

Humanities Academic Skills Workshops

PGTA Guide

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Introduction to the Humanities Academic Skills Module

This module has been designed to help develop the academic skills and attributes required to succeed at university. It is made up of a series of eight video-streamed lectures available through the Blackboard course “HUMA 1027—Humanities Skills”. The videos are accompanied by a series of four workshops delivered by postgraduate teaching assistants during weeks 2 to 5 of the first semester. As per below, some of the videos are intended for personal viewing, whilst others will be shown in the workshops in conjunction with a series of tasks outlined in the remainder of this workbook.

Online Lecture Topics

1. Accessing support and managing expectations
2. Effective use of lectures
3. Time management and effective reading
4. Research practice and academic integrity
5. Making the most out of feedback
6. Essay writing
7. Group work and presentations
8. Exam technique and revision methods

Workshop Topics

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Week 2 | Accessing support and managing expectations
Effective use of lectures
Time management and effective reading |
| Week 3 | Research practice and academic integrity
Making the most out of feedback
Essay writing |
| Week 4 | Group work and presentations |
| Week 5 | Exam technique and revision methods |

Attendance at these workshops will be monitored and failure to participate in the module may impact on your progress. All students who attend the workshops will be awarded 10 Graduate Passport Points (for information see: www.soton.ac.uk/careers/passport).

This module has been designed to be interactive and engaging, and you will be guided through it with the support of a PhD student in the Faculty (referred to here as your PGTA: Postgraduate Teaching Assistant). Do not hesitate to speak with them if you have any queries.

Please remember to bring this workbook with you to all workshops and use it to make notes throughout the module. Should you lose it, a PDF version is available for download on Blackboard.

Week 2 Workshop

Effective use of lectures

Time management & effective reading

This 45-minute workshop focuses upon developing your skills in note-taking, active reading, and time management. It is accompanied by one video lecture that will be shown at the start of class — ‘Effective Use of Lectures’ — as well as two critical supplementary lectures — ‘Time Management & Effective Reading’ and ‘Accessing Support & Managing Expectations’ — which you should review before or after your first workshop. The former of these two additional videos is a necessary complement to many of the activities you will be completing in this workshop. The latter provides answers to key questions, including email and web contacts for critical services at the university.

Some of the activities on the following pages are identified as optional. If time permits, your PGTA will lead you through them. Otherwise, please aim to complete them as soon as possible after the workshop.

Corresponding Online Lectures

Accessing Support & Managing Expectations

Effective Use of Lectures

Time Management & Effective Reading

Activity | Note Taking

Use the central spaces below to take notes as you watch the video on ‘Effective Use of Lectures’.

Actively taking notes during lectures helps to consolidate the information which is being presented to you, and is also a good way of maintaining concentration.

ACTIVITY: Note Taking

Pre-Lecture Preparation

During Lecture Learning

Note to PGTAs

As this is the first workshop, you will likely want to spend 5 minutes introducing yourself, the module, and this workshop’s aims. Several more minutes might also be allotted to students introducing themselves.

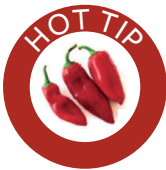
The ‘Effective use of lectures’ video explains the basics of note-taking and lecture-based comprehension. It is supplemented by the adjacent list of common problems and proposed solutions (see p.9 of this workbook), which students should review on their own time. As the video lecture is being screened, students should actively take notes by completing the underlying activity in an effort to model best practice.

If time permits, share your own experiences in preparing for and negotiating lectures as a student.

Recommended Time

20 minutes, including screening of the video lecture, introductions and any necessary time for questions & answers.

Post-Lecture Reflection



For more tips on note-taking, see http://www.academic-skills.soton.ac.uk/studytips/lecture_notes, and review the Blackboard Study Skills Toolkit activity on ‘Academic speaking, listening, and note-taking skills’.

For Review Only | Getting the most out of lectures (adapted from Price & Maier 2007)

See below for a list of common problems that students encounter in relation to lectures, including suggestions for managing those problems. Do not hesitate to speak to your lecturer for further guidance. (NB. Aim to review this list before or after attending your Week 2 workshop.)

