Level Descriptors for Postgraduate Taught Degrees (Level 7)

Students at this level will be expected to produce work which:

- Demonstrates a knowledge of the principal areas, boundaries and conventions of the subject
- Shows an ability to bring the problem solving and analytical skills gained in their first degree (or work experience) to apply to a new field of study
- Integrates knowledge, handles complexity and demonstrates reasoned judgement
- Shows an ability to communicate with specialist and non-specialist audiences
- Reflects an ability to study and research independently

Percentage	0 - 34	35 – 49	50 – 59	60 – 69	70 - 79	80 - 100
Degree Class	Fail	Compensatable* fail	Pass	Merit	Distinction	Distinction
Knowledge/ Understanding: Addresses task/ question set.	Inadequate evidence of knowledge as expected for level 7. No or inadequate evidence of reading. Little ability to use or select information effectively.	Inconsistent evidence of knowledge and understanding concepts and principles taught at level 7. Inconsistent evidence of reading literature, mostly restricted to recommended set texts. Information applied with limited consistency.	Adequate evidence of sound knowledge and understanding of the key or higher order principles and concepts. Appropriate use of sources to show understanding of concepts, may include some evidence of reading beyond the set texts. Competent use of information and generally able to handle some complex problems.	Good evidence of knowledge and understanding of the key or higher order principles, concepts and techniques. Evidence of comprehensive reading. Literature used to support central argument or development of debate. Good degree of competence in the use of information and generally able to handle complex problems.	A comprehensive and thorough awareness of the key or higher order principles, concepts and techniques of the subject. Evidence of extensive reading that extends beyond core texts. Critical knowledge of how to use information to support points. Evidence of handling complex problems (e.g. numerical) with confidence.	Exceptional evidence of knowledge of concepts and techniques of the subject. Exceptional evidence of extensive reading that extends significantly beyond core texts. Outstanding ability in the use of information to support points. Evidence of handling complex problems (e.g. numerical) with high level of confidence.

Percentage	0 - 34	35 – 49	50 – 59	60 – 69	70 - 79	80 - 100
Degree Class	Fail	Compensatable* fail	Pass	Merit	Distinction	Distinction
Cognitive/ Thinking: Shows an understanding of theory and concepts, and an ability to critically assess them.	Inadequate evidence of critical understanding as required at this level. Lacks ability to develop an effective argument as required for level 7.	Inconsistent evidence of critical understanding. Argument is just adequate but may be poorly structured.	Level of critical understanding is sound. Some confusion may be evident but most argument is relevant and adequate.	Good level of critical understanding evident. Competent in producing argument that is well sustained, structured and legitimate.	Critical understanding is applied in a comprehensive and concise manner. Analysis is appropriate and precise. High degree of competence to produce innovative, original argument	Critical understanding is applied in a comprehensive and concise manner. Analysis is comprehensive. Very high degree of competence to produce innovative and original argument
Cognitive/ Thinking: Clearly presented, rigorously argued and focussed analysis.	No/ inadequate evidence of analysis. No/ inadequate evidence of ability to develop an effective argument.	Evidence of some systematic handling of information to provide a basic but inadequate analysis for level 7. Limited coherent argument that lacks focus and direction.	Analysis is appropriate for level. Analysis is evident with some reliance on description. Some confusion but most argument is relevant and adequate.	Competent ability to systematically analyse and synthesise information. Analysis is relevant and mostly effective. Argument is well sustained, structured and legitimate.	High degree of ability to structure and synthesise information and argument that provides clarity throughout the work. Analysis appropriate and precise. Some innovative and original argument.	Very high degree of ability to structure and synthesise information and argument that provides clarity throughout. Analysis is most comprehensive. Extensive innovative and original argument.
Cognitive/ Thinking: Shows independent thinking.	No evidence.	Shows some evidence but inconsistent.	Ability to include innovative ideas evident.	Able to present effective innovative or original views.	Good evidence of innovative and original views.	Very good evidence of innovative or original ideas presented.
Subject Specific: Supports arguments with clear, effective examples/ evidence.	No evidence.	Limited evidence.	Some relevant ideas/ arguments evident.	Relevant examples are evident, reasonably clearly articulated.	Relevant examples are evident, very clearly articulated.	Relevant examples are evident, very clearly articulated and evidenced to the topic.

Percentage	0 - 34	35 – 49	50 – 59	60 – 69	70 - 79	80 - 100
Degree Class	Fail	Compensatable* fail	Pass	Merit	Distinction	Distinction
Subject Specific: Scope of relevant literature including reference list.	No evidence.	Limited evidence with numerous omissions.	Reasonable coverage but incomplete or numerous omissions.	Good coverage with minimal omissions.	Excellent coverage with minimal errors.	Excellent coverage.
Transferable Skills: Well-structured with appropriate introduction and conclusions.	Very poor and often/mostly inarticulate. Mostly incomprehensible.	Significant deficiencies in expression. Inconsistent and poor use of language.	Some deficiencies are apparent. Competent but some inconsistencies apparent.	Mostly well expressed. Clear and appropriate use of language.	Very well expressed. Confident and very good use of language.	Very competent and fluent use of expression. Confident and very good use of language.
Transferable Skills: Evidence of group cohesion in final submission. **	Shows very little cohesion, extremely fragmented.	Shows some evidence of cohesion in final submission, slightly fragmented.	Shows evidence of cohesion in final submission. Some fragmentation in style.	Final submission shows reasonable cohesion of the group work with a consistent style.	Final submission clearly shows cohesion of the group work in a quality style.	Final submission clearly shows cohesion of the group work with a professional common style.
Transferable Skills: Individual contribution to group submission. **	No evidence.	Limited evidence.	Some evidence of limited individual contributions.	Evidence of individual contributions.	Strong evidence of individual substantive contributions and integrated.	Strong evidence of individual substantive contributions and very well integrated.
Transferable skills: ability to make presentations (ie clear purpose and focus, engagement with audience, clarity, use of language)	Purpose very unclear or inappropriate. No engagement with the audience. Often/mostly inarticulate. Mostly incomprehensible.	Purpose is not clear and not entirely appropriate. Some engagement with audience. Significant deficiencies in expression. Inconsistent and/or poor use of language.	Purpose is clear and articulated. Able to engage the audience. Some deficiencies are apparent. Competent but some inconsistencies.	Material directly relates to purpose. Engages and interests the audience. Generally well expressed. Clear and appropriate use of language.	Very well focussed and presented, with appropriate content. Ensures audience is involved and engaged. Very well expressed Confident and very good use of language.	Exceptionally well focused and effective presentation with high level of sophistication. Very competent and fluent use of language. Confident and very good use of language.