

SMLLC MARKING AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR WRITTEN NON-LANGUAGE WORK

CLASS	CLASS BAND ATTRIBUTES
I First Class 82-98	Impressive on every level. The argument combines clarity and sophistication; the overall structure leads the reader from a strong and thought-provoking introduction, through some persuasively explored and contextualised case-studies and examples, to a conclusion that casts new light on both the material and the assignment question. Competing lines of argument and interpretation are deftly compared and evaluated, the essay building a persuasive and compelling argument of its own from the material and secondary sources. Leads the reader confidently and persuasively through even the most complex, sophisticated or contentious ideas. Clear evidence of independent thinking and thoughtful critical analysis of both primary and secondary material. Both in terms of style and content, this work resembles something that could plausibly appear in an academic publication. The bibliography is complete, wide-ranging where appropriate, and accurate.
I First Class 78	A well-planned, clear and compelling overall argument. The introduction is rich and thought-provoking, and helpfully outlines the trajectory of the ensuing argument; the body of the argument is well structured and clear, with no elements seeming out of place or unjustified, and the conclusion is rich, nuanced, and offers a provisional answer to the question while gesturing towards wider issues. Possible counter-arguments and perspectives are discussed and critically evaluated, resulting in an overall argument that is both strong and nuanced. Evidence of independent critical thinking and thoughtful analysis of primary texts, together with clear evidence of wider reading and an excellent command of the material. Written in a consistent and mature academic register, expression and argument in these essays combines clarity and sophistication; the work may approach publishable quality in terms of style and register. Fully acknowledged use of a range of sources through quotations and paraphrase, always appropriately and correctly referenced. Quotations are accurate and are smoothly integrated into the syntax of sentences. The bibliography is complete, wide-ranging, and accurate.
I First Class 75	A well-planned, clear and compelling overall argument. Paragraph structure supports the development of the argument, leading the reader from a strong introduction to a rich and nuanced conclusion. Helpful engagement with possible counter-arguments may contribute to a strong and nuanced overall argument. Relevant throughout with judiciously selected material persuasively employed in support of the argument. Evidence of independent thinking and thoughtful analysis of primary texts, together with clear evidence of wider reading and an excellent command of the material. Different sources, texts or approaches to the topic may be critically evaluated, the writer's conclusions being deployed as appropriate in support of the argument. Written in a consistent and mature academic register, expression and argument in these essays will normally be clear and sophisticated, rather than just grammatically and syntactically correct. Fully acknowledged use of a range of sources through quotations and paraphrase, always appropriately and correctly referenced. Quotations are accurate and do not disrupt the proper syntax of sentences in which they appear. The bibliography is complete, wide-ranging where appropriate, and accurate.
I First Class 72	A clear and well-planned overall argument, leading from a helpful introduction outlining the main issues to a strong and informed conclusion. Possible counter-arguments or other interpretations are helpfully addressed, though not necessarily resolved. The essay remains relevant throughout, and appropriate material is brought in to support the argument. Evidence of independent thinking and engagement with primary texts, together with evidence of wider reading and a strong command of the material. The style is not just grammatically and syntactically correct but consistent, mature, and sophisticated. Fully acknowledged use of a range of sources through quotations and paraphrase, appropriately and correctly referenced. Quotations are accurate and do not disrupt the proper syntax of sentences in which they appear. The bibliography is complete, wide-ranging where appropriate, and accurate.
2:a Upper Second 68	A persuasive argument, clearly set out with introductory and concluding paragraphs. Each paragraph has a clear focus, and the progression of ideas is clear. The essay anticipates and mounts some defence against possible counter-arguments or objections; it identifies the key elements of the essay title and interrogates its underlying claims. Well-informed and thorough, demonstrating some good familiarity (whether in range or depth) with secondary material. Evidence of original and thoughtful engagement with both primary and secondary materials. The validity of secondary sources is assessed rather than merely asserted. Indeed, assertion is defended, with each of the essay's principal claims being supported via the use of appropriate material. A clear, purposeful use of language largely free from errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Easy to read; written in a style and register that would be considered broadly correct and appropriate in the educated world beyond the academy. Fully acknowledged use of a range of sources through quotations and paraphrase, appropriately and correctly referenced. Quotations are accurate and are integrated into the sentences in which they appear. The bibliography is complete and accurate.
2:a	A clear line of argument, with helpful introductory and concluding paragraphs. Each paragraph has a clear focus, and they are arranged into a persuasive argument.

