

Marking and assessment criteria for taught postgraduate courses

80+ (Distinction): Work which, over and above possessing all the qualities of the 70-79 mark range, answers the question in such a way as to approach the level necessary for acceptance in professional academic publication. Demonstrates highly sophisticated critical analysis of relevant material. There is very clear, original line of argument. Extends existing discussions to such an extent as to represent a significant advance in understanding of the relevant arguments or issues.

70-79 (Distinction): Intelligently and clearly argued, with some evidence of genuine originality in analysis or approach. Demonstrates impressive command and knowledge of relevant material and the ability to situate the topic within existing debates and to modify or challenge received interpretations. Makes excellent use of relevant primary and secondary texts to advance the argument. Well structured, very well written, with proper referencing and bibliography.

60-69: Well organised and effectively argued, showing a sound grasp of relevant philosophical concepts, arguments, issues, problems etc. and evidence of ability to engage in critical analysis. When needed demonstrates an ability to draw upon relevant primary and secondary material, and to relate it in an illuminating way to the issues being discussed. Generally well written, with a clear line of argument and satisfactory referencing and bibliography.

50-59 (Pass): A lower level of attainment than work marked in the range 60-69, but demonstrating some reasonable understanding of relevant arguments and issues. Demonstrates a general grasp of the subject matter but may contain some areas of confusion. The line of argument is not as clear as it needs to be in places and the critical analysis offered is at times weak. When needed generally demonstrates an ability to relate relevant texts to the issues under discussion. On the whole clearly written, with adequate referencing and bibliography.

40-49 (Fail): Work falls short of the standards demanded for the award of a MA. Significant elements of confusion in the framing and execution of the response to the question. Lack of clarity. Mainly descriptive in approach. Resorts to paraphrase or direct quotation of secondary sources instead of offering independent analysis of relevant material. Some attempt to meet requirements for referencing and bibliography.

39- (Fail): Poorly argued, written and presented. Conceptual confusion and failure to demonstrate any real knowledge or understanding of relevant

philosophical concepts, arguments, issues, problems etc. Failure to address the issues raised by the question; derivative, insubstantial or very poor deployment of relevant material.