

## Level and Mark Descriptors

The following Level and Mark Descriptors are to be used for the academic year 2021/22 onwards.

The Level Descriptors are those developed by SEEC (2016). These descriptors are aligned with the England, Wales and Northern Ireland (EWNI) Credit Level Descriptors.

Note: minor amendments to the terminology of the SEEC and EWNI descriptors have been made to align with the University's values.

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# Level Descriptors

## Summary

	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8
<b>EWNI Summary credit level descriptors</b>	Apply knowledge and skills in a range of complex activities demonstrating comprehension of relevant theories; access and analyse information independently and make reasoned judgements, selecting from a considerable choice of procedures in familiar and unfamiliar contexts and direct own activities, with some responsibility for the output of others.	Develop a rigorous approach to the acquisition of a broad knowledge base; employ a range of specialised skills; evaluate information, using it to plan and develop investigative strategies and to determine solutions to a variety of unpredictable problems; and operate in a range of varied and specific contexts, taking responsibility for the nature and quality of outputs.	Generate ideas through the analysis of concepts at an abstract level with a command of specialised skills and the formulation of responses to well-defined and abstract problems; analyse and evaluate information; exercise significant judgement across a broad range of functions; and accept responsibility for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.	Critically review, consolidate and summarise a systematic and coherent body of knowledge, utilising specialised skills across an area of study; critically evaluate concepts and evidence from a range of sources; transfer and apply diagnostic and creative skills and exercise significant judgement in a range of situations; and accept accountability for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.	Display mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge and skills, employing advanced skills to conduct research, or advanced technical or professional activity, accepting accountability for related decision-making, including use of supervision.	Make a significant and original contribution to a specialised field of inquiry, demonstrating a command of methodological issues and engaging in critical dialogue with peers and accepting full accountability for outcomes.

## Setting

	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8
Operational Context	Operates in predictable and defined contexts that require the use of given techniques and information sources.	Operates in a range of varied but predictable contexts that require the use of a specified range of techniques and information sources.	Operates in situations of varying complexity and predictability requiring the application of a wide range of techniques and information sources.	Operates in complex and unpredictable contexts, requiring selection and application from a range of largely standard techniques and information sources.	Operates in complex and unpredictable and/or specialised contexts, requiring selection and application from a wide range of advanced techniques and information sources.	Operates in complex and unpredictable and/or specialised contexts at the forefront of knowledge.
Autonomy and responsibility for actions	Acts largely under direction or supervision, within defined guidelines. Takes responsibility for initiating and completing tasks and procedures.	Acts with limited autonomy, under direction or supervision, within defined guidelines. Takes responsibility for the nature and quality of outputs.	Acts with limited supervision and direction within defined guidelines, accepting responsibility for achieving personal and/or group outcomes and/or outputs.	Acts with minimal supervision or direction within agreed guidelines, taking responsibility for accessing support and accepting accountability for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.	Acts with initiative in decision-making and accessing support within professional or given guidelines, accepting full accountability for outcomes.	Acts autonomously and with initiative, often in a professional capacity with responsibility for self and often others.

## Knowledge and Understanding

	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8
Knowledge and understanding	<p>Has an understanding of defined areas of the knowledge base.</p> <p>Demonstrates knowledge of current areas of debate in the field of study.</p>	<p>Has a broad understanding of the knowledge base and its terminology or discourse.</p> <p>Demonstrates recognition that areas of this knowledge base are open to ongoing debate and reformulation.</p>	<p>Has detailed knowledge of well-established theories and concepts.</p> <p>Demonstrates recognition of different ideas, contexts and frameworks and identifies those areas where the knowledge base is most/least secure.</p>	<p>Has a systematic understanding of the knowledge base and its inter-relationship with other fields of study.</p> <p>Demonstrates current understanding of some specialist areas in depth.</p>	<p>Has a deep and systematic understanding within a specialised field of study and its interrelationship with other relevant disciplines.</p> <p>Demonstrates an understanding of current theoretical and methodological approaches and how these affect the way the knowledge base is interpreted.</p>	<p>Works with theoretical/research knowledge at the forefront of the discipline.</p> <p>Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of techniques and methodologies applicable to the discipline.</p>