Problem	Solution
You have very high expectations of the lectures which are not being met	Look at the module outline to ensure you are aware of the content to be addressed. Speak to the lecturer if materials are being excluded or you are otherwise having difficulty following the content.
You are unable to cope with the volume of information being given to you because it is all new	Increase your pre-lecture preparation by reading the module outline, and reviewing the assigned readings for the lecture as well as any Blackboard notes available prior to the lecture.
You quickly go into information overload and give up taking notes	Review key concepts and terminology in advance to ensure you understand them prior to the lecture. Review your note-taking strategy—consider applying the Cornell Method: http://lsc.sas.cornell.edu/Sidebars/Study_Skills_Resources/cornellsystem.pdf
You do not recognise or understand some of the new terminology	Increase your pre-lecture preparation by reading the module outline, and reviewing the assigned readings for the lecture as well as any Blackboard notes available prior to the lecture.
The information seems very detailed and in great depth	Aim to do some reading before the lecture to get a better understanding of the topic and to prepare you for the terminology and associated concepts.
You are distracted easily in lectures	Be selective about where you choose a seat in the lecture room and with whom you sit. Avoid sitting next to those who distract you. Aim to sit near the front of the room, close to your tutor.
You find it hard to take in information due to the manner that it is delivered	Speak to your lecturer for guidance. Review your note-taking strategy to see if it can be appropriately modified. Consider setting aside time after each lecture to review notes with your classmates and discuss the subject matter.

Activity | Active Reading (adapted from Price & Maier 2007)

Active reading entails, in part, critical analysis of academic and non-academic texts. The table below presents some general questions, and possible responses, to apply to most reading materials that you’ll encounter at university. Use this to guide your reading of the article on the following page. Your PGTA will then lead you through a short group discussion of the content.

Question	Response	To consider...
Are the author’s ideas a summary of someone else’s research?		Look for words like: – according to... – a research study by.. – cited in...
Is the argument sound & strong? What evidence is provided?		– look for research and references that back up the same line of argument
Is the evidence reputable?	Regroup and lead students through a summative discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the reading.	
Is the evidence refutable?		– question what methods were used to gather the evidence – is the evidence based on assumptions or rigorous resources?
Are there any unfinished threads in the text or inconsistent statements?		– review each idea against what the author has said/concluded about it: does the evidence substantiate the argument? – the find facility is useful for searching the content of electronic texts

Note to PGTA’s

Ask students to review the ‘Time management & effective reading’ and ‘Accessing support & managing expectations’ lectures on Blackboard on their own time following this workshop. Introduce them to the table below and consider asking them about their current strategies for critically reviewing texts. Have students, either independently or in small groups, read the article excerpt on the following page (p.11) and contemplate its content in light of the table’s questions. Prompt them to use the mind mapping activity on p.12 to help process their reading of the article.

Recommended Time

25 minutes, including approx. 5 minutes to familiarise students with the task/ resources, 5 minutes for reading time, and 15 minutes for small group and full group discussion.

Activity | Active Reading

Read the excerpt below and consider it in light of the active reading questions listed on the preceding page. Your comments will then inform a group discussion, moderated by your PGTA, on the strengths and weaknesses of the article.

Bringing Hominins Back to Life

Excerpt from Michael Balter, 2009, *Science* 325:136-139.

To reconstruct our ancestors, paleoartists weave art and science together in a sometimes uneasy marriage. The result is lifelike models that influence how both researchers and the public view ancient humans.

The interplay between art and science makes reconstruction “a two-way street,” says Gary Sawyer, who has been reconstructing hominins at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in New York City for more than 30 years. The artists must track researchers’ latest anatomical interpretations, and reconstruction helps scientists think about issues such as “what kind of muscles a hominin had and how it walked on the landscape”...Some researchers argue that reconstructions influence how scientists view ancient hominins and interpret their behavior. “The scientific community requires a lengthy period of time to absorb and adapt to new ideas, and these illustrations are often part of the process by which you see the change,” says Stephanie Moser, an archaeologist at Southampton University in the United Kingdom. “These artistic representations are part of the knowledge cycle and not outside it.”

Yet the comfort level about reconstructions varies among scientists. AMNH paleoanthropologist Ian Tattersall, who has collaborated with Sawyer and other paleoartists, says he wishes they weren’t necessary. “I would rather not do these, but we have an obligation to the public, which ultimately supports this research and wants to see its results. But [reconstructions] require lots of decisions that science can’t answer.” Did our earliest ancestors smile? How fat were they? “The reconstructions allow us to ask the questions but not to answer them,” says Tattersall.

