

Command words

Command words are the words and phrases used in exams and other assessment tasks that tell students how they should answer the question.

The following command words are taken from Ofqual's official list of command words and their meanings that are relevant to this subject. In addition, where necessary, we have included our own command words and their meanings to complement Ofqual's list.

Analyse

Separate information into components and identify their characteristics.

Apply

Put into effect in a recognised way.

Assess

Make an informed judgement.

Calculate

Work out the value of something.

Comment

Present an informed opinion.

Compare

Identify similarities and or differences.

Complete

Finish a task by adding to given information.

Consider

Review and respond to given information.

Contrast

Identify differences.

Define

Specify meaning.

Describe

Set out characteristics.

Discuss

Present key points about different ideas or strengths and weaknesses of an idea.

Evaluate

Judge from available evidence.

Explain

Set out purposes or reasons.

Give

Produce an answer from recall.

Identify

Name or otherwise characterize.

Interpret

Translate information into recognisable form.

Justify

Support a case with evidence.

Label

Provide appropriate names on a diagram.

Name

Identify using a recognised technical term.

Outline

Set out main characteristics.

Plot

Mark on a graph.

State

Express clearly and briefly.

Sketch

Draw approximately.

Suggest

Present a possible case/solution.