## Cognitive Skills

	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8
<b>Conceptualisation and critical thinking</b>	Relates principles and concepts to underlying theoretical frameworks and approaches.	Identifies principles and concepts underlying theoretical frameworks and approaches, identifying their strengths and weaknesses.	Identifies, analyses and communicates principles and concepts, recognising competing perspectives.	Works with ideas at a level of abstraction, arguing from competing perspectives. Identifies the possibility of new concepts within existing knowledge frameworks and approaches.	Uses ideas at a high level of abstraction. Develops critical responses to existing theoretical discourses, methodologies or practices and suggests new concepts or approaches.	Develops ideas at a high level of abstraction. Develops theoretical discourses, methodologies or practices, critically analysing their development and application.
<b>Problem solving, research and enquiry</b>	Undertakes defined investigative strategies and communicates results effectively in a given format.	Identifies a well-defined focus for enquiry, plans and undertakes investigative strategies using a limited and defined range of methods, collects data from a variety of sources, and communicates results effectively in an appropriate format.	Undertakes research to provide new information and/or explores new or existing data to identify patterns and relationships. Uses appropriate theoretical models to judge the significance of the data collected, recognising the limitations of the enquiry.	Demonstrates confidence and flexibility in identifying and defining complex problems. Identifies, selects and uses investigative strategies and techniques to undertake a critical analysis, evaluating the outcomes.	Designs and undertakes substantial investigations to address significant areas of theory and/or practice. Selects appropriate advanced methodological approaches and critically evaluates their effectiveness.	Acts independently and with originality in problem solving. Develops or adapts appropriate advanced methodological approaches and critically evaluates their effectiveness.

	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Level 5</b>	<b>Level 6</b>	<b>Level 7</b>	<b>Level 8</b>
<b>Synthesis and creativity</b>	Collects information to inform a choice of solutions to standard problems in familiar contexts.	Collects information from a variety of authoritative sources to inform a choice of solutions to standard problems in familiar contexts.	Collects and synthesises information to inform a choice of solutions to problems in unfamiliar contexts.	Applies knowledge in unfamiliar contexts, synthesising ideas or information to generate novel solutions.  Achieves a body of work or practice that is coherent and resolved.	Flexibly and creatively applies knowledge in unfamiliar contexts, synthesises ideas or information in innovative ways, and generates transformative solutions.	Synthesises and applies new approaches, in a manner that can contribute to the development of methodology or understanding in that discipline or practice.
<b>Analysis and evaluation</b>	Analyses a range of information using pre-defined principles, frameworks or criteria.	Judges the reliability of data and information using pre-defined techniques and/or criteria.	Analyses a range of information, comparing alternative methods and techniques.  Selects appropriate techniques/criteria for evaluation and discriminates between the relative relevance and significance of data/evidence collected.	Analyses new, novel and/or abstract data using an appropriate range of established subject-specific techniques. Judges the reliability, validity and significance of evidence to support conclusions and/or recommendations.  Proposes reasons for contradictory data/results.	Undertakes analysis of complex, incomplete or contradictory evidence/data and judges the appropriateness of the enquiry methodologies used.  Recognises and argues for alternative approaches.	Undertakes independent analysis or evaluation, managing complexity, incompleteness of data or contradictions in areas of knowledge.