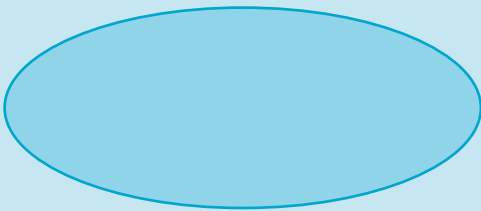
...Researchers and paleoartists have been working together since the 19th century, when the first hominin fossils were discovered. The effects of science on the art and vice versa were obvious almost immediately. One celebrated battle of reconstructions was sparked by the 1908 discovery of a nearly complete Neandertal skeleton at La Chapelle-aux-Saints in southern France. French paleontologist Marcellin Boule concluded that the Neandertal did not walk fully erect and played no part in human ancestry. The artist he enlisted created a brutish, stooped, hairy creature, more ape than human. But Scottish anatomist Arthur Keith, who had concluded that Neandertals were ancestral to modern humans, commissioned a rival drawing of the La Chapelle-aux-Saints Neandertal sitting on a rock and looking very human as it pensively knapped a stone tool. Boule’s brutish conception dominated until at least the 1950s, when new fossils and research convinced most anthropologists that Neandertals were either our ancestors or our very close relatives. (The latter view predominates today; see *Science*, 13 Feb, p. 870.) Thus, today’s Neandertal reconstructions tend to emphasize their humanity.

Part of the shift, some researchers say, can be explained by a change in social attitudes, as in the 1960s Neandertals came to be seen as more peaceful. “Reconstructions tend to reflect our deepseated views” of hominins, says paleoanthropologist Steven Churchill of Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. “Do you assume that they are like us but just a little more primitive or that they were very different? It affects how questions are asked”...

Activity | Using Mind Maps to Summarise

Mind maps and summary sheets are effective tools for summarising what you have learnt about a particular topic in a lecture or reading. Summarising as you go along will save you time when it comes to revision.

You are encouraged to create a mind map to help process your reading of Balter’s (2009) article on the preceding page. Use the space below to note ideas to contribute to the group discussion.



Note to PGTAs

Ask students to brainstorm their understanding of the argument presented in Balter 2009 (on the preceding page) via a mind map. Note to students that mind maps are particularly useful in summarising or encapsulating ideas, for instance at the end of lectures, readings, or in preparing for assignments and exams. They are one of several note-taking techniques which might be effective for students.

Recommended Time

To be done in conjunction with the preceding activity on active reading.

Optional Activity | Managing Assignments

By now you may be aware of the deadlines for some of your upcoming assignments. Use the system below to plan bite size deadlines for one such assignment and then aim to adhere as closely as possible to those deadlines.

By recording the date you completed the task, you will be able to assess whether your planning was viable or overly optimistic. This approach is simply one means of organising yourself: if it does not suit you, feel comfortable in developing strategies that meet your specific needs.

	Details	Deadline	Date Completed
Confirmed choice of assignment			
Identification of sources			
Reading of sources and note taking			
Planning			
First Draft	Note to PGTAs If time permits, ask students to complete the activities on this and the following page. Students should be prompted to review the Blackboard video and slides on ‘Time management & effective reading’ and ‘Accessing support & managing expectations’ to complement these exercises.		
Final Draft			
Re-read & circulate for others to read			
Final submission			This deadline will, of course, be fixed by your tutor.

Optional Activity | Time Management

As you now know your timetable for the semester, you can use the table below to plan your week. Be realistic. Whilst you might not always follow this schedule, it should help you to develop a routine early on which will ultimately set you in good stead for the rest of your university career.

Colour code different activities to allow you to visualise how you are distributing your time.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
09 - 10							
10 - 11							
11 - 12							
12 - 13							
13 - 14							
14 - 15							
15 - 16							
16 - 17							
17 - 18							
Early Evening							
Late Evening							



Study



Socialising



Paid Work



Other

Week 3 Workshop

Making the Most Out of Feedback

Essay Writing

This 45-minute workshop focuses upon developing your skills in essay writing, in understanding marking criteria, and in responding to the critical feedback of your tutors. It is accompanied by two video lectures that will be shown in class — ‘Making the most out of feedback’ and ‘Essay writing’ — and one lecture that you should review on your own: ‘Research practice & academic integrity’. These resources are necessarily supplemented by your discipline handbooks, which specify the bibliographic and citation formats you should follow, along with other research and stylistic guidelines.

It is essential for you to be familiar with the university’s academic integrity policy. It can be accessed online at www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/academicintegrity-statement.html. You can easily review your understanding of this policy via the web-based quiz available on the Blackboard site for this module.

You will begin the following workshop by watching the video on ‘Feedback’, after which your PGTA will lead you through an activity which prompts you to study the marking criteria specific to your discipline. Subsequently, you will be shown the lecture on ‘Essay writing,’ and your PGTA will then ask you to critically analyse various sample essays produced by other first-year Humanities students. In this way, you can review the quality of different pieces of work and compare your assessments with those of the original marker of that work.

