

DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT UNDERGRADUATE MARKING SCHEME

First Class Honours (1) 70-100%	<p>A first-class answer will always engage closely with the question and demonstrate distinction both in the range and command of material covered and in argument and analysis. Answers will have a coherent and logical structure and be written in clear and lucid style, integrating theory and evidence, and with a breadth of reference to relevant literature. A first-class mark may be awarded on the basis of more than one set of criteria. The argument may be particularly sophisticated, fluent and incisive. The answer may show exceptional knowledge and understanding of the issues involved. The approach may be original, suggesting new ways of considering material or issues.</p> <p>Grading within the First Class category will depend on the extent and combination of these qualities of sophistication, understanding and originality. While excellence is required to achieve the lower range in the class (70-74), some answers will be outstanding in these regards, achieving marks in a higher range (75-79); truly exceptional answers will achieve marks of 80 and above.</p>
Upper Second (2A) 60-69	<p>An upper second answer will focus closely on the question and show evidence of an intelligent and broad-based engagement with, and understanding of, relevant material. Arguments will be comprehensive, logically structured and clearly organised and expressed, with wide reference to appropriate literature.</p> <p>Grading within the Upper Second Class depends on the extent and combination of these qualities. Answers at the top of the class will contain evidence of a high ability and show superior judgement, prioritisation and sophistication. Those at the bottom of the Class will still be competent, accurate and exhibit wide reading, but will demonstrate less depth of understanding or argument.</p>
Lower Second (2B) 50-59	<p>A lower second answer will contain work which, though generally competent and broadly relevant, is lacking in sophistication, depth and focus. Answers tend to be limited in examples, organisation and breadth of reference. Answers in this Class may contain sections which are of limited direct relevance to the main argument and display a clumsy and unsophisticated approach and style. Good answers which stray from the question set should normally not be marked higher than a Lower Second.</p> <p>Grading within this Class depends on the extent and combination of these characteristics. Answers at the top of the Class will be reasonably well-argued and show a satisfactory knowledge but unimaginative understanding of the issues involved. Answers which would normally fall in the 2A category but which are too short, rushed, unfinished or badly organised should normally be marked as the top band of the Lower Second Class. Those answers at the bottom end of the Class will contain too much indiscriminate information, or factual errors and inaccuracies. Clumsy prose style or competent but pre-packaged answers that bear a limited relation to the question set will generally fall into the bottom end of the Class.</p>
Third (3) 40-49	<p>A third class answer will show little knowledge of specific issues discussed or their broader context and be deficient in grasp, understanding and breadth of reference. There will be little sustained attempt to develop an argument in response to the question and ideas will be poorly organised and expressed. Arguments will be characterised by omission of key points and inaccuracies.</p> <p>Grading within the Third Class depends on the extent and combination of these deficiencies. Answers at the top end of the Class may provide a reasonable answer, but one that is unduly brief, is lacking in organisation, or contains material largely unrelated to the question. Those at the bottom end of the Class will display serious deficiencies in argumentation, logic, understanding of key issues and style.</p>
Fail (F)	<p>Work that is seriously deficient in knowledge, understanding and salience. The content is mostly irrelevant, with no serious recognition of the demands of the set question. There is no evidence that course material has been understood. Grading within the Class depends on the extent and combination of these deficiencies.</p>

0-39	<p>An answer at the top end of this Class may refer to themes anticipated by the question and suggest some level of understanding. Yet it will be clearly deficient in key attributes such as knowledge, logical development of argument, etc., and may demonstrate elements of irrelevance and superficiality. Answers where the candidate began to answer the question in an appropriate way, but ran out of time, might fall into this category.</p> <p>Those answers in the middle of the Class may hint at engagement with at least some relevant material. However, the majority of the material will lack relevance, direction, accuracy and substance.</p> <p>An answer at the bottom end of the Class will contain no material of relevance to the question asked. There will be negligible evidence that the candidate has properly understood any of the course materials. Answers where the candidate has barely attempted to answer the question will fall into this bracket.</p> <p>Examiners can award a Zero where the answer is effectively missing, or does not engage at all with the question.</p>
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