## Performance and Practice

	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8
Adaptation to context	Undertakes a given and clearly defined role.	Locates own role in relation to specified and externally defined parameters.	Identifies external expectations and adapts own performance accordingly.	Identifies external expectations and adapts own performance accordingly.	Autonomously adapts performance to multiple contexts.	Autonomously adapts performance to contexts requiring professional outputs.
Performance	Undertakes given performance tasks that may be complex.	Undertakes performance tasks that may be complex and non-routine, engaging in self-reflection.	Undertakes complex and non-routine performance tasks. Analyses performance of self and others and suggests improvements.	Identifies and applies new techniques and processes to own performance and reflects upon how these might be evaluated.	Autonomously implements and evaluates improvements to performance, drawing on innovative or sectoral best practice.	Has technical mastery, performs smoothly with precision and effectiveness, can adapt or develop skills and procedures for new situations.
Team and organisational working	Adapts own behaviour to meet obligations to others.	Works effectively with others and recognises the factors that affect team performance.	Interacts effectively within a team, giving and receiving information and ideas and modifying responses where appropriate. Recognises and ameliorates situations likely to lead to conflict.	Works effectively within a team, supports or is proactive in leadership, negotiates in a professional context and manages conflict. Proactively seeks to resolve conflict.	Works effectively with multiple teams as leader or member. Clarifies tasks and make appropriate use of the capacities of team members, resolving likely conflict situations before they arise.	Leads and/or works effectively with often multiple teams in multiple roles.  Manages the capacities of members to achieve outcomes, handling conflict with confidence.

	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Level 5</b>	<b>Level 6</b>	<b>Level 7</b>	<b>Level 8</b>
<b>Ethical knowledge and application</b>	Has knowledge of the ethical issues in the main areas of study.	Demonstrates knowledge of ethical issues and is able to discuss these in relation to personal beliefs and values.	Takes personal responsibility for the application of professional codes of conduct.	Takes personal responsibility for the application of professional codes of conduct and incorporates this into their practice.	Incorporates a critical ethical dimension to their practice, managing the implications of ethical dilemmas. Works proactively with others to formulate solutions.	Analyses and manages ethical dilemmas and works pro-actively with others to formulate and implement solutions.



## Personal and Enabling Skills

	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8
<b>Personal evaluation and development</b>	Assesses own capabilities against given criteria. Engages in guided development activity.	Assesses own capabilities in key areas and engages in development activity through guided self-direction.	Assesses own capabilities using justifiable criteria set by self and others, taking the wider needs of the context into account. Uses feedback to adapt own actions to reach a desired aim and reviews impact.	Takes responsibility for own learning and development using reflection and feedback to analyse own capabilities, appraises alternatives and plans and implements actions.	Undertakes personal reflection to analyse self and own actions. Makes connections between known and unknown areas, to allow for adaptation and change.	Reflects on own and others' functioning in order to improve practice. Is independent and self-critical as a learner. Guides and supports the learning of others and manages own professional development.
<b>Interpersonal and communication skills</b>	Applies interpersonal and communication skills to clarify tasks and communicate outcomes in narrowly defined contexts.	Applies interpersonal and communication skills to clarify tasks and identify and rectify issues in a range of contexts.	Adapts interpersonal and communication skills to a range of situations, audiences and degrees of complexity.	Sets criteria for, and is effective in, professional and interpersonal communication in a wide range of situations.	Identifies, evaluates and maintains capabilities and qualities to support effective communication in a range of complex and specialised contexts.	Displays consultancy skills. Communicates complex or contentious information clearly and effectively to the target audience.