Corresponding Online Lectures

Research Practice and Academic Integrity

Making the Most Out of Feedback

Essay Writing

MARKING CRITERIA: Archaeology	
1st Class (1st) 70-100%	(above 80%) means outstanding, brilliant (74-79%) is a clear first, excellent (70-73%) means of very high quality, but not perfect. Some original ideas, or perceptive points <i>For a First Class mark you must demonstrate:</i> - Extensive reading - Detailed understanding of what you have read - Strong and consistent theme or point of view developed throughout the assignment - Coherent discussion of ideas with the information (i.e., ideas, data, case-studies, etc.) - Use of information in a constructive way to support or critique the ideas of others - Clear expression of your ideas, presented in a well-structured format
Upper Second Class (2:1) 60-69%	(66-69%) is very good, but not exceptional. Good ideas, clearly expressed (60-65%) is good, but not exceptional. Some original ideas, but errors, generally
Lower Second Class (2:2) 50-59%	Provide students with 5 minutes to review their relevant disciplinary marking criteria as outlined in the following pages. Ask them how these criteria converge with their expectations. Make students aware that, in most cases, these criteria pertain to Year One ONLY. Students should consult their discipline handbooks for the most up-to-date information. Recommended Time 15-20 minutes, including screening of the ‘Feedback’ lecture, review of assessment criteria and discussion. Material omitted and less, inaccurate lised it fits into the cture
Third Class (3rd) 40-49%	(47-49%) poor work, inadequate content, little understanding of the subject (44-46%) very weak (40-43%) only just at Honours Degree standard

MARKING CRITERIA: English	
High First Class (1st) 85-100%	All the qualities of First Class work (see ‘Low First’, below) but most carried through to a level either appropriate for a higher degree (e.g., MA) or indicative of unusual excellence.
Middle First Class (1st) 75-84%	All the qualities of First Class work (see ‘Low First’, below), but several carried through to a level strongly indicative of unusual excellence.
Lower First Class (1st) 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 - awareness 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 (let your reader know where you are) - formal requirements observed (footnotes, complete bibliography)
Upper Second Class (2:1) 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 Class (2.2) 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 (3rd) 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
Fail 35-39%	- 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 - little evidence of effort
Fail 0-34%	- 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

MARKING CRITERIA: Film	
High First Class (1st) 85-100%	All the qualities of First Class work (see ‘Low First’, below) but most carried through to a level either appropriate for a higher degree (e.g., MA) or indicative of unusual excellence.
Middle First Class (1st) 75-84%	All the qualities of First Class work (see ‘Low First’, below), but several carried through to a level strongly indicative of unusual excellence.
Lower First Class (1st) 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 – awareness 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 (let your reader know where you are) – formal requirements observed (footnotes, complete bibliography)
Upper Second Class (2:1) 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 Class (2.2) 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 (3rd) 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
Fail 35-39%	– 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 – little evidence of effort
Fail 0-34%	– 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

MARKING CRITERIA: History	
High First Class (1st) 85-100%	– exceptional work judged against all criteria – near-flawless performance of the task with significant originality of approach which pushes the boundaries of the course material – most elements of the performance are appropriate to postgraduate work or indicative of unusual excellence
Middle First Class (1st) 75-84%	– outstanding work judged against all criteria – the task is completed with originality and attention to detail and near-flawless argument – some elements of the performance are suggestive of postgraduate work or indicative of unusual excellence
Lower First Class (1st) 70-74%	– excellent work judged by all criteria – evidence of independent and relevant thought and argument – some originality of approach – securely supported argument with relevant and wide-ranging selection of primary and secondary evidence; very good level of analytical skills in evidence – engagement with relevant academic debates – very clear and competent presentation skills (including correct observance of formal requirements)
Upper Second Class (2:1) 60-69%	– good to very good quality work – independent approach to the set task, but significantly dependent on material from lectures and seminars – good use of evidence with relevant selection of primary and secondary material (some minor flaws in evidence and relatively limited range of reading distinguish this class from first class) – good level of analytical skills in evidence; good level of competence in presentation skills (including correct observance of formal requirements)
Lower Second Class (2.2) 50-59%	– work in the range of below average to good quality – relatively routine and pedestrian when judged against all criteria – competent use of primary and secondary material, but largely dependent on core course materials/evidence of limited reading – limited competence in structuring and/or articulating coherent argument – limited evidence of analytical skills – e.g. relevance to question is unclear in places; rather descriptive account of the question being discussed – generally competent in presentation skills (including correct observance of formal requirements)
Third Class (3rd) 40-49%	– well below average quality work – very dependent on secondary material – substantial elements of the argument are unclear or absent – very limited skills in structuring and/or articulating coherent argument – very limited analytical skills – e.g. limited relevance to question; substantially descriptive account of the question being discussed – satisfies minimum formal requirements – work at the lowest end of this range achieves the bare minimum requirement to be considered as sufficient for Honours level or sufficient to qualify
Fail 35-39%	– at this grade a student in Year 1 would fail to qualify – in Year 2 and Final Year, work does not represent the bare minimum to achieve Honours – very derivative work, with substantial failures of understanding of material – lack of analytical approach; very descriptive; argument is substantially incoherent – substantial failures in maintaining relevance to the question – substantial failures in structuring and/or articulation of coherent argument – failures in satisfying formal requirements; shows lack of effort – evidence of plagiarism or other serious breaches of academic integrity

