

## Psychology MSc Marking Criteria and Mark Scheme for Essay-style Questions

Grade	Mark (%)	Level 7
<b>A++</b>	100	Outstanding knowledge and understanding with deep insight and excellent synthesis. Clear evidence of originality and innovative thoughts. Exceptional, high quality, publishable work.
<b>A+</b>	92	Excellent comprehension with well-presented evidence and very good synthesis. Focused and logical structure and balanced arguments with no irrelevant material or inaccuracies.
<b>A</b>	83	Very good knowledge and understanding of the material, showing evidence of wide reading. Clear and logical presentation and organisation, with good balance and synthesis. No irrelevant material or errors.
<b>A-</b>	74	Very good comprehension with good insight and originality. The arguments are balanced and well organised, with no irrelevant material or errors.
<b>B+</b>	68	Good understanding and knowledge of the relevant concepts. Logical presentation and organisation, mostly balanced work. Minimal irrelevant material and errors. Some attempts at originality but lacking in depth.
<b>B</b>	65	Good evidence of comprehension showing clear understanding of the topic and wider reading. Good balance and synthesis but not consistent. Some omissions and tangential material, but arguments are logical and supported by relevant evidence.
<b>B-</b>	63	Reasonable response with sufficient understanding and knowledge of the relevant material but does not go beyond. Good attempt at synthesis but arguments are not balanced and there are some omissions.
<b>C+</b>	58	Satisfactory response with sufficient evidence of comprehension and somewhat logical arguments. Few omissions and errors, mostly focused response. Some attempts at originality and partial synthesis.
<b>C</b>	55	A satisfactory response showing some evidence of knowledge and comprehension. Some originality and partial attempt at synthesis but poorly organised and balanced. Some omissions and few errors.
<b>C-</b>	53	Relevant, but not comprehensive arguments. Limited originality and some errors. Poor organisation and balance, minimal synthesis.
<b>D+</b>	48	Limited knowledge and awareness of concepts with several omissions. Some relevant material presented but lacking in evidence and with some errors.
<b>D</b>	45	Limited evidence of comprehension with major omissions and some errors. Some relevant material presented but mostly subjective arguments. Very poor organisation and balance.
<b>E</b>	43	Poor comprehension and knowledge, and limited understanding of the relevant material. Major omissions and some errors. Lack of synthesis and unbalanced organisation.
<b>F+</b>	37	Very poor evidence of comprehension. Arguments poorly organised and mostly subjective. Substantial errors and omissions, lack of balance and synthesis.
<b>F</b>	27	Severe lack of comprehension with mostly irrelevant materials. Substantial errors and omissions.
<b>F-</b>	17	Extremely poor work showing severe lack of understanding of the material. Arguments mostly subjective and irrelevant.
<b>0</b>	0	Nothing of relevance written

### Notes:

- This mark scheme applies to all work (including examinations) completed on or after 05/10/23.
- In order to qualify for an “A-grade” the work must meet most of the indicated criteria.
- Grade to % conversion: A++ = 100; A+ = 92; A = 83; A- = 74; B+ = 68; B = 65; B- = 63; C+ = 58; C = 55; C- = 53; D+ = 48; D = 45; E = 43; F+ = 37; F = 27; F- = 17; 0 = 0

See further considerations on the next page.

The following will be taken into consideration when making an academic judgement on the work and awarding a grade and providing feedback:

1. The grade awarded will take into account the work as a whole. Although all parts of the descriptions in the marking scheme are important, the judgement should be balanced as, for example, a brilliant essay that never really directly answers the question should not get an 'A' grade overall because it meets most of the description. Similarly, brilliantly argued, but poorly presented essay would be considered better than a brilliantly presented, but poorly argued one.
2. Was the work completed in a limited time (e.g., a timed exam or lab practical over a few hours) or did the student have days or weeks to complete the work? This would especially affect presentation, but also issues like referencing and structure. Less emphasis should be placed on areas like these if the work was completed in a limited time.
3. There is a key threshold to cross in order to receive 'A' grades (first class). This must go above the material taught to students and show at least some evidence of original thought and deep understanding and knowledge.
4. There is a key threshold to pass in order to receive a pass mark of 'C' or above (>50%). The work must demonstrate enough understanding and knowledge to meet the learning outcomes of the assignment and pass which are not outweighed by other deficiencies in the work.
5. Students are responsible for demonstrating evidence of outside reading and identifying sources of information used in the work. This may be formal in-text citations and a reference list at the end of the work in coursework, or something more like 'a recent student by scientists on gene 475 in a mouse model found...' depending on the context.
6. There is no fixed penalty for going over a given word count or similar limit, but academic staff will stop reading once the word count is reached. This will impact how the work is then evaluated against the marking criteria. Likewise, there is no fixed penalty for going under a given word count, but it might impact how the work will be evaluated against the marking criteria.
7. Only the values given here should be given to students as marks for their work (i.e., if an 'E' grade is awarded this is 43%, it is not any value from 37% to 45%). Exceptions can occur to this if there are e.g., late penalties applied.