

Examination

This 4-hour examination gives a choice of four questions. Students choose two of the questions to write an essay on, meaning they write two essays/answers, each worth about half of the overall grade. There is no fixed upper or lower limit on length. However, answers below 500 words (or 1000 words for the complete paper) are unlikely to pass.

Grading criteria

Essays will be marked holistically, with no specific percentage of marks for any one aspect. Instead, the marker will be making an overall judgement of the quality of the piece of work as a whole. Weaknesses in one area of the criteria may be compensated for by particular skill in another, and vice versa.

Excellent

- The answers present directly relevant, sophisticated, and interesting responses to the chosen questions using appropriate terminology.
- Arguments are very well organized and supported with pertinent examples. The answers demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the question, the course texts, and the period in which they were written.
- A very high standard of written academic English, with few technical (e.g. grammatical or spelling) errors.

Very good

- Work in this category provides clearly focused answers which are well argued and supported, demonstrating a sound knowledge base and very good engagement with the course texts.
- The arguments presented are mainly effective, coherent, and well organized.
- The answers are fluently and accurately written for the most part, perhaps with occasional inaccuracies.

Good

- The answers are mainly relevant and succeed in addressing the chosen questions. There is clear evidence of engagement with and knowledge of the texts, though there may be some imprecision.
- Some aspects of the arguments may be slightly less fully developed than in the higher categories.
- The answers demonstrate good written expression overall, but some minor issues may be evident.

Satisfactory

- Answers in this category show a partial answering of the question, with a limited engagement with the texts, and may be rather mechanical in approach (for example, a reliance on description at the expense of interpretation). Some basic errors may be in evidence.
- Arguments are fair, with some use of relevant examples, but knowledge may be sparse in certain areas.
- Written English is generally readable, but may be somewhat weak at times.

Poor

- Answers may not satisfactorily address the question asked. They may also lack focus and be prone to unsubstantiated assertions, based on a limited understanding of the course materials.
- The arguments may not be well organized and may not always follow logically.
- Written expression in English may be more problematic (and more frequently so) than in the above categories.

Unacceptable

- Work in this range may have some of the following shortcomings:
 - Inadequate knowledge
 - Insufficient length
 - Failure to address the question
 - Incoherent argument
 - Very poor language use