MARKING CRITERIA: Modern Languages	
High First Class (1st) 90-100%	An outstanding answer showing an excellent overall understanding of basic concepts, and a confident use of standard critical approaches to the subject. Evidence of a significant degree of originality in the handling of the assignment (formulation of ideas and aims, capacity to interpret primary and secondary material). Argument very clearly structured and confidently supported by appropriate evidence. Presentation is clear and accurate; sources are thoroughly documented. An ambitious answer that could not be bettered at Level 1 in the time available.
Middle First Class (1st) Excellent 80-89%	An excellent answer showing a good understanding of basic concepts and a capacity to use standard critical approaches appropriate to the subject. Evidence of developing confidence in formulating independent ideas, criteria and judgements. Argument cogent and clearly supported by appropriate evidence drawn from primary and secondary sources, which are thoroughly cited. Presentation is good. An ambitious answer, unusually perceptive for an undergraduate at Level 1.
Lower First Class (1st) Very good 70-79%	A very well focussed answer demonstrating a generally good level of understanding of basic concepts and reasonable confidence in handling standard approaches to the subject. Some evidence of the capacity for independent thought in developing an argument that draws on primary and secondary sources to advance an argument that is generally sound, although it may occasionally falter (for example, there may be occasional lack of clarity or organisation). Presentation is generally good and sources are well documented.
Upper Second Class (2:1) Good 60-69%	A competent answer in all or most areas, or showing moderate competence in some areas but excellence in others. Able to summarise and interpret primary (and some secondary) material in a way that demonstrates awareness of basic concepts and some evidence of a developing capacity for critical evaluation. Less ambitious in scope than First Class, but still aiming to achieve a good level of discussion. At the lower end of the scale, there may be some shortcomings, but major errors are avoided. Presentation generally competent; sources adequately documented.
Lower Second Class (2:2) Satisfactory 50-59%	Answer reasonably competent in all or most areas, or uneven answer showing strength in some areas but weakness in others. Fairly competent knowledge or understanding of the material studied, but characterised by one or more of the following: inadequate grasp of basic concepts; lack of sufficient critical reading and awareness; lack of considered thought; argument not always well structured or relevant; gaps in planning and use of evidence; lacks the scope, accuracy and/ or cohesiveness expected of an Upper Second. Limited awareness of critical debates but may be too descriptive or generalised; would benefit from sharper focus and more reflection; sources documented, but perhaps with some inconsistency/gaps.
Third Class (3rd) Basic 40-49%	Weak answer in all or most areas, tending to be descriptive with poor grasp of basic concepts and uncritical coverage of debates and issues, but with some basic (or minimal, at the lower end of the scale) relevant information and understanding. Some evidence of reading and attempt to address question or topic, but with substantial omissions or the inclusion of irrelevant material. Skills of planning, structuring and presentation relatively weak; barely adequate level of understanding and reading; poor referencing.
FAIL Very weak 20-39%	Answer showing poor (or minimal at the lower end of the scale) achievement in all areas, but containing some elementary relevant information (in the 30%-40% band) or a very minimal degree of elementary relevant information (in the 20%-30% band). Reliant on a minimal range of reading, with a very poor grasp of basic concepts and poor attention to detail. May be repetitious, consisting of a string of weak statements/opinions which may not relate to each other. Assertions without supporting evidence; minimal reflection; confused argument; little if any analysis; poor planning, use of English and presentation; sources very inadequately cited (or not cited). At the lower end of the scale (20%-30%), there is little evidence that the candidate has benefited from the course under assessment.
FAIL Inadequate 0-19%	Inadequate answer in which there is no evidence of understanding or knowledge of the material studied; inability to construct an argument; lack of planning or presentation skills; significant elements of irrelevance, error or plagiarism; sources not cited.

