

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.

Calculate

Work out the value of something.

Compare

Identify similarities and or differences.

Complete

Finish a task by adding to given information.

Consider

Review and respond to given information.

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.

Identify

Name or otherwise characterise.

Illustrate

Present clarifying examples.

Interpret

Translate information into recognisable form.

Justify

Support a case with evidence.

Outline

Set out main characteristics.

Suggest

Present a possible case/solution.

State

Express clearly and briefly.