Faculty of Arts
Grade Descriptions

High Distinction (Above 80):
• Work of exceptional quality showing a command of subject matter and appreciation of issues;
• Has a clearly formulated argument which is developed throughout the work;
• Engages the question or topic throughout the assignment;
• Demonstrates wide reading of relevant literature;
• Very well expressed;
• High level of intellectual work.

Distinction (70-79):
• Work of high quality showing strong grasp of subject matter and appreciation of major issues though not necessarily of the finer points;
• Has a clear argument which may not be fully sustained throughout the work;
• Masters most of the concepts and issues raised by the question;
• Shows diligent research;
• Clearly expressed;
• Good intellectual work.

Credit (60-69):
• Work of good quality showing an understanding of subject matter and appreciation of main issues though possibly with some lapses and inadequacies;
• Has an argument which may not be fully sustained throughout the essay and is possibly marred by minor weaknesses;
• Fair range of reading;
• Well prepared and presented;
• Expression may need improvement in places;
• Solid intellectual work.

Pass (50-59):
• Work of fair quality showing awareness of the main issues in the question but has difficulty framing a relevant response;
• Argument may be weak;
• Takes a factual approach and does not attempt to interpret the findings;
• Modest level of research;
• Written expression and scholarly conventions need improvement;
• Competent intellectual work.

Fail (Below 50):
• Work of poor quality;
• A lack of understanding or misconception of the issues and concepts raised in the question;
• No clear argument is presented;
• Insufficient grasp of the relevance and interrelatedness of the material being presented;
• Poorly researched;
• Expression that is difficult to understand;
• Careless about scholarly conventions, spelling and other aspects of presentation.