MARKING CRITERIA: Music	
1st Class (1st) 70-100%	This is work of exceptionally high quality, excellent in content and preparation, with originality and flair. Marks of 80 and above are awarded rarely, usually to work that goes beyond undergraduate level.
Upper Second Class (2:1) 60-69%	Good work overall. Work marked in the top half of this range may have some excellent elements; work in the lower half of the range may contain elements that are only adequate.
Lower Second Class (2:2) 50-59%	Satisfactory or adequate work. There may be some technical or presentational flaws, more apparent in work marked in the lower half of the range.
Third Class (3rd) 40-49%	Work of poor quality, with consistent or severe technical or presentational shortcomings and errors or irrelevancies.
Fail 0-39%	The work is not of sufficient merit to pass the assessment, through failure to accomplish the task set.
Performance marking schemes for music students are described in the Performance Handbook. N.B. All marks are provisional until confirmed by the Humanities Assessment Boards at the end of the year. This applies to both coursework and the results of the first semester examinations.	

MARKING CRITERIA: Philosophy	
1st Class (1st) 70-100%	Excellent understanding and mastery of the set topic, which is demonstrated in: a clear, accurate and concise presentation of the problem(s) under discussion and of the views and arguments examined, especially of the more sophisticated and subtle points; a high level of critical engagement with the material that goes beyond a good understanding of criticisms encountered in lectures or in the literature; a very clear and helpful organization and exposition and very good presentation. In addition, signs of originality that are evidence of independent thought (e.g. pushing further ideas or objections encountered, or suggesting new ones, or new aspects of familiar ones), and the capacity to relate the set topic to other philosophical topics and problems will merit a higher first mark.
Upper Second Class (2:1) 60-69%	Good to very good understanding of the set topic demonstrated in explicit and mostly clear identification and explanation of the problem(s) under discussion. The discussion shows a good grasp of at least most of the fundamental relevant views and arguments encountered in lectures and secondary reading and, while tending to rely mostly on the these, it nonetheless goes beyond mere reportage, displaying good critical engagement. The material is basically well organized and presented, with a fairly clear structure and helpful signposting that enable the reader to see where the discussion is going at any point.
Lower Second Class (2:2) 50-59%	Reasonable to good grasp of the set topic shown in the relevance of the discussion. Demonstrates a fair to good understanding of the material consulted but tends to rely too much on lectures notes and/or secondary literature, showing some but not enough critical engagement. Reasonable to good exposition, perhaps with occasional lack of clarity offset by passages that provide solid evidence of understanding. Reasonable organization and presentation, with some sense of direction towards a conclusion despite possibly the odd moments of irrelevance or confusion.
Third Class (3rd) 40-49%	Understanding of at least some aspects of the set topic and some success at explaining the problem(s) under discussion and some views and arguments that are relevant to those problems. Not much evidence of critical engagement and overreliance on lecture notes, e.g. where the bulk of the discussion consists in regurgitating these or views encountered in secondary literature. The discussion is not very well structured, the different parts of the essay are not clearly related to each other, and there may be some irrelevance or confusion but there is still some sense of direction towards a conclusion that relates back to the problem(s) under discussion.
Fail 0-39%	Basic failure to identify and/or explain clearly the philosophical problem(s) under discussion. Poor level of understanding reflected in, for example, confused and/or confusing exposition, irrelevant material, poorly connected points that read more like a list than an argument, etc. A very poor level of understanding and/or no serious attempt to address the topic, showing either lack of effort or substantial and systematic confusion, will merit a very low fail, below the qualifying mark of 25. (NB. Students cannot progress or graduate with any mark below the qualifying mark in any module.)

ACTIVITY | Essay Marking 1

This is a generic example of one of the feedback forms that markers use to give you critical commentary on your writing. Read one of the essays that your PGTA has distributed to you, and use the relevant disciplinary marking criteria on the preceding pages to grade the work. Your PGTA will lead you through a discussion of your findings.

	Excellent	Good	Competent	Weak	Poor
Knowledge of relevant literature					
Addresses the question / task set					
Analytical ability					
Structure and focus					
Draws on relevant examples / evidence					
Bibliography and citation					
What are the strengths	Note to PGTAs Following viewing of the ‘Essay writing’ video: – Divide students into groups of 3 to 4 – Give each group two essays (on the same topic) whose quality of work is distinct and contrastable (i.e., 1st class versus 3rd class; 2:1 versus 2:2) – Have groups take each essay in turn, reading and assessing the content, and using the underlying feedback form to record their commentary – Allow students some time for discussion of why they marked it as they did; then provide them with the original grade assigned to the piece of work, along with the marker’s feedback – Aim to distribute the same essays to at least two of the groups in order to compare and contrast their marking procedures and assessments Recommended Time 25-30 minutes, including screening of the ‘Essay writing’ lecture, review of one or two essays, and group discussion.				
What are its weaknesses					
How might it be improved					
Recommended Grade	Marker				

ACTIVITY | Essay Marking 2

This is a generic example of one of the feedback forms that markers use to give you critical commentary on your writing. Read the second of the two essays that your PGTA has distributed to you, and use the relevant disciplinary marking criteria on the preceding pages to grade the work. Your PGTA will lead you through a discussion of your findings.