Upper Second 65	<p>Key elements of the essay title are identified and explored, and its overall claims assessed. A direct, purposeful and generally thorough answer that sticks closely to the question, with relevant material selected and persuasively discussed. Well-informed and thorough, demonstrating a reasonable degree of familiarity with secondary material suggested on reading lists. Evidence of some thoughtful engagement with primary or secondary materials; the validity of secondary sources is assessed rather than merely asserted. The essay's principal claims are supported via the use of appropriate material. A purposeful, functional use of language largely free from serious errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Clear and easy to read; written in a style and register that would be considered broadly correct and appropriate in the educated world beyond the academy. Fully acknowledged use of a range of sources through quotations and paraphrase, almost always appropriately and correctly referenced. Quotations are accurate and do not disrupt the proper syntax of sentences in which they appear. The bibliography is complete, adequate, and accurate.</p>
2:a Upper Second 62	<p>A clear argument, perhaps with occasionally irrelevant elements or elements whose relevance has not been demonstrated. Each paragraph has a clear focus. Sometimes the relevance of examples might be assumed rather than proven. A mostly thorough answer that sticks closely to the terms of the question, although some greater consideration of the question's underlying themes might help. Generally well-informed and thorough, demonstrating some familiarity with the material suggested on reading lists. Evidence of some thoughtful engagement with the material; the essay's main claims are backed up with some appropriate material, although some claims might require more evidence. A purposeful, functional use of language largely free from serious errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Mostly clear and easy to read; written in a style and register that would be considered broadly appropriate in the educated world beyond the academy. Fully acknowledged use of sources through quotations and paraphrase, for the most part appropriately referenced. Quotations are generally accurate and do not disrupt the proper syntax of sentences in which they appear. The bibliography is complete, adequate, and mostly accurate.</p>
2:b Lower Second 58	<p>A mostly clear argument, with some occasionally irrelevant elements or elements whose relevance has not been demonstrated. Each paragraph has a clear focus. Sometimes the relevance of examples might be assumed rather than proven. A mostly thorough answer that sticks closely to the terms of the question without really considering its question's underlying issues. Shows some familiarity with the material suggested on reading lists and an attempt to back up claims; some claims might require more evidence. Language is functional and adequate, but with some problems of spelling, punctuation, or grammar. Mostly clear and easy to read; written in a style and register that would be considered broadly appropriate in the educated world beyond the academy. Generally clear in style, but with some lapses of formulation and register, perhaps with the occasional ungrammatical construction. Quotations are mostly accurate, but may perhaps be clumsily integrated into syntax or argument. Referencing is largely accurate, though with occasional inconsistencies. The bibliography may be incomplete, partly inappropriate, and/or incorrectly set out.</p>
2:b Lower Second 55	<p>The makings of a decent argument, but whose overall direction is hampered by some irrelevant, unclear, or debatable examples. Might fix unduly heavily on one aspect of the assignment rather than considering the question as a whole. Some use of secondary literature or allusions to commentators. Occasionally backs up main claims with evidence, but many claims are asserted rather than defended. Generally clear in style, but with some lapses of formulation and register. The occasional ungrammatical construction may also be encountered. Quotations will be mostly accurate, but may perhaps be clumsily integrated into syntax or argument. Referencing will be largely accurate, though not without some inconsistencies. The bibliography may be incomplete, partly inappropriate, and/or incorrectly set out.</p>
2:b Lower Second 52	<p>The basic argument is sometimes lost behind various irrelevant, unclear, or debatable examples. Might fix unduly heavily on one specific aspect of the assignment rather than considering the question as a whole. Little engagement with secondary literature. Most claims are asserted rather than backed up. Generally clear in style, but with some lapses of formulation and register that might impede clarity. Some ungrammatical constructions. Quotations are broadly accurate, but may well be clumsily integrated into syntax or argument. Referencing is adequate, but shows some inconsistencies. The bibliography may be incomplete, inappropriate, and/or incorrectly set out.</p>
3 Third Class 48	<p>Overall argument rather unclear; reads like a collection of loosely related examples or claims; some examples are irrelevant, unclear, or debatable. Little or no engagement with secondary literature. Most claims are merely asserted rather than backed up. There may be frequent problems with register, basic use of English, punctuation and/or capitalisation. Expression and style may make comprehension difficult. Quotations are sometimes inaccurate or clumsily integrated into syntax or argument. Little or no attempt has been made at correct referencing. The bibliography is short, incomplete, or even missing; it may bear little relation to the content of the essay itself.</p>