# University of Wolverhampton Mark Descriptors

## Undergraduate

Marking band	Work demonstrates:
90-100% Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exceptional originality and/or independent thought</li> <li>• a breadth of knowledge and understanding beyond the taught material</li> <li>• no errors</li> <li>• exceptional problem-solving and/or analytical and/or creativity skills</li> </ul>
80-89% Outstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• outstanding level of originality and/or independent thought</li> <li>• a breadth of knowledge and understanding beyond the taught material</li> <li>• very few errors</li> <li>• outstanding problem-solving and/or analytical and/or creativity skills</li> </ul>
70-79% Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• excellent level of originality and/or independent thought</li> <li>• a breadth of knowledge and understanding beyond the taught material</li> <li>• a few minor errors</li> <li>• excellent problem-solving and/or analytical and/or creativity skills</li> </ul>
60-69% Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• originality and independent thought in the way that material has been presented</li> <li>• very good breadth of knowledge and understanding that aligns with the key concepts introduced by the taught material</li> <li>• a few minor errors</li> <li>• very good problem-solving and/or analytical and/or creativity skills</li> </ul>
50-59% Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some originality and evidence of independent thought in the way that material has been presented</li> <li>• good breadth of knowledge and understanding that draws on key elements of the taught materials</li> <li>• clear presentation, but with a few errors</li> <li>• good problem-solving and/or analytical and/or creativity skills</li> </ul>
40-49% Sufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic, possibly derivative, presentation of material</li> <li>• sufficient breadth of knowledge and understanding to address the assessment criteria / learning outcomes at a threshold level</li> <li>• some errors in the work</li> <li>• sufficient problem-solving and/or analytical and/or creativity skills</li> </ul>
30-39% Insufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• poor presentation of material</li> <li>• several errors in the work</li> <li>• insufficient breadth of knowledge and understanding that misses and/or misunderstands many elements of the taught materials</li> <li>• some assessment criteria / learning outcomes not met at the threshold level</li> </ul>
0-29% Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• very poor presentation of material for assessment</li> <li>• multiple errors in the work</li> <li>• poor breadth of knowledge and understanding that fails to draw upon most elements of the taught materials</li> <li>• majority, or all, assessment criteria / learning outcomes not met at the threshold level</li> </ul>

## Postgraduate

Marking band	Work demonstrates:
90-100% Outstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>outstanding originality and/or independent thought that could be considered for dissemination to the broader discipline (e.g. through publication in a journal)</li> <li>engagement in a focused academic debate, which presents a range of evidence underpinning a deep understanding of all the issues studied</li> <li>challenges to current theory and/or practice</li> <li>no errors</li> <li>outstanding problem-solving and/or analytical and/or creativity skills</li> </ul>
80-89% Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>excellent level of originality and/or independent thought with the potential for dissemination to the broader discipline</li> <li>engagement in an academic debate which presents clear evidence of a considered understanding of the professional issues studied, the approach adopted and the position taken</li> <li>enhancements to current theory and/or practice</li> <li>very few errors</li> <li>excellent problem-solving and/or analytical and/or creativity skills</li> </ul>
70-79% Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>analysis and critique of concepts, models of key authors, rival theories, and major debates together with some evidence of synthesis</li> <li>the complexity of the context in which the work is situated</li> <li>differing perspectives and interpretations</li> <li>a few minor errors</li> <li>very good problem-solving and/or analytical and/or creativity skills</li> </ul>
60-69% Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>capacity to express views based on sound argument and solid evidence in an articulate and concise way</li> <li>effective engagement in a critical dialogue relating to professional practice</li> <li>willingness to question and to explore issues and to synthesise theoretical perspectives and practical application</li> <li>a few minor errors</li> <li>good problem-solving and/or analytical and/or creativity skills</li> </ul>
50-59% Sufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evidence of engagement with pertinent issues</li> <li>presentation of key authors and debates</li> <li>evidence of suitable basic reading</li> <li>clear presentation, but requiring stronger presentation of synthesis or evaluation</li> <li>sufficient problem-solving and/or analytical and/or creativity skills</li> </ul>
40-49% Insufficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>little evidence of an ability to apply the principles of the module to a wider context</li> <li>an overly descriptive account demonstrating only minimal interpretation, and very limited evidence of analysis, synthesis or evaluation</li> <li>lack of counterarguments and/or alternative frames of reference</li> <li>insufficient problem-solving and/or analytical and/or creativity skills</li> </ul>
0-39% Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fundamental misconceptions of the content</li> <li>little or no understanding of relevant theory and/or practice</li> <li>no evidence of independent thought or criticality</li> <li>a descriptive form of presentation</li> </ul>

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