Department of Anthropology

Essay and take-home assessment grade criteria

The following scheme for grading of marks applies to summative assessments including: summative course work, research essays and take-home assessments (also known as online exams).

Attributes listed for each class are assumed to include the best attributes from the class below. Referencing for all work must include in-text citation with dates and page numbers and a separate bibliographic reference list at the end of the document that contains all citations in full. Where an assessment does not involve a set question (for example, a self-designed research essay), references to 'the question' in the criteria should be read as referring to the essay's chosen topic or title.

Class	Marks (%)	Attributes
Brilliant Distinction	**100**	Work of exceptional quality, based on comprehensive conceptual knowledge of the topic, and developing a cogent and original argument in response to the question. For a mark of 90 or more, analysis is of such originality or insight as to potentially change some aspect of conventional understanding about the topic discussed. Referencing is accurate and precise.
Distinction	**70 – 79**	Work that is closely linked to the question set, well presented and argued with sophistication, maturity, and incisiveness, and that demonstrates a wide familiarity with the subject matter and anthropological debates, especially as revealed through the course readings, lectures and class discussions. Such work often displays independent judgement and originality. Referencing is accurate and precise.
Merit	**60 – 69**	Competent work, well-argued, showing a good grasp of the subject matter. Evidence of familiarity with a wide range of reading, and engagement with some anthropological debates covered in the course. Factually correct and comprehensive in coverage, and with precise, accurate referencing, although there may be minor slips and omissions. Clear presentation and organisation of the text, showing an understanding of and familiarity with terms and concepts relevant to the question.

Pass	**50 – 59**	Work that demonstrates some understanding of the subject matter and a grasp of a basic set of readings, but is generalising in nature or is marred by a lack of sophisticated argument or knowledge. The writing is frequently narrative in style or fails to focus. Often includes unsupported generalisations, occasional inaccuracies, irrelevances, omissions, contradictions, and is weak in definition and application of concepts. Although the main issues are understood, they are often presented in a superficial manner and there is little attempt to go beyond the standard reading. Referencing is incomplete, imprecise and/or inaccurate.
Fail	**30 – 49**	Basic, below-average work, which nevertheless shows evidence that there is some familiarity with the subject. Essays display only a partial grasp of the topic and the different aspects of debates, and barely attempt an analysis. Arguments are fleeting, frequently simplistic or flawed, or not grounded in the course readings, lectures and class discussions. Concepts are disordered. Several inaccuracies and omissions. Referencing has numerous mistakes and is incomplete, and there may be unattributed or unreferenced quotes.
Bad Fail	**0 – 29**	Very weak work which lacks relevance, direction, accuracy and substance. Referencing is completely inadequate, has numerous mistakes and is incomplete, and there may be unattributed or unreferenced quotes.

Please also be aware that other departments will have their own criteria, against which their courses are assessed. It is your responsibility to consult the relevant departmental marking criteria.