

Extract from the "Guidelines for Examiners and Assessors for Tripos Examinations 2020"

II. GRADE DESCRIPTORS

Fail, lower range [0 to 9]

Work in this category shows no attempt to answer the question set. It fails to show any basic knowledge of the topic.

Fail, middle range [10 to 29]

Work in this category shows an attempt to answer the question set. Yet it fails to show any basic knowledge of the topic.

Fail, higher range [30 to 39]

Work in this range shows an attempt to answer the question set. It may display some basic knowledge of the topic. Yet it is either irrelevant to the question set, incoherent, unsystematic, superficial, or unacceptably brief. Work at the lower end of this range will have more than one of these defects.

Third, lower range [40 to 44]

Work in this range shows some basic knowledge of the topic. Yet it displays extensive serious deficiencies in terms of its accuracy, coherence, detail, organisation, breadth of reference, or focus on the wording of the question set.

Third, higher range [45 to 49]

Work in this category shows some basic knowledge of the topic. Yet it displays some serious deficiencies in terms of its accuracy, coherence, detail, organisation, breadth of reference, or focus on the wording of the question set.

Lower second, lower range [50 to 54]

Work in this category shows extensive weaknesses in terms of its accuracy, coherence, detail, organisation, breadth of reference, or focus on the wording of the question set. But it shows sound basic knowledge of the topic. Achieving this mark on a question therefore signifies that the candidate has firm control of at least some of the essential points.

Lower second, higher range [55 to 59]

Work in this category shows some weaknesses in terms of its accuracy, coherence, detail, organization, breadth of reference, or focus on the wording of the question set. But it shows sound basic knowledge of the topic. Achieving this mark on a question therefore signifies that the candidate has firm control of the essential points.

Upper second, lower range [60 to 64]

Work in this category shows generally sound knowledge of the topic, displays good understanding of the question set, and is clearly organised and cogently argued. There may be weaknesses in these or other areas, but such weaknesses will be relatively minor.

Upper second, higher range [65 to 69]

Work in this category shows sound knowledge of the topic. It displays very good understanding of the question set. It is clearly organised and cogently argued. Work in this category will normally contain a detailed and broad based engagement with the relevant material.

First, lower range [70 to 74]

Work in this category shows all the merits of Upper Second class work. Yet it goes beyond such work either in terms of its range, detail, precision, clarity or sophistication of argument.

First, middle range [75 to 79]

Work in this category shows excellent command of the topic. It displays an excellent level of understanding of the question set. It is well organized, clearly expressed and cogently argued.

First, higher range [80 to 85]

Work in this category shows excellent command of the topic. It displays an excellent level of understanding of the question set. It is well organised, clearly expressed and cogently argued. Work in this category will either approach the question set from an unexpected angle, contain unusually elegant, illuminating or original passages, or be especially well illustrated in a relevant fashion.

A special issue arises with respect to the General paper for Parts IB and II, where candidates are given a number of short titles rather than specific questions. The intention is that candidates should in effect set their own question within the area (or one of the areas) indicated by the title, and should set

it with a view to the fact that they have three hours to answer it. Work which does not fall within any reasonable interpretation of the title incurs the same penalties as does irrelevant work in other papers.