

## University of Wollongong Grade Descriptors

The University of Wollongong Grade Descriptors are general statements that describe student performance at each of the University's grade levels.

They aim to:

- a) Communicate to students and staff what our grades represent in terms of standards of performance.
  - o Students can refer to these descriptors prospectively when working on assessments to understand what is expected of them, and retrospectively after having received a mark for an assessment or in a subject to understand how their performance has been assessed and graded.
  - o Staff can refer to these descriptors prospectively when designing assessment tasks and marking criteria and when marking assessments, including using them as a basis for crafting marking rubrics, and retrospectively when undertaking benchmarking and review of marking and grading.
- b) Provide a frame of reference for moderation of assessment activities, especially within teaching teams, to ensure that assessment practice across the University is appropriate, consistent and fair.

The University of Wollongong Grade Descriptors are expressed in general terms so that they are applicable to a broad range of disciplines, including mathematical and computational disciplines.

UOW uses criterion-referenced grading processes as opposed to a normal distribution grading scheme.

Grade	Mark (%)	Descriptor
High Distinction HD	85-100	<p>A high distinction grade (HD) is awarded for performance that provides evidence of an outstanding level of attainment of the relevant subject learning outcomes, demonstrating the attributes of a distinction grade plus (as applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consistent evidence of deep and critical understanding</li> <li>• substantial originality and insight in identifying, generating and communicating competing arguments, perspectives or problem-solving approaches</li> <li>• critical evaluation of problems, their solutions and their implications</li> <li>• use of quantitative analysis of data as the basis for deep and thoughtful judgments, drawing insightful, carefully qualified conclusions from this work</li> <li>• creativity in application as appropriate to the discipline</li> <li>• eloquent and sophisticated communication of information and ideas in terms of the conventions of the discipline</li> <li>• consistent application of appropriate skills, techniques and methods with outstanding levels of precision and accuracy</li> <li>• all or almost all answers correct, very few or none incorrect</li> </ul>

Distinction D	75-84	<p>A distinction grade (D) is awarded for performance that provides evidence of a superior level of attainment of the relevant subject learning outcomes, demonstrating the attributes of a credit grade plus (as applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evidence of integration and evaluation of critical ideas, principles, concepts and/or theories</li> <li>• distinctive insight and ability in applying relevant skills, techniques, methods and/or concepts</li> <li>• demonstration of frequent originality in defining and analysing issues or problems and providing solutions</li> <li>• fluent and thorough communication of information and ideas in terms of the conventions of the discipline</li> <li>• frequent application of appropriate skills, techniques and methods with superior levels of precision and accuracy</li> <li>• most answers correct, few incorrect</li> </ul>
Credit C	65-74	<p>A credit grade (C) is awarded for performance that provides evidence of a high level of attainment of the relevant subject learning outcomes, demonstrating the attributes of a pass grade plus (as applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evidence of learning that goes beyond replication of content knowledge or skills</li> <li>• demonstration of solid understanding of fundamental concepts in the field of study</li> <li>• demonstration of the ability to apply these concepts in a variety of contexts</li> <li>• use of convincing arguments with appropriate coherent and logical reasoning</li> <li>• clear communication of information and ideas in terms of the conventions of the discipline</li> <li>• regular application of appropriate skills, techniques and methods with high levels of precision and accuracy</li> <li>• many answers correct, some incorrect</li> </ul>
Pass P	50-64	<p>A pass grade (P) is awarded for performance that provides evidence of a satisfactory level attainment of the relevant subject learning outcomes, demonstrating (as applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• knowledge, understanding and application of fundamental concepts of the field of study</li> <li>• use of routine arguments with acceptable reasoning</li> <li>• adequate communication of information and ideas in terms of the conventions of the discipline</li> <li>• ability to apply appropriate skills, techniques and methods with satisfactory levels of precision and accuracy</li> <li>• a combination of correct and incorrect answers</li> </ul>
Fail F	<50	<p>A fail grade (F) is given for performance that does not provide sufficient evidence of attainment of the relevant subject learning outcomes.</p>
Technical Fail TF		<p>A technical fail (TF) grade is given when minimum performance level requirements for at least one assessment item in the subject as a whole has not been met despite the student achieving at least a satisfactory level of attainment of the subject learning outcomes.</p>
Satisfactory S		<p>A satisfactory grade (S) is awarded for performance that demonstrates a satisfactory level of attainment of the relevant subject learning outcomes.</p>

Unsatisfactory U		An unsatisfactory grade (U) is awarded for performance that demonstrates an unsatisfactory level of attainment of the relevant subject learning outcomes.
Excellent		An excellent grade (E) may be awarded, instead of a satisfactory grade (S), within subjects from the School of Medicine that have been completed with a consistent pattern of high standard of performance in all aspects of the subject.

*Nb: The University of Wollongong acknowledges Macquarie University's scheme of grade descriptors which have been used, with permission, as a basis for this document.*