

Jurisprudence
March 2013
Examiners Comments

The exam scripts that I reviewed were of a reasonable standard. There were a few scripts that did not show sufficient preparation across the board, with very short answers, usually focused on more obvious aspects of the theoretical material engaged, and often seeming to more reflect lecture slides than a deep understanding of the material studied. The outcome saw a reasonable spread of marks: while no student who sat the exam failed it, none received a High-Distinction either, with many of the papers clustering at around the Credit range.

Perhaps the most important factor impacting on marks was that they did not show sufficient in-depth knowledge of the course materials, particularly the readings and the finer points thereof. One of the most important factors impacting on a student's overall mark for the exam was lack of consistency across all questions attempted, with some of the scripts showing two or three very well developed responses, in the vicinity of HD grades, but then failing to produce a similar result for others. It is important for students to understand that in order to achieve a high grade in this exam they need to be consistent. Achieving the highest possible grades is difficult under exam condition, but it is impossible without consistency. There were, however, a number of papers that provided mostly thoughtful, well-developed responses to each question.

There was little effort in terms of evaluation of the material discussed, the papers were mostly very descriptive. Only a few students took the time to reflect on the material they presented from an evaluative perspective, which is evidence of the application of higher cognitive skills. Students need to develop their capacity to reflect on the material they engage, here that means that they need to evaluate the ideas discussed and show that they understand the significance of any weaknesses in the theoretical material that they are discussing.

Legibility was, as ever, an issue, there were a few scripts that were very difficult to read and students cannot expect to do well if they present material that is difficult to decipher. Here my advice is that it is probably best to be judicious and produce a legible paper than rush and produce one that cannot be read. This issue is one that is often the case and so expected in an exam of this sort.

In general though the exam scripts, while mid-range in terms of their content, showed an understanding of the various topics for this course, with none so bad as to fail.

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Examiner.