<p>3 Third Class 45</p>	<p>Argument hard to follow; reads like a collection of loosely related examples or claims of dubious relevance. Little or no engagement with secondary literature, and little or no attempt to back up claims. There may be consistent problems with register, basic use of English, punctuation and/or capitalisation. Expression and style may make comprehension difficult, with very occasional passages perhaps even bordering on unintelligibility. Quotations are often inaccurate, clumsily integrated into syntax or argument, or entirely absent. Little or no attempt has been made at correct referencing. The bibliography is short, incomplete, or even missing. Even where a reasonable bibliography has been provided, such essays will typically fail to reflect or reference the secondary reading implied by the bibliography.</p>
<p>3 Third Class 42</p>	<p>Argument very hard to follow, but with evidence of critical thought; reads like a collection of loosely related examples or claims of dubious relevance. Little or no engagement with secondary literature, and little or no attempt to back up claims. Consistent problems with register, basic use of English, punctuation, and/or capitalisation. Expression and style may make comprehension difficult, sometimes to the point of unintelligibility. Quotations, where they even appear, are inaccurate and clumsily integrated into syntax or argument. Little or no attempt at correct referencing. The bibliography is very short or missing. Even where a reasonable bibliography has been provided, such essays will typically fail to reflect or reference the secondary reading implied by the bibliography.</p>
<p>Fail 32-38</p>	<p>Fail but with some redeeming evidence of effort and/or engagement. Some content might be loosely relevant to the topic only in the very broadest terms, but there is very little attention paid to the specific question set, or they home in on just one word and discuss it exclusively. There is thus much that is irrelevant, much padding, and, in many cases, little sense of any real effort to get to grips with the question set. There will typically be little or no progression or development of ideas. The overall argument, if and when it seems to exist, will usually be very unclear. These essays offer little or no evidence of independent thought. Claims may be made but typically remain unsubstantiated, mere undefended assertions. Essays in this category often contain numerous incomplete or ungrammatical sentences. Stylistic problems consistently hinder comprehension and, in the worst cases, may render large parts of the essay virtually unintelligible. Quotations will often be inaccurate or clumsily integrated into syntax or argument. There may be little or no attempt at referencing, let alone correct referencing. The bibliography will often be short, incomplete or non-existent. An otherwise well-written essay that substantially fails to answer the question, or which infringes the rubric by drawing on illegitimate material, might also fall into this category.</p>
<p>Fail 2-28</p>	<p>Bad fail with almost nothing to commend it and little or no evidence of effort or engagement. Some content might be loosely relevant to the topic only in the very broadest terms, but there is very little attention paid to the specific question set. Lots of irrelevance and padding, or an unduly short answer. Little or no progression or development of ideas; any overall argument is very unclear. Little or no evidence of independent thought. Essays in this category often contain numerous incomplete or ungrammatical sentences. Stylistic problems consistently hinder comprehension and, in the worst cases, may render large parts of the essay virtually unintelligible. Quotations, where used, are inaccurate or clumsily integrated into syntax or argument. There may be little or no attempt at referencing, let alone correct referencing. The bibliography will often be short, incomplete or non-existent. An otherwise adequate essay that substantially fails to answer the question, or which infringes the rubric by drawing on illegitimate material, might also fall into this category.</p>

Undergraduate Marking Criteria					
	I	II	III	IV	F
Relevance	precise grasp of the question or topic, addresses it directly and keeps it in focus throughout	shows a sound understanding of the question or topic and tackles it effectively	shows an adequate understanding of the question or topic and shows reasonable competence in addressing it, but prone to stray from the point or lose focus	reveals an inadequate understanding of the question or topic and proves less than competent in addressing it and keeping it in focus	shows little or no understanding of the question or topic and either fails to address it at all or provides an irrelevant answer
Knowledge	displays a detailed, accurate knowledge of the texts under discussion, including apt and exact quotations	displays a solid knowledge of the texts under discussion and quotes them accurately	displays basic knowledge of the texts under discussion and can quote them, though not always aptly or accurately	displays insufficient knowledge of the texts under discussion, quoting them only occasionally and seldom accurately	displays minimal or no knowledge of the texts under discussion and every sign of not having prepared for the assignment
Analysis	develops an original approach to the material by questioning established views and advancing a fresh analysis or interpretation	provides a complex account of the material, demonstrates superior powers of analysis and interpretation	delivers an acceptable account of the material which demonstrates effective powers of analysis and interpretation, but does not do justice to the complexity of the issues	delivers a rudimentary or incomplete account of the material, which betrays poorly developed powers of analysis and interpretation	betrays few signs of competence in the analysis and interpretation of texts
Argument	demonstrates an ability to construct an exceptionally lucid and cogent argument, anchored in concisely adduced textual evidence	exhibits an ability to construct a clear argument backed up by relevant textual evidence	constructs arguments that fall short of full clarity and coherence and are not sufficiently supported by textual evidence	constructs arguments which tend to be muddled and incoherent, and which are rarely substantiated by textual evidence	fails to construct an organised, consecutive argument supported by appropriate textual evidence
Critical Engagement	engages intelligently and questioningly with a broad range of secondary reading (critical or theoretical)	brings relevant secondary reading (critical or theoretical) to bear on the literature under discussion	demonstrates limited evidence, understanding or questioning of relevant secondary reading (critical or theoretical)	little evidence of relevant secondary reading (critical or theoretical)	no evidence of secondary reading (critical or theoretical)

Use of Language	reveals an advanced command of the language by expressing ideas in clear, fluent and stylish prose, by using appropriate critical terms precisely, and by exhibiting an expert grasp of the rules of grammar, spelling and punctuation	reveals a sure command of the language by expressing ideas in lucid prose, by using appropriate critical terms properly, and by evincing a firm grasp of the rules of grammar, spelling and punctuation	reveals a fair but limited command of the language by expressing ideas with occasional clumsiness, by using appropriate critical terms imprecisely or not at all, and by evincing an imperfect grasp of the rules of grammar, spelling and punctuation	expresses ideas with habitual clumsiness and lack of clarity; uses appropriate critical terms incorrectly or not at all; and shows weak grasp of the rules of grammar, spelling and punctuation	fails to articulate ideas clearly and coherently; displays a general ignorance of critical terminology, and fails to demonstrate a basic grasp of the rules of grammar, spelling and punctuation
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