

Command words

Awarding bodies have prepared various glossaries for the command words used in assessments. The definitions have been grouped by meaning.

The same command words are often used across different assessment levels within the same subject.

When designing assessment materials use command words consistently and correctly. Avoid words that prompt single-word answers. Use different command words to elicit different kinds of responses, not purely for the sake of variety.

Analyse separate information into components and identify their characteristics

Assess make an informed judgement

Consider review and respond to given information

Criticise assess worth against explicit expectations

Evaluate judge from available evidence

Examine investigate closely

Explore investigate without preconceptions about the outcome

Review survey information

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Comment present an informed opinion

Deduce draw conclusions from information provided

Define specify meaning

Describe set out characteristics

Discuss present key points

Explain set out purposes or reasons

Illustrate present clarifying examples

Interpret translate information into recognisable form

Outline set out main characteristics

Relate demonstrate connections between items

State express in clear terms

Summarise present principal points without detail

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Argue present a reasoned case

Debate present different perspectives on an issue

Give produce an answer from recall

Justify support a case with evidence

Prove demonstrate validity on the basis of evidence

Suggest present a possible case

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Calculate work out the value of something

Estimate assign an approximate value

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Compare identify similarities

Contrast identify differences

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Apply put into effect in a recognised way

Complete finish a task by adding to given information

Develop take forward or build upon given information

Identify name or otherwise characterise