

Grading Rubric for Written Work

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Overview

Your written work is assessed along five weighted dimensions. Every dimension receives the grade it deserves in its own right (1 to 5). The overall grade is the weighted average of these five individual grades. A sixth dimension, *Independence & Difficulty* (IND), carries no weight of its own: it adjusts the overall result by up to ± 5 percentage points — at most one step on the grading scale.

Table 1: Assessment dimensions and weights

No	Dimension	Code	Weight
1	Argumentation & Logic	ARG	20%
2	Research Design & Methods	MET	20%
3	Literature & Theory	LIT	15%
4	Results & Analysis	RES	25%
5	Academic Craft	CRF	20%
6	Independence & Difficulty	IND	± 5 pp

Scoring Scale

Each dimension is assessed at one of the following five levels. The level carries the same name as the grade it produces: work assessed at 2 (“gut”) in every dimension receives the overall grade 2.0.

Table 2: Assessment scale per dimension

Grade	Rating	Description	Points
1	sehr gut	Clearly exceeds the requirements; outstanding quality	95
2	gut	Fully meets the requirements, at good quality	80
3	befriedigend	Meets the requirements, with noticeable weaknesses	65
4	ausreichend	Just meets the basic requirements	50

Grade	Rating	Description	Points
5	nicht ausreichend	Does not meet the requirements; substantial deficiencies	0

There are deliberately no intermediate levels. The finer resolution of the overall grade comes from combining five dimensions — not from feigning a precision inside one dimension that a single judgement cannot support.

Where nothing particularly stands out in a dimension, level 2 (“gut”) applies: the requirements are then taken to be fully met. What is assessed is always the work itself against the requirements — not its position within the cohort.

Dimensions in Detail

1. Argumentation & Logic (ARG, 20%)

This dimension assesses the quality and persuasiveness of your reasoning.

Table 3

Criterion	Description
Clear thesis / research question	Is there a precise, well-delimited research question or thesis statement?
Logical coherence of argument	Do the arguments follow logically and without contradiction?
Claims supported by evidence	Are claims backed up with sources, data, or examples?
Conclusion follows from analysis	Does the conclusion follow naturally from the preceding analysis?

2. Research Design & Methods (MET, 20%)

This dimension assesses whether the methodology fits the research question, is presented transparently, and whether you deal honestly and self-critically with its limitations.

Table 4

Criterion	Description
Method appropriate to question	Does the chosen method suit the research question and the material?
Method explained transparently and reproducibly	Is the procedure described clearly enough for others to follow and reproduce?
Limitations acknowledged and honestly discussed	Are the limitