sources and			considerations.		
sources and			The work shows a		
			limited use of		
materials.			sources and		
			materials.		



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		Academic and		
		intellectual skills are		
		weak and there are		
		errors in expression		
		and the work may		
		lack structure		
		overall.		
		There are difficulties		
		in developing		
		professional skills		
		(where appropriate).		
		The work lacks		
		original thought and		
		is largely imitative.		
Clear	29%	A poor performance		
Fail	and below	in which there are		
	WOIDU	substantial gaps in		
		knowledge and		
		understanding,		
		underpinning theory		
		and ethical		
		considerations.		
		The work shows		
		little evidence in the		
		use of appropriate		
		sources and		
		materials.		
		Academic writing		
		skills are very weak		
		and there are		
		numerous errors in		
		expression.		
		The work lacks		
		structure overall.		
		Professional skills		
		(where appropriate)		
		are not developed.		
		The work is		
		imitative.		



Level 7 is characterised by an expectation of students' expertise in their specialism. Students are semi-autonomous, demonstrating independence in the negotiation of assessment tasks (including the major project) and the ability to evaluate, challenge, modify and develop theory and practice. Students are expected to demonstrate an ability to isolate and focus on the significant features of problems and to offer synthetic and coherent solutions, with some students producing original or innovative work in their specialism that is potentially worthy of publication by Arden University. A clear appreciation of ethical considerations (as appropriate) is also a prerequisite.

clear appreciation of ethical considerations (as appropriate) is also a prerequisite.				
Grade	Mark	Generic Assessment	Subject Specific	Subject Specific
	Bands	Criteria	Criteria:	Criteria:
			Knowledge and	Intellectual,
			understanding	Practical, and
				Transferable Skills
Distinction	80+	Outstanding analysis of		
		key issues and concepts/.		
		Outstanding		
		development of		
		conceptual structures and		
		argument, making		
		consistent use of		
		scholarly conventions.		
		Outstanding research		
		skills, independence of		
		thought, an extremely		
		high level of intellectual		
		rigour and consistency,		
		exceptional expressive /		
		professional skills, and		
		outstanding creativity		
		and originality.		
		Outstanding		
		academic/intellectual		
		skills. Work pushes the		
		boundaries of the		
		discipline and		
		demonstrates an		
		awareness of relevant		
		ethical considerations.		
		Work may be considered		
		, for publication by Arden		
		university		
Distinction	70-79	Excellent analysis of key		
	-	issues and concepts/.		
		Excellent development of		
		conceptual structures and		
		argument, making		
		consistent use of		



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		scholarly conventions.		
		Excellent research skills,		
		independence of thought,		
		an extremely high level of		
		intellectual rigour and		
		consistency, exceptional		
		expressive / professional		
		skills, and substantial		
		creativity and originality.		
		Excellent		
		academic/intellectual		
		skills. Work pushes the		
		boundaries of the		
		discipline and		
		demonstrates an		
		awareness of relevant		
		ethical considerations.		
		Work may be considered		
		for publication by Arden		
		university		
Merit	60-69%	Very good level of		
		competence		
		demonstrated. High level		
		of theory application.		
		Very good analysis of key		
		issues and concepts.		
		Development of		
		conceptual structures and		
		argument making		
		consistent use of		
		scholarly conventions.		
		Some evidence of original		
		thought and a general		
		awareness of relevant		
		ethical considerations		
Pass	55-59%	A good performance. A		
		good knowledge of key		
		issues and concepts.		
		Fairly descriptive, with		
		some analysis of existing		
		scholarly material, and		
		some argument		
		development. Limited		
		evidence of original		
		thought. Some awareness		
		of relevant ethical		
		considerations.		



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		Good professional skills		
-		(where appropriate).		
Pass	50-54%	A satisfactory		
		performance. Basic		
		knowledge of key issues		
		and concepts. Generally		
		descriptive, with		
		restricted analysis of		
		existing scholarly material		
		and little argument		
		development. Use of		
		scholarly conventions		
		inconsistent. The work		
		lacks original thought.		
		Limited awareness of		
		relevant ethical		
		considerations.		
		Satisfactory professional		
		skills (where		
		appropriate).		
Marginal	40-49%	Limited research skills		
Fail		impede use of learning		
		resources and problem		
		solving.		
		Significant problems with		
		structure/accuracy in		
		expression. Very weak		
		academic professional		
		skills.		
		the first second second second		
		Limited use of scholarly		
		conventions.		
		Errors in expression and		
		the work may lack		
		structure overall		
	39%	A poor performance in		
	and	which there are		
	below	substantial gaps in		
		knowledge and		
		understanding,		
		underpinning theory and		
		ethical considerations.		
		Little ouidence of		
		Little evidence of		
		research skills, use of		
		learning resources and		



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problem solving.	
Major problems with structure/ accuracy in expression.	
Professional skills not present.	
Very weak academic professional skills.	
No evidence of use of scholarly conventions.	

Policy Name:	Generic Grading Criteria
Policy Reference:	QA62
Approval Authority:	Learning Teaching and Assessment Committee
Last Approved:	February 2023
Responsible SMT Lead:	Director of the Centre of Excellence for Learning and Teaching
Responsible Department:	Centre of Excellence for Learning and Teaching
Policy Contact:	Director of the Centre of Excellence for Learning and Teaching
Review Frequency:	3 years