	Excellent	Good	Competent	Weak	Poor
Knowledge of relevant literature					
Addresses the question / task set					
Analytical ability					
Structure and focus					
Draws on relevant examples / evidence					
Bibliography and citations					
What are the strengths of this essay?					
What are its weaknesses?					
How might it be improved?					
Recommended Grade	Marker				

Week 4 Workshop

Group work & presentations

This 90-minute workshop focuses upon developing your skills in working within a team and in delivering oral presentations to both small and large audiences. It is accompanied by one video lecture that will be shown at the start of class — ‘Group work & presentations’. This workshop seeks to provide you with an opportunity to practice your public speaking and group work skills in a supportive, calm environment. It aims to boost your confidence and give you a chance to reflect on your capabilities in a non-demanding context.

Your PGTA will divide you into groups and ask you to brainstorm possible topics for presentation to your classmates. Using the ‘Checklist’ on the following page, work with your team to prepare a 5-minute talk to which each member of the group will contribute. You will then be asked to use the ‘Self-Evaluation’ form to reflect on your presentation skills, and to guide discussion with the larger class about presentation skills and techniques.

Corresponding Online Lectures

Group Work & Presentations

ACTIVITY | Checklist for Preparing Talks

Use the table below to organise your teamwork and prepare for your oral presentation. Be sure to delegate tasks amongst your team, and keep track of the time for both preparation and delivery of your talk. Think critically about the format you want to use for the presentation, and consider letting that format guide your division of labour.

Task	Notes	Responsibilities
Decide on the title and general topic for your talk (see mindmapping activity on following page)		
Decide on group roles and delegate tasks		
Research the topic —make sure you feel confident enough to develop an angle		
Refine and narrow the topic —ascertain your main points or headings		
Write brief notes on prompt cards to make sure that you will cover all the ground you want to		
Look carefully at the evaluation criteria to be used		
Check the room you are doing the talk in: does it have the equipment you need?		
Decide and prepare the visual aids you need		
Practise giving your talk and timing it		

Note to PGTAs

Following screening of the video lecture, divide students into groups of 4-5 and encourage them to use this checklist to guide their teamwork. Students should aim to apply an appropriate brainstorming technique—e.g., the mind map on the subsequent page—to settle upon a topic and its structure.

Presentations should be 5 minutes maximum, and each member of the group will need to contribute to its staging and delivery. Time for one or two questions at the close of each presentation should be provided—chaired by yourself as PGTA. Immediately postpresentation, students should be encouraged to reflect on their performance (both on paper using the self-evaluation sheet on p.28, and aloud if appropriate) and you should feel comfortable providing constructively critical advice to the full group based on your observations.

If time permits, following delivery of their presentations, lead a discussion about the difficulties students encountered working as a group. Brainstorm possible solutions.

Recommended Time

Aim to break the workshop down generally as follows, although adapt as necessary:

- 10 minutes: introduction and video screening
- 10 minutes: brainstorming
- 20 minutes: group planning, preparation and practicing
- 40 minutes: 5 minutes each for presentations, plus 5 minutes each for questions, discussion and turn-around time
- 10 minutes: group discussion and reflection

ACTIVITY | Mind Maps

Using the mind-mapping technique introduced in Week 2 (or a similar brainstorming strategy of your choice), select a topic for presentation to your classmates in the form of a 5-minute talk. Build on that topic by delegating one member of your team to write down ideas as others call them out loud. Try not to discuss these ideas in depth until everyone has contributed as many points as possible to the mind map. Once brainstorming is complete, return to each point to evaluate, classify, sort and tease out their interrelationships. This process should provide you with a good foundation for structuring your talk.

ACTIVITY | Oral Presentation: Self evaluation

Use this table to critically assess your performance and to guide discussion with your PGTA about your team’s overall delivery of the talk.

