Honours Thesis (Ancient History, History, Religious Studies)

The following marking criteria are indicative only. Please check Course Profile for marking criteria applicable to your thesis.

Your Honours thesis will be assessed according to the following criteria:

1.   Research Question: Is there a clear and coherent research question? Is this research question important, interesting and/or innovative?
2.   Knowledge of Relevant Literature: Is there a review and critical assessment of the academic literature relevant to this research question?
3.   Method: Does the thesis identify an appropriate method for answering the research question and given reasons for the adoption of this method? Has the method been consistently and correctly utilised in the thesis?
4.   Use of Primary Source Materials: Where relevant, does the student demonstrate a proficiency in selecting and locating relevant primary source materials/data?
5.   Quality of Analysis: Has the student presented an argument or thesis that answers the research question? Has the argument been clearly explained and adequately substantiated? Has the hypothesis been adequately explored and tested? Does the author demonstrate an ability to make scholarly judgments through critical analysis and argument?
6.   Written Expression: Is the thesis written in a lucid, engaging manner, free from grammatical and other errors?
7.   Referencing: Is it adequately referenced as per discipline conventions?
8.   Overall presentation of the thesis including word length.

To achieve a grade of 7 (High Distinction, 80-100%), your thesis should demonstrate an exceptional level of competency in choice of thesis topic and structure of the thesis, a very high level of competency in application of research methodology, use of evidence, quality of analysis, and written expression. The presentation of your thesis should achieve a very high standard. Your writing will be very clear and concise, pay strict attention to discipline conventions and have minimal, if any errors in referencing, expression, grammar, spelling and punctuation.

To achieve a grade of 6 (Distinction, 70-79%), your thesis should demonstrate an advanced level of competency in choice of thesis topic and structure of the thesis, a high level of competency in application of research methodology, use of evidence, quality of analysis, and written expression. The presentation of your thesis should achieve a very high standard. Your writing will be clear and concise, follow discipline conventions and have few errors in referencing, expression, grammar, spelling and punctuation.

To achieve grade of 5 (Credit, 60-69%), your thesis should demonstrate proficient but above average level of competency in choice of thesis topic and structure of the thesis, a proficient but above average level of competency in application of research methodology, use of evidence, quality of analysis, and written expression. The presentation of your thesis should achieve a high standard. Your writing will follow discipline conventions, have some errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation, and demonstrate your ability to communicate effectively.

To achieve a grade of 4 (Pass, 50-59%), your thesis should demonstrate a basic level of competency in choice of thesis topic and structure of the thesis, as well as a basic level of competency in application of research methodology, use of evidence, quality of analysis, and written expression. The presentation of your thesis should achieve an appropriate standard.

Your organisation, writing, referencing, spelling and grammar will be adequate and use some of the discipline conventions to communicate appropriately.

To achieve a grade of 3 (Marginal Fail, 45-49%), your thesis will demonstrate that you have only achieved a superficial level competency in choice of thesis topic and structure of the thesis, as well as a superficial level of competency in application of research methodology, use of evidence, quality of analysis, and written expression. It will demonstrate that you have an emerging ability to apply basic knowledge and skills, but that this falls short of the Honours pass level. The presentation of your thesis should achieve an acceptable standard. Your organisation, writing, spelling and grammar will be adequate or poor and your referencing and use of discipline conventions poor/and or inconsistent.

To achieve a grade of 2 (Fail, 25-44%), your thesis will be faulty in its choice of thesis topic and structure. It demonstrates a low level of competency in application of research methodology, use of evidence, quality of analysis, and/or written expression. Your arguments will be unsupported and/or inappropriate, your organisation and writing will be poor and/or inappropriate, and your referencing and use of discipline conventions poor/and or inconsistent.

To achieve a grade of 1 (Low Fail, 0-24%), your thesis will demonstrate that you have failed to meet the minimum learning requirements and skill acquisition for this assessment task. Your thesis will be deficient in its choice of thesis topic and structure. It will fail to reach the basic level of competency in application of research methodology, use of evidence, quality of analysis, and/or written expression. Arguments will be unsupported and/or inappropriate. The presentation of your thesis will have failed to achieve an acceptable standard, and its organisation, writing, spelling grammar and referencing will be poor. Use of discipline conventions will be poor, absent or inappropriate.

Honours Thesis (Philosophy)

1.   Topic Definition: Ability to define the topic or philosophical issue under debate.
2.   Argument and Structure: Ability to construct a well-reasoned argument for a certain point of view.
3.   Content: Ability to demonstrate a depth and breadth of understanding of the various positions in a philosophical debate.
4.   Originality: Insight and/or originality in interpreting texts or constructing a point of view or argument.
5.   Presentation: Capacity to produce a polished, well-written and appropriately referenced thesis.

