

WRITING AN ESSAY FOR CREDIT

Most LRBS courses can be taken for Masters-level credit. LRBS courses are accredited through the University of London and attract 20 CATS-M points. The credit system is governed by the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) of the School of Advanced Study which is available to view here: www.sas.ac.uk/sites/default/files/files/QAF%202018-2019.pdf

All essay topics must be within the subject matter covered by the course. The essay topic should be approved by the tutor responsible for the course and by the LRBS Director before work on the essay begins.

Students wishing to pursue the credit option must adhere to the following schedule:

1. Attend one of the two Essay Guidance sessions held at 5 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays of the LRBS week (see Programme Schedule on p. 11).
2. Discuss and agree an essay topic with the course convenor during the LRBS week or as soon as possible after completion of the course.
3. Inform the LRBS Director by email <andrew.nash@sas.ac.uk> of the topic that has been agreed no later than one week after completion of the course.
4. Inform the LRBS administrator by email <georgia.reeves@sas.ac.uk> of the intention to pursue the credit option and make the relevant payment no later than one week after completion of the course.

Supervision

Once an essay topic has been approved, students are entitled to regular supervision from their tutors. Most or all of this supervision will take place via email. The amount of contact should be agreed with your tutor at an early stage in the supervision process. It is the student's responsibility to keep in regular contact with the tutor.

Students will also be allocated a point of contact from among the staff of the Institute of English Studies. This person may be consulted at any point for advice on supervision, presentation and submission of the essay.

Students are entitled to feedback on draft material of up to 50% of the essay (c.2500 words). A date for sending your draft work should be agreed between you and your tutor at an early stage.

Essay level

LRBS essays are assessed at Masters level and should be devised and written accordingly. Unlike PhD work, Masters-level essays do not require original research or examination of primary evidence. An extensive, effective and critical use of secondary work will be perfectly acceptable. Essays based on investigation and interpretation of primary materials are, of course, welcomed.

Essay length

The word limit for an LRBS essay is 5,000 words. This includes footnotes but excludes the bibliography and appendices.

Where a project (such as an editing project) is submitted in place of an essay, the scope and length should be roughly equivalent to 5000 words. This will be confirmed by the course convenor and LRBS Director when the topic is first approved.

Referencing and Presentation

Students are expected to provide appropriate references for any and all primary or secondary material used. A properly arranged bibliography must be included at the end of the essay.

LRBS essays should follow the MHRA citation style. A quick guide is available here: www.mhra.org.uk/style/quick.html and the full guide here: www.mhra.org.uk/style

Please note: students will not be penalised for failing to follow MHRA citation conventions slavishly. As in all scholarly work, the main requirement is for referencing to be full and accurate and for the citation method to be consistent throughout.

ESSAY SUBMISSION

Candidates should submit an electronic copy of their essay in Microsoft Word or PDF format to <iesMA@sas.ac.uk>. There is no requirement to submit a hard copy. Students are strongly advised to keep a copy of their electronic file for reference.

The electronic version of the essay must be fully formatted and ready to print. If necessary, images or appendices may be submitted as separate files. These must be clearly labelled. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that files are received in an uncorrupted state. Students will receive an acknowledgement of the safe and satisfactory receipt of an essay via email.

All submitted essays must contain a completed cover sheet which will be emailed to students in advance. The candidate's name should not appear anywhere on the submitted coursework.

Submission deadlines

Essays should be submitted by 1700 hours BST (British Summer Time) on the following dates:

For courses taken during 17-21 June: **6 September 2019**

For courses taken during 24-28 June: **13 September 2019**

For courses taken during 1-5 July: **20 September 2019**

Penalties for late submission

Essays submitted after the deadline without a valid extension will be subject to a penalty deduction of 10% of the mark awarded for up to one week late, or 20% of the mark awarded for between one and two weeks late. When work is more than two weeks late, any additional penalty to be applied is at the discretion of the Institute.

The Institute reserves the right not to accept work submitted more than two weeks late; in such cases the mark recorded will be zero.

Extenuating circumstances and disability

Students experiencing medical problems and/or other exceptional circumstances which affect their ability to perform adequately must notify their point of contact in the Institute of English Studies as soon as possible and in advance of the essay deadline. A valid medical certificate or other written evidence may be required.

An extension to the essay deadline will be granted only in exceptional circumstances (usually medical, and this will require a doctor's certificate). Extensions will be granted at the discretion of the LRBS Director. If you require an extension you should discuss your circumstances in the first instance with your point of contact in the Institute of English Studies.

Students who hold an existing diagnosis for dyslexia, or any other form of disability which they consider should be taken into account in assessment, should inform their point of contact in the Institute of English Studies, or the LRBS Director, at the earliest opportunity. Reasonable adjustments to assessment will be made in accordance with the School of Advanced Study's Quality Assurance Framework.

Please note that if an extension to your essay is granted beyond 18 October your final mark will not be approved by the Examinations Board and credit may not be awarded until the following academic year. For information about examinations board procedures see below.

ESSAY MARKING

All essays are double-marked by a first and second marker. All marking is anonymous: numbers are substituted for names on all work seen by both internal and external examiners. The grading scheme and grade descriptions are printed on pp. 22-23.

The final mark is not confirmed until it has been considered by the Institute's MA Examination Board which is chaired by the LRBS Director. The Board consists of an intercollegiate examiner and an examiner external to the University of London. The role of the intercollegiate and external examiner is to scrutinise procedures and approve final marks. Full information about the operation of the Examination Board is available in the School of Advanced Study's Quality Assurance Framework:
<www.sas.ac.uk/sites/default/files/files/QAF%202018-2019.pdf>.