Presentation Topic:			
Planned Learning Outcomes	Score out of ten	Strengths	Goals for next time
Academic Context – Knowledge and understanding of core material – Extent, quality and appropriateness of research – Conceptual grasp of issues, quality of argument and ability to answer questions			
Quality Management – Pacing of presentation, adherence to time limits – Effective use of visual aids – Organisation and structure of material (intro, main body & conclusion)			
Quality of Communication – Audibility, liveliness and quality of presentation – Confidence and fluency in use of English – Appropriate use of body language – Responsiveness to audience			

Note to PGTAs
Ask students to use this self-evaluation form to reflect on the delivery of their presentations. Use the form yourself to evaluate students’ performances. Following each talk, ask students to comment upon their perceptions of their own delivery. Provide supportive feedback to the group based on your evaluation.

Week 5 Workshop

Exam technique & revision methods

This 45-minute workshop focuses upon developing your skills in preparing for and writing exams. It is accompanied by one video lecture that will be shown at the start of class — ‘Exam technique and revision methods’.

Your PGTA will lead you through a brainstorming activity which prompts you to reflect on the study strategies that are most meaningful to you. Subsequently, your PGTA will divide you into groups and ask you to critically analyse various sample exam responses produced by other first-year Humanities students. You will want to review the relevant disciplinary marking criteria introduced in Week 3 to structure your analyses. The assessments of the original markers of the exam samples will then be distributed, allowing you to compare your evaluations against theirs, and providing the opportunity to reflect on the quality of different pieces of work.

Corresponding Online Lectures

Exam technique & revision methods

ACTIVITY | Brainstorming

Use the space below to consider the study techniques you find most useful to you in preparing for exams. These will be specific to you and your learning style, and may be affected by the topic you are studying. Compare your techniques with those of one of your classmates. Your PGTA will then guide you through a group discussion of successful revision strategies.

Note to PGTA's

Following viewing of the video lecture,

- Ask students to brainstorm about their personal preferences regarding study techniques on the page below, and allot several minutes for students to then share these preferences with a classmate.
- Regroup and ask the class to call out their preferred techniques while you record them on the whiteboard. These should include some or all of the following:
 - Summarisation of notes/handouts into 'distilled notes' (key words, phrases) on flash cards or A4 sheets
 - Colour-coding of interrelationships and key ideas
 - Concept & mind maps
 - Peer group revision
 - Reviewing past exams and responding to them in a mock-exam environment
 - Repeating information out loud to yourself or recording it on to audiotape and replaying the tape to yourself
 - Rewriting notes word-for-word
 - Reviewing past essay questions and preparing mock essay plans in response to those questions
- Indicate to students that revision methods are specific to the individual, and success often depends not only on their applicability to the subject matter, but on the environment and overall context in which they are used.

Recommended Time

15 minutes, including screening of the 'Exam technique' lecture, brainstorming and general discussion.

ACTIVITY | Exam Marking 1

This is an example of some of the generic standards upon which markers might assess your exam writing. Read one of the exams that your PGTA has distributed to you, and use the relevant disciplinary marking criteria from Week 3 to evaluate its quality. Actively underline and highlight its strengths and weaknesses. Your PGTA will lead you through a discussion of your findings.

What are the strengths of this piece of writing?

What are the weaknesses?

Note to PGTA's

- Divide students into groups of 3 to 4
- Give each group two exams on the same topic whose quality of work is distinct and contrastable (i.e., 1st class versus 3rd class; 1st versus 2:2)
- Have groups take each exam in turn, reading and assessing the content, and using the underlying feedback form to record their commentary
- Allow students some time for discussion of why they marked it as they did; then reveal the original grade assigned to the piece of work, along with the marker's feedback
- Aim to distribute the same essays to at least two of the groups in order to compare and contrast their marking procedures and assessments

What improvements could be made?

Do you think the student is a good writer?

Recommended Time

25-30 minutes, including review of two essays and group discussion.

What mark would you award this exam response?

What mark was this exam response awarded?

Was your assessment accurate? Reflect upon any differences in opinion.

ACTIVITY | Exam Marking 2

This is an example of some of the generic standards upon which markers might assess your exam writing. Read the second of the two exams that your PGTA has distributed to you, and use the relevant disciplinary marking criteria from Week 3 to evaluate its quality. Your PGTA will lead you through a discussion of your findings.

What are the strengths of this piece of writing?
What are the weaknesses?
What improvements could be made to this exam response?
Do you think the student has an appropriate knowledge of the relevant literature?
What mark would you award this exam response?
What mark was this exam response awarded?
Was your assessment accurate? Reflect upon any differences in opinion.

Key References

COTTRELL, S. (2008) *The Study Skills Handbook*. 3rd ed. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

PRICE, G. & MAIER, P. (2007) *Effective Study Skills*. Harlow: Pearson/Longman.



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