To achieve a grade of 7 (High Distinction, 80-100%), your topic should be clear and well defined. You should produce a rigorously argued and clear thesis, with a very high standard of coherent, critical and logically structured analysis. Your thesis should be exceptionally well structured, demonstrating a high level of proficiency in constructing complex argumentative theses. Your thesis should demonstrate an exceptionally high level of understanding of texts, problems, and core concepts. Your thesis should also demonstrate proficiency at using highly relevant and widely sourced references. Your thesis should present penetrating and novel insights about texts, concepts, problems and arguments. There should be clear evidence of creative and independent thought, and an engaging and creative use of examples. Your writing will be lucidly expressed, interesting and engaging. Throughout the thesis, grammar and spelling will be of an exceptionally high standard. Referencing and bibliography will be of a scholarly standard.

To achieve a grade of 6 (Distinction, 70-79%), your thesis topic should be well defined. You should produce a well-argued thesis, with careful and coherent critical analysis, and well-ordered logical analysis. Your thesis should be generally well structured, demonstrating proficiency in constructing complex argumentative theses. Your thesis should demonstrate a high level understanding of texts, problems, and core concepts, and demonstrate proficiency at using a wide range of relevant references. Your thesis should present an advanced understanding of basic texts, concepts, problems, and arguments. There should be evidence of independent thought and creative use of examples. Your writing will be clearly expressed and articulate. Grammar and spelling will be of a high standard but may include a few errors. Referencing and bibliography will maintain high standards of citations and bibliography but may have occasional oversights.

To achieve a grade of 5 (Credit, 60-69%), your thesis topic should be generally well defined. You should produce a coherently argued thesis, demonstrating proficiency in application of critical thinking concepts. There should be evidence of argumentative structure demonstrating an ability to identify and reconstruct multi-reason arguments. Your thesis should demonstrate a generally secure understanding of texts, problems, and core concepts, and demonstrate and ability to understand and incorporate some relevant references. Your thesis should present a secure grasp of conventional readings of texts, concepts, problems and arguments, and an ability to understand the point of examples. Your writing will be generally clear and well expressed, with occasional grammatical and spelling errors. In general, bibliographic, and in-text conventions will be followed.

To achieve a grade of 4 (Pass, 50-59%), your thesis topic should be adequately defined. In your thesis, you should identify simple arguments, demonstrating an understanding of simple inferential relationships between reasons and conclusions. There will be minimal argumentative structure. You should demonstrate an ability to identify and reconstruct simple arguments. Your thesis should demonstrate a basic understanding of texts, problems, and core concepts, with some relevant references appropriately cited. Your thesis should present a satisfactory understanding of texts, problems, concepts, and arguments, and an ability to understand the point of examples. Your thesis will be written with satisfactory expression. Grammar and spelling should be of an acceptable standard, though it may exhibit frequent errors. There will be limited adherence to referencing conventions.

To achieve a grade of 3 (Marginal Fail, 45-49%), your thesis topic will only be asserted. Your thesis argument will not go beyond a sequence of assertions and will exhibit a lack of clarity and precision. The thesis structure exhibits disorganisation and does not go beyond presenting opposing positions without explaining logical relationships between them. Your thesis should demonstrate basic awareness with some lapses in understanding. References used in the thesis are irrelevant to topic and/or insufficient in number. Your thesis will only present a rudimentary grasp of texts, concepts, problems, and the role of examples in philosophical arguments. Your writing will have notable flaws in expression, and numerous grammatical and spelling errors. There will be some attempt made at referencing.

To achieve a grade of 2 (Fail, 25-44%), your thesis will be defined with significant confusion. Your thesis exhibits confusion, with flawed and disorderly analysis, non sequiturs and incoherent argument. The thesis structure is unclear or convoluted, and/or there is a serious failure to identify, reconstruct or construct an argumentative thesis. Your thesis demonstrates a serious misunderstanding of texts and core concepts. References used are irrelevant to topic and/or insufficient in number. Textual interpretation is shallow and repetitive. It consists mostly of significantly flawed paraphrase. There is a lack of proficiency in interpreting and applying

central concepts. Your writing has serious flaws in expression, with deeply problematic spelling and grammar. It is barely evident that referencing was attempted.

To achieve a grade of 1 (Low Fail, 0-24%), your thesis definition will be off topic/non-attempt to define. There is insufficient evidence to measure argumentative abilities. There is only obscure and confused or absent analysis. Your thesis has an indecipherable structure, with paragraphs and sentences that are logically unconnected. The discussion presented is irrelevant to the thesis topic. References are either not included or irrelevant to the topic. There is insufficient evidence to measure whether an independent stance has been attempted. Language used in the thesis is incomprehensible, with unintelligible grammar and spelling.