

Assessment criteria for 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

<p>(e.g., using "big" words without being entirely aware of what they imply)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structured, though perhaps somewhat arbitrarily • formal requirements largely observed
<p>THIRD CLASS (40-49%)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<p>FAIL (39% AND BELOW)</p>
<p>35-39%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>34% and below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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