Reassessment

Any student failing the essay is entitled to submit another essay for reassessment. The re-assessed essay must be on a different topic from the essay that was failed. This second topic must be agreed between the student, the tutor, and the Course Director. A new timetable for resubmission will be agreed at the same time. The maximum mark for a reassessed essay is 50.

NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

Students will receive notification of their essay mark(s) following the MA Examination Board. This usually takes place in late October. Students will be sent the essay cover sheet with the agreed markers' comments and grade.

Students who achieve an award of credit will receive by post an official certificate issued by the University of London. The certificate will state the title of the LRBS course taken and the number of CATS M points gained. Any student wishing to transfer credit from the LRBS will need to present the official University of London certificate to their home institution. If required, LRBS can provide a letter to accompany the certificate that confirms the actual mark awarded. Electronic files of essays are retained in the Institute of English Studies for two years.

GRADING SCHEME

The pass mark is 50%. Merit may be awarded for a mark of 60-69. Distinction may be awarded for a mark of at least 70.

The grading scheme

A	80-100)	
A-	75-79)	
A--	70-74)	Distinction
AB	69)	Merit/Distinction borderline
B++	65-68)	
B+	63-64)	
B(+)	60-62)	Merit
B	59)	Pass/Merit borderline
B(-)	56-58)	
B-	53-55)	
B--	50-52)	Pass
C++	49)	Pass/Fail borderline
C+	46-48)	
C	43-45)	
C-	40-42)	
CD	39)	
D+	36-38)	
D	33-35)	
D-	30-32)	
E	0-29)	Fail

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

Distinction, 80-100%

Work of an exceptional quality, based on a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the topic. Such work will usually embody analysis of sufficient originality to change the conventional way of understanding the subject treated. This work will be well argued, well organised and well documented.

Distinction, 70-79%

Work of a high quality, based on a thorough understanding of the topic, characteristically analysing its propositions with sufficient originality to challenge received ideas.

Merit, 60-69%

Degrees of work at a high level of competence, displaying substantial knowledge and understanding of the topic, organised in a clear structure of argument.

Pass, 50-59%

Degrees of work that display adequate knowledge and understanding of the topic. There may be room for significant improvement in clarity of structure of argument, or inappropriateness of expression. Work at this level may display some oversimplification; some expected points may be missing; some irrelevant material may have been included.

Fail, 40-49%

Work that shows some knowledge, but with weaknesses, such as misunderstanding or lack of thoroughness. Important information or segments in the argument may be lacking. The argument may be persistently obscure or naïve.

Fail 35-39%

Work that is seriously flawed, displaying a lack of research, irrelevance, incoherence or a grave misunderstanding of the topic; short work.

Fail, Up to 34%

Unacceptable or not submitted.

PLAGIARISM

The School is committed to ensuring the quality and status of the degrees it awards through the University of London. Plagiarism is a threat to that quality and is a serious academic offence, and cases are dealt with under the University of London's Regulations for Proceedings in Respect of Examination Offences (Paragraph 12, Ordinance 15).

What constitutes plagiarism?

Plagiarism is the taking of another person's thoughts, ideas, words, results, judgements, results, images etc and presenting them as your own. If you submit any piece of work for assessment that contains work that is not your own, without indicating this to the marker (acknowledging your sources) you are committing 'plagiarism'.

The following are examples of plagiarism. These are not exhaustive:

- Direct quotations from the published or unpublished work of others without being identified as such

- Copying the work of another student with or without their permission

- Using text downloaded from the internet

- Borrowing statistics or assembled facts from another person or source

- Buying/borrowing an essay/report and presenting it as your own

- Copying graphs, images, charts etc without proper citation

- Paraphrasing — putting another person's ideas and judgements into your own words without acknowledgement of the origin

- Submitting the same piece of your own assessed work (or a significant part thereof) more than once (credit can only be given once)

Students should feel free to discuss these issues with their personal tutors or other members of staff at any time, but they should also recognise that they must take personal responsibility for the integrity of their academic writing, which includes learning what is expected of them by those responsible for marking their work.

If it is found that you have plagiarised, this may result in:

- Expulsion from the School

- A mark of zero

- A record on your student file

- Becoming the subject of an investigation

- Cancellation of your examinations

Not being allowed to re-enter an examination

Loss of reputation

When plagiarised material is included in your assignments tutors are likely to notice the shift in style and are more than likely to recognise the source.

Referencing

There are a number of different referencing style guides. You should check with your Institute if it requires a specific style to be adopted. These will be explained in your Student Handbook and at induction.

Paraphrasing

That is, where you restate information/ideas in your own words. However, just changing a few words here and there does not make them your own and you must still cite your source. Always check your paraphrasing against the original text to ensure that you haven't copied the same phrases.

Web sources

Treat information found on the web in exactly the same as printed material but also make sure that you write the complete URL address and date accessed.

Agencies

Students should note that the use of, or contribution to, online essay banks, ghostwriting agencies, or agencies who offer to edit essays in order to improve grades is strictly forbidden.

What to do if you are suspected of plagiarism

Cooperate fully with the investigation. It is your interests to be open and honest.

Get some help. Registry staff can direct those accused of plagiarism to sources of advice.

Web advice

How not to plagiarise: www.advice.writing.utoronto.ca/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize/

School responsibilities

The School recognises its responsibility for managing plagiarism and will undertake to ensure that all its students are provided with information about plagiarism in the Handbooks and at induction. This will include what constitutes plagiarism, how to avoid it, and an idea of the penalties associated with it.

Ensure that students are given information on the correct referencing methods for the discipline.