



# Academic criteria explained



In your module handbooks you will find the **marking criteria** for each assessment.

The criteria tell you what your tutor wants to see in your assessment, under headings such as: Content, Structure, Analysis, Harvard Referencing, Integration of sources, Presentation, Communication ...

It is worth taking some time to look at the criteria, so that you can clearly see what you have to do in order to achieve a good mark.

The steps here will help you to understand the criteria.



## (1) Answer the question:

If you do not answer the question and follow the instructions your tutor has set out for you, you are unlikely to pass.

## (2) Demonstrate your knowledge of the subject matter:

Show your tutor that you have read widely on the topic.

## (3) Show awareness of the key ideas under investigation:

Do not simply repeat what you have read. You need to express its relevance and importance in relation to the question.

## (4) Present your ideas in a logical way:

Logical development of ideas and clear structuring is essential to guide the reader, and help them to understand your argumentation.

## (5) Create a coherent and well supported argument:

Through your reading you may find that there are conflicting views on the subject. You need to weigh up the evidence and form your own reasoned judgment. You should present this judgment to the reader in a persuasive way.

## (8) Reference appropriately:

It is very important that you accurately follow referencing conventions when you refer to the work of others.

## (9) Use clear and accurate language:

You want your reader to appreciate your research and argumentation; you do not want them to waste their time and energy trying to work out what you are trying to say.

## (6) Make effective use of sources:

You can only be persuasive if you support your argument with the research and theories of writers in the field. The evidence should be carefully selected, and balanced with your 'academic voice'.

## (7) Follow academic conventions:

Familiarise yourself with academic conventions, for example: how to structure an essay, or a report; how to structure an introduction or a main body paragraph.

## (10) Show evidence of critical thinking:

Some features of critical thinking have already been mentioned above. Another feature is that you need to use sound judgment on whether the research, key concepts and theories you have read and considered should be accepted, challenged or rejected.

## (11) Produce work independently:

You need to work independently and credit the work of others. Make yourself aware of the rules surrounding academic misconduct and plagiarism. Any breach of the rules is taken very seriously, and could even result in dismissal from the university.

