

## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR THE BA ENGLISH

### FIRST CLASS (70-100%)

#### ***High First (85% and above)***

- all the qualities of first class work but most carried through to a level either appropriate for a higher degree (e.g., MA) or suggestive of possibilities for publication (level 3) or indicative of unusual excellence (levels 1, 2, 3)

#### ***Middle First (75-84%)***

- all the qualities of first class work but several carried through to a level strongly suggestive of higher degree work (level 3) or indicative of unusual excellence (levels 1, 2, 3)

#### ***Lower First (70-74%)***

- original, independent and relevant thought and argument
- argument(s) convincingly presented, limitations / restrictions recognised
- well evidenced, relevant primary and secondary (critical) material well selected to back up its argument & incorporated into own text, competently and imaginatively analysed
- aware of the academic debate surrounding the subject
- readable, lucid and concise, clear and competent use of vocabulary and grammar
- well structured and signposted in agreement with argument (you let your reader know where you are)
- formal requirements observed (footnotes, complete bibliography)

### SECOND CLASS (50-69%)

#### ***Upper Second (60-69%)***

- contains proof of having thought through the question independently, though relying on material from lectures and seminars to some extent
- makes an overall argument in which the parts are clearly related to the whole
- well-evidenced, using relevant primary and secondary material honestly, critically and selectively, analytic rather than descriptive
- readable, competent use of vocabulary and grammar
- clearly structured
- formal requirements observed

**Lower Second (50-59%)**

- derives much from lectures / seminars and/or secondary literature (though acknowledged)
- own argument not entirely obvious, at times faulty
- uses both primary and secondary literature (largely the same examples as in the lecture / seminar) to make its case
- rather descriptive; relevance to question at times unclear
- mostly readable and grammatical; occasionally simplistic; can be pretentious (e.g., using "big" words without being entirely aware of what they imply)
- structured, though perhaps somewhat arbitrarily
- formal requirements largely observed

**THIRD CLASS (40-49%)**

- heavily derivative, though acknowledging sources
- argument unclear or absent
- heavily descriptive; relevance to question not clear
- difficult to follow, verging on ungrammatical, English poor
- structure not clear
- formal requirements not fully observed
- some evidence of effort

**PASS (35-39%) [NB: FAIL for students enrolled from 2003-4 onwards]**

- heavily derivative; sources often misunderstood though acknowledged
- argument garbled though with moments of sense
- often, though not always, irrelevant to question
- difficult to follow; sometimes ungrammatical; English poor
- mostly, though not completely, unstructured
- formal requirements often ignored
- shows evidence of only little effort

**FAIL (34% AND BELOW )**

- plagiarised (sources not acknowledged, material stolen from other people's work without indication)
- argument garbled
- very largely descriptive or irrelevant to question
- often incomprehensible, and written in very poor English
- unstructured
- formal requirements consistently ignored
- shows lack of effort