

OPINION ARTICLE MARKING CRITERIA

Objective: *To prepare a well-organised, clear, concise review of the literature on a topic selected by the student in consultation with the supervisor. The review should not be a mere précis of research papers, but a genuine synthesis of the literature. As a guide, the review should be prepared as an 'Opinion' article suitable for submission to a Trends journal germane to the research topic. The most important aims of this assignment are to (1) encourage the student to read more broadly early on in the year; (2) identify any issues related to the student's ability to write scientific papers; and (3) encourage critical reading of the literature.*

Marking Criteria

First Class: 90-100

Full understanding of the topic and its importance to biology and the broader context. Evidence of conceptually sophisticated thinking e.g. by inclusion of personal views, connections with other subject areas etc. Arguments supported by evidence and examples.

Student will have consulted a wide range of appropriate sources. Appropriate referencing in a standard format with minimal errors. Use of original tables and figures to summarize data from multiple sources to support an argument.

Excellent overall standard of presentation, exhibiting a high standard of English and clarity of expression. Appropriate use of fonts and effects. Rich, flowing text, pleasure to read with minimal errors. Appropriate separation of text into sections/sub-sections.

First Class: 80-89

Student will have demonstrated substantial understanding of the topic area and its place in biological science. Critical evaluation and arguments supported by evidence and examples with some evidence of independent thinking. Evidence of consulting a range of appropriate sources which are appropriately referenced. No significant errors. High standard of presentation, exhibiting a good standard of English and clarity of expression. Appropriate use of fonts and effects. Writing is accurate.

Second Class: 75-79

Understanding of the topic demonstrated, but with limited evaluation of its importance. Restricted use of evidence and examples. Some errors. At least acceptable standards of English, but with ambiguities and awkward expression. Some attention to layout and formatting. References in text and bibliography correctly cited. Writing mostly accurate, but uninteresting.

Second Class: 70-74

Little understanding of the topic area demonstrated, with no attempt to synthesize. Review will be little more than a précis of research papers. Opinions expressed are likely to be directly taken from published reviews or papers. Occasional errors in facts. Limited reading with a short bibliography. In the main, references in text and bibliography are correctly cited. Poor layout and formatting. Basic use of reproduced figures and tables.

Third Class: 65-69

Limited understanding of the topic area. Frequent factual or other errors. Inadequate standard of presentation. Poor use of English and inappropriate use of fonts and effects. Writing has frequent ambiguities, errors of expression, verbose or too brief. Insufficient reading around the topic. Referencing contains errors. Almost no attempt to provide a logical structure. No evidence of independent thought.

Fail<65

Limited understanding demonstrated. Unacceptable standard of presentation, including use of English. Poor presentation, rushed and sloppy. No, or totally inadequate, reference to literature and other sources of information.