

Glossary of command terms

Command terms with definitions

These command terms indicate the depth of treatment required for a given assessment statement and relate to the course objectives in the “Assessment objectives” section. Objectives 1 and 2 are lower-order skills and objectives 3, 4 and 5 relate to higher-order skills. These terms will be used in examination questions, and so it is important that students are familiar with the following definitions.

Objective 1

Define	Give the precise meaning of a word, phrase, concept or physical quantity.
Draw	Represent by means of a labelled, accurate diagram or graph, using a pencil. A ruler (straight edge) should be used for straight lines. Diagrams should be drawn to scale. Graphs should have points correctly plotted (if appropriate) and joined in a straight line or smooth curve.
Label	Add labels to a diagram.
List	Give a sequence of brief answers with no explanation.
Measure	Obtain a value for a quantity.
State	Give a specific name, value or other brief answer without explanation or calculation.

Objective 2

Annotate	Add brief notes to a diagram or graph.
Apply	Use an idea, equation, principle, theory or law in relation to a given problem or issue.
Calculate	Obtain a numerical answer showing the relevant stages of working.
Describe	Give a detailed account.
Distinguish	Make clear the differences between two or more concepts or items.
Estimate	Obtain an approximate value.
Identify	Provide an answer from a number of possibilities.
Outline	Give a brief account or summary.

Objectives 3, 4 and 5

Analyse	Break down in order to bring out the essential elements or structure.
Comment	Give a judgment based on a given statement or result of a calculation.
Compare and contrast	Give an account of similarities and differences between two (or more) items or situations, referring to both (all) of them throughout.
Construct	Display information in a diagrammatic or logical form.
Deduce	Reach a conclusion from the information given.
Derive	Manipulate a mathematical relationship to give a new equation or relationship.
Design	Produce a plan, simulation or model.
Determine	Obtain the only possible answer.
Discuss	Offer a considered and balanced review that includes a range of arguments, factors or hypotheses. Opinions or conclusions should be presented clearly and supported by appropriate evidence.
Evaluate	Make an appraisal by weighing up the strengths and limitations.
Explain	Give a detailed account, including reasons or causes.
Justify	Give valid reasons or evidence to support an answer or conclusion.
Predict	Give an expected result.
Solve	Obtain the answer(s) using algebraic and/or numerical methods and/or graphical methods.
Suggest	Propose a solution, hypothesis or other possible answer.