

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 to identify their characteristics (AO3)

Apply

Put into effect in a recognised way (AO4)

Argue

Present a reasoned case (AO3)

Calculate

Work out the value of something (AO4)

Compare

Identify similarities and differences (AO3)

Complete

Finish a task by adding to given information (AO4)

Consider

Review and respond to given information (AO3)

Contrast

Identify differences (AO3)

Define

Specify meaning (AO4)

Describe

Set out characteristics (AO4)

Discuss

Present key points about different ideas or strengths and weaknesses of an idea (AO3)

Evaluate

Judge from available evidence (AO3)

Examine

Investigate closely (AO3)

Explain

Set out purpose or reasons (AO4)

Give

Produce an answer from recall (AO4)

How (far)

Work out the correct answer (AO4)

Identify

Name or otherwise characterise (AO4)

Justify

Support a case with evidence (AO3)

Name

Give the correct title or term (AO4)

Outline

Set out main characteristics (AO4)

Repeat (the pattern)

Maths specific; repeat a given pattern (AO4)

State

Express clearly and briefly (AO4)

What (is)

Give the correct information (AO4)

Which

Select or give the correct information (AO4)