

## Essay marking criteria

Marked in accordance with the Senate Scale.

Please note that categories ('*Research*', *depth*, *detail*, *understanding*, *analysis and synthesis*' etc.) are not equally weighted and weighting may vary from one assignment to another.

	Poor (<40)	Satisfactory (40s)	Fair (50s)	Good (60s)	Very good (70s)	Excellent (80+)
Research depth, detail, understanding, analysis and synthesis	Unsatisfactory level of research. Unsatisfactory understanding and analysis. Major omissions or errors. Research not integrated into the account or not relevant to the topic. Over use of lengthy direct quotes from references.	Barely satisfactory level of research. Barely satisfactory understanding and analysis. Very significant omissions or errors. Research poorly linked to the essay topic.	Fair level of research. Fair understanding and analysis. Some significant omissions or errors. Research imperfectly linked to the essay topic and discussion.	Good level of research. Good understanding and analysis. Lacks some depth. Some omissions and errors. Research directed at the essay topic and used to aid the discussion.	Very good level of research. Very understanding and analysis. May have minor omissions and errors. Information, detail and ideas from research linked well to the flow of discussion in the essay.	Excellent level of research. Excellent understanding and analysis. Impressive command of the topic. Some original thinking.
Referencing and acknowledging research	There are no references or references are to inappropriate sources (e.g. Wikipedia or other websites).	There are few references and citations. Much information is not clearly supported by a cited reference. Many paragraphs have only one citation. Incorrect (non-Harvard) formatting has been used.	Some information is not clearly supported by a cited reference. Harvard style used but there are errors, such as references not listed alphabetically, some references incomplete, style is inconsistent.	All information is clearly supported by cited references. Harvard style has been followed with few errors.	All information is clearly supported by cited references. Harvard style has been followed with no errors.	As 70s plus a sophisticated integration of referencing with sentence and paragraph structure that enables a flow of ideas.
Figures	No figures or no appropriate figures.	Some figures but there are parts where one would have been useful but none is	Fair use of figures but still some omissions. Quality of figures may be variable, lacking	Good figures used appropriately, supporting and extending text to good effect, but with	High-quality figures used appropriately, supporting and extending text to very good effect.	As 70s with no significant omissions or errors. Diagrams may be hand drawn.

		included. Poor quality figures.	clarity or containing errors.	some room for improvement.		
Structure	No introduction or conclusion. Paragraph structure is absent. There are one-sentence paragraphs.	Little introduction or conclusion. Paragraphs are an uneven size. There are virtually no topic sentences. There are no clear subjects for the paragraphs.	There is an introduction and a conclusion, but these are either too long or too short. Paragraphs are an uneven size. There are no clear subjects for the paragraphs.	There is an introduction and a conclusion. Most paragraphs are well constructed. Paragraphs keep to one topic each.	Clear introduction and conclusion. All paragraphs are very well constructed with clear topics. There is a clear structure to the information within each paragraph.	A clear introduction and conclusion. Each paragraph has its own evidence-based argument which links to the title and flow of the idea/argument.
Concluding the essay	There is no conclusion to the essay.	The conclusion very brief and may be no more than a summary of the preceding essay.	The conclusion tries to bring together and extend and what has been said but does so with only limited effectiveness.	The conclusion to brings together the preceding discussion effectively, referring back to the introduction.	As 60s but going beyond this, perhaps referencing other areas of biology or future research or application.	As 70s but to a greater extent, often evidencing broad understanding.
General writing	Major errors in grammar and spelling so that important elements of meaning are lost.	Major errors in grammar and spelling so that some meaning is lost.	Many errors in grammar and spelling but meaning is clear. Sentences ramble and try to cover several points.	A few minor errors in grammar and spelling. Most sentences are well written.	Grammar and spelling are excellent. Ideas are clearly expressed. Sentences are well balanced and do not ramble.	A sophisticated writing style. Excellent use of vocabulary.
The overall interest of the essay – is it a good read?	It is hard to follow the discussion. Ideas do not link together. It is a hard read.	Ideas and information often disjointed but some of the discussion is still clear. Quite often it is difficult to follow.	Ideas and information somewhat disjointed but discussion is still clear. Not always easy to follow the flow.	The essay reads well. Information and ideas were discussed well.	The essay is really interesting to read and flows well. There were some thoughtful sections.	The essay is a joy to read. Full of thoughtful sections. Some original thoughts based on well-researched evidence.
Comments						

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