

HUMAN RIGHTS

Overall grade boundaries

Grade:	E	D	C	B	A
Mark range:	0-7	8-15	16-22	23-28	29-36

The range and suitability of the work submitted

As we have been highlighting for the last years, most of the submitted essays are not on Human Rights or are not sufficiently focused on Human Rights. Supervisors must ensure that a candidate submitting an EE in human rights has the correct supporting information in order to pursue it. Candidates should be made aware of the full range of EEs available to them. Many essays submitted have research questions that are of a general nature, and too broad to be dealt with systematically within the 4000 word limit. Human Rights is a discipline in its own right, and candidates should be aware of and familiar with the academic context of it in order to do well.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: research question

Most of the times the research question is not firmly rooted in Human Rights or it is too broad in scope for 4000 words. This approach can be self-penalizing, particularly where the research question is not rooted in Human Rights. An unsystematic research question will be awarded a 0 for this criterion, which has subsequent caps for given criteria, as outlined in the assessment criteria detailed in the EE guide.

Criterion B: introduction

Generally, the context of the research does not include the required component parts as detailed in the EE guide. Key concepts raised and address, and how the research question relates to existing knowledge on Human Rights is often omitted.

Criterion C: investigation

Increasingly candidates are presenting research that is wholly web-based and often non-academic in nature. The EE is based on an academic journal entry, and the sources

consulted equally must be academic in nature. There is a worrying underuse and lack of theoretical sources on Human Rights from scholars in the field.

Criterion D: knowledge and understanding of the topic studied

Too often, candidates do not position the investigation in the academic context of Human Rights. For example, if a student chooses to write the essay on same sex marriage, the essay should include theoretical background on non-discrimination, equality protection before the law and so on.

Criterion E: reasoned argument

Many poor essays are descriptive and narrative and therefore do not meet the requirements of the higher order skills which include reasoned argument and analytical and evaluative skills.

Criterion F: application of analytical and evaluative skills

Analysis is too often brief or lacking. Sometimes there is the inclusion of unjustified or subjective value judgments.

Criterion G: use of language appropriate to the subject:

Usually, there is no effective use of terminology appropriate to Human Rights. Sweeping generalizations, unsupported assertions, overly subjective value judgment and biased language are often seen.

Criterion H: conclusion

This criterion tends to be coherent with the general performance level of the rest of the essay. Good essays have strong conclusions that exhibit the required elements; poor essays have shallow conclusions, full of sweeping generalizations or unsupported assertions.

Criterion I: formal presentation

This is usually one of the strongest criteria. There is little reason to not do well against this criterion, provided the formal requirements as detailed in the EE guide are followed.

Criterion J: abstract

It seems that some students are not aware of the three required elements, which indicates a wider concern of them not being given the documentation (EE guide) that they need ahead of embarking on the task.

Criterion K: holistic judgment

Supervisor comments do not always seem to exhibit what is required to assist examiners in assessing the candidate in question against this criterion. A good supervisor comment will

address this criterion, and offer the examiner insight into the research process of the candidate that may not be evident in the body of the EE.

Recommendations for the supervision of future candidates

Supervisors and candidates alike must be fully aware of the requirements of the EE generally, and specifically in Human Rights. The research question must be suitably focused and grounded in Human Rights. A research that lacks of theoretical background in Human Rights will lead to a weak essay.