

Department of Geography Undergraduate Coursework Grading Expectations:

Note: this document should be used as a general guide and is not meant to replace the marking criteria that your course instructors and lecturers are currently adopting. When in doubt, always check with your course instructors and lecturers.

(A+): A mark at this grade is indicative of an outstanding work. Marks in this range will be awarded for work that exhibits all the qualities befitting of an A grade as listed below but have, in addition, very substantial elements of original insight and flair. There is also clear evidence of independent critical thinking and advanced comprehension of the topic. Essays will make excellent use of appropriate and detailed examples as well as illustrations (figures, diagrams, maps, etc.). Quantitative answers will demonstrate innovative deployment of methods and the creative usage of data sets; the results should be correct and any conclusions clearly and accurately expressed. For all answers, relevant academic referencing styles and conventions must be adhered to.

(A): A mark at this grade is indicative that the work is of an excellent standard. The answer will exhibit excellent levels of knowledge and understanding comprising all the qualities listed in the A- to B+ range but with additional elements of originality and flair. The answer will also go beyond the prescribed course readings and demonstrate awareness of the nuances and underlying assumptions of the question. Essays will make excellent use of appropriate and detailed examples as well as illustrations (figures, diagrams, maps, etc.). Quantitative answers will demonstrate creative usage of data sets that are clearly presented and analysed; the results should be correct and any conclusions clearly and accurately expressed. For all answers, relevant academic referencing styles and conventions must be adhered to.

(A- to B+): A mark in this range is indicative that the answer is of an excellent to very good standard.

Answer of this quality shows a good level of knowledge and understanding of relevant course materials and also demonstrates critical analytical skills. It will show evidence of reading a wide variety of materials and being able to synthesize ideas gleaned from the readings to support and develop arguments. However, in contrast to an A/A+ grade essay, there is little evidence of original and critical insight here. Essay answers should be well organized and exhibit good writing skills with arguments substantiated by relevant examples and illustrations (figures, diagrams, maps, etc.). Quantitative answers will be clearly presented; the results should be correct and any conclusions accurately expressed. All relevant academic referencing styles and conventions must be adhered to.

(B to B-): A mark in this range is indicative that the answer is of a very good to good standard.

Answer of this quality will show clear knowledge and understanding of relevant course materials. It will focus on the essay title or question posed and demonstrates basic understanding and application of key concepts and ideas. The answer should

also exhibit sound essay writing and critical analytical skills. It will be reasonably well structured and coherently presented. Arguments should be illustrated with relevant examples, but unlike answers in the preceding grades, these may not fully document or detail. Essays will also provide appropriate examples as well as illustrations (figures, diagrams, maps, etc.). In more quantitative work, while it may be possible to follow the logic and reasoning steps leading to the answers obtained, the results may have some very minor errors. For all answers, relevant academic referencing styles and conventions must be adhered to.

(C+ to C): A mark in this range is indicative that the answer is of a good to satisfactory range.

Answer will show some knowledge and understanding of relevant course materials, but very little critical thinking. The answer may be weakly structured, covering only a limited range of relevant materials or have weakly developed or incomplete arguments. The answer also tends to exhibit weak essay writing and/or analytical skills. In the case of quantitative answers, the logic and reasoning steps leading to the conclusion may not be clearly expressed. Overall, the answers are poorly presented without proper footnotes and referencing and/or an incomplete bibliography.

(D+ to D-) Probationary grade: A mark in this range is indicative that the answer is below the satisfactory standard.

Typically, the answer here is very brief with poorly organized structure and/or have misunderstood the questions asked. It will show very limited knowledge and understanding of the relevant course materials and display weak writing and/or analytical skills and may contain major factual errors. Essays will exhibit no clear argument and may contain several spelling and grammar errors with very inadequate or absent references or bibliography. Quantitative work will contain obvious errors (such as violation of basic assumptions) and incorrect conclusions.

(F) Fail Grade: A mark at this grade indicates that the answer is below the minimum standard required at the current level of the degree programme.

It indicates that the work is extremely weak and seriously inadequate. This will be because either the work is badly jumbled and incoherent in content, and/or not addressing the essay title or question asked. It will show minimal evidence of basic knowledge and understanding of the relevant course materials and may exhibit very weak writing and analytical skills with very inadequate or absent references and/or bibliography. Quantitative work may contain significant errors (such as incorrect usage of methods) and incorrect conclusions.