

	Distinction		Merit	Good Pass	Pass	Fail	
Knowledge and understanding	Deep knowledge of the topic, explicitly related to comprehensive knowledge of the discipline(s). Evaluates and contributes to current knowledge.	Deep knowledge of the topic, explicitly related to comprehensive knowledge of the discipline(s). Evaluates current knowledge.	Thorough, explicit knowledge & understanding of the topic. Some appreciation of and explicit links to a wider field.	Sound knowledge and understanding of central topic issues. Some explicitly identified. Some appreciation of a wider field.	Adequate, largely implicit knowledge and understanding of central topic issues.	Basic, implicit knowledge of central topic issues. Partial understanding.	Inadequate knowledge or understanding of central topic issues.
Analysis	Consistently high level of ability to analyse critically using a wide range of appropriate criteria, sources and perspectives. Excellent synthesis of elements of the argument including contrary views.	High level of ability to analyse critically using a range of perspectives. Excellent synthesis of elements of the argument including contrary views.	Can present a coherent critical argument demonstrating the ability to analyse, synthesise and evaluate to form a balanced and supportable judgement.	Can develop a critical analysis without guidance. Some ability to synthesise concepts, theories and practice. Can apply a range of analytical methods appropriate to the task.	Evidence of some critical awareness. Analysis can be structured within guidance. May be some difficulty in balancing and substantiating points.	Largely descriptive. Inconsistent in the application of critical judgements. Some unsubstantiated assertion.	Work is descriptive and uncritical. May contain unsubstantiated assertion and hyperbole.
Use of source material	Discussion is always well supported by reference to an extended range of contrasting source material and texts. Accurate use of reference style.	Discussion is well supported by reference to an extended range of source material. Accurate use of reference style.	Discussion is well informed by reference to relevant learning material. Accurate use of reference style.	Good use made of further reading to illustrate and extend the discussion. Accurate use of referencing technique.	Limited use of further relevant reading in support of the discussion. Largely accurate use of referencing technique.	Poor use of source material. Little evidence of additional reading. Generally accurate use of reference style.	Poor use of source material. Little or no evidence of additional reading. Incorrect or inconsistent use of reference style.
Relevance to the set task	Discussion is wholly relevant to all aspects of the task. The work is insightful and thought provoking.	All aspects of the task are addressed in full with some evidence of independent thought.	All aspects of the task are addressed in a confident manner and in proportion to their significance.	All aspects of the task are addressed at an effective level.	All aspects of the set task are addressed but issues may not gain the attention their significance demands.	Work addresses the task in most respects. May contain some irrelevant discussion or over-emphasise peripheral issues.	Work does not address the set task. Little appreciation of the significance of central issues.
Structure	Structure supports a full response and there is evidence of substantial independent thought.	Organisational rationale compliments and enhances the clarity of the argument and there is evidence of independent thought.	Organisational rationale clearly aids the clarity and coherence of the discussion.	Organisational rationale clearly aids the clarity and coherence of the discussion.	Clear organisational rational that serves to shape the discussion in an appropriate manner.	Poorly organised but some attempt to order the argument. Major features may be poorly explored. Some repetition.	Little evidence of an organisational rationale. Major features may be insufficiently defined or may be absent. Work may be repetitive.
Use of language	Work displays an excellent use of standard written English.	Work displays an excellent use of standard written English.	Work displays a very good use of standard written English. All statements are clearly expressed and there is good flow from one point to the next.	Work displays a good use of standard written English with few, if any, grammatical errors. It is written in an appropriately academic style.	The work is written to an acceptable standard of English. There are few, if any, grammatical errors. Work may need more careful editing.	Generally poor standard of English usage. Much more care needed with language construction and checking of the text.	Poor standard of basic English. Much more care needed with language construction and checking of the text.