

8.3 Grade Descriptors for Coursework and Examination Scripts

The Economics Department works to the following marking scheme:

Degree Class	Percentage Mark	Grade
I	70% +	A
II.1	60% - 69%	B
II.2	50% - 59%	C
III	40% - 49%	D
Fail	0% - 39%	F

The following Grade Descriptors explain the criteria by which marks are awarded to individual exam answers and to answers for coursework:

Characteristics of answers		
Class and mark range	Style of question: Essay/argument	Style of question: Problem/mathematical
First (A) 70-100%	<p>Clear and thorough analysis, responding directly to the questions set, with rigorous arguments based (as appropriate) on extensive knowledge of relevant concepts, theory and empirical evidence.</p> <p>Marks above 80 should be used to signify novel and/or distinctive discussion, showing unusually clear insight and/or exceptional sophistication in approach.</p>	<p>Accurate derivation of answers to all parts of question, including parts requiring significant independent thought. Clear explanation and evidence of thorough understanding of the reasons for the method employed, and the intuition behind results obtained.</p> <p>Marks above 80 should be used to signify unusually clear insight and/or exceptional sophistication in approach.</p>
Upper second (B) 60-69%	<p>Well organised, clearly-expressed, and a direct response to the question. Evidence of good analytical skills and appropriate reading. Effective grasp of concepts. Use of relevant examples. Appropriate and well-explained use of relevant algebra or diagrams, integrated into the structure of the analysis.</p>	<p>Accurate answer to most parts of question, with incomplete answers only to sections requiring significant independent solution. Clear explanation of methods, results and intuition.</p>

Lower second (C) 50-59%	Shows a general understanding of the question, with more limited relevant reading and use of examples. Competent reproduction of ideas and concepts from lectures and textbooks with little evidence of independent thought.	Accurate answer to all part of question requiring standard or routine approaches, with some explanation and intuition, reproducing lecture or textbook material on the reasons for methods employed and their interpretation. Errors should not betray significant misunderstanding of standard material.
Third (D) 40-49%	Answer shows some understanding of the question and the broader subject area, but shows little evidence of detailed knowledge or reading. Contains some mistakes, misunderstandings or irrelevant material. Relatively poor organisation and expression, and non-analytical approach.	Answer displays some surface knowledge of the subject matter of the question, but there are errors in some routine parts of the question <i>and/or</i> inadequate or inaccurate explanations.
Fail (F) 20-39%	Muddled, though may show some awareness of the general field. <i>or</i> Incorrect notes of limited relevance, but indicating some evidence of understanding in relation to the field in general.	Significant errors in most routine parts of the question and inadequate or inaccurate explanations, <i>or</i> Incomplete notes indicating some evidence of understanding appropriate methods.
Fail (F) 0-19%	Little or nothing of relevance in answer to question. <i>Or</i> Comprehensive mistakes, failures and misunderstandings, showing that little or nothing of value has been understood from module material.	Little or nothing of relevance in answer to question. <i>Or</i> Comprehensive mistakes, failures and misunderstandings, showing that little or nothing of value has been understood from module material.

Note: In answers where successive stages of a multi-part question depend on the results to earlier stages, appropriate credit should be given for intelligent and well-explained attempts to answer subsequent stages, albeit that an error made in an earlier stage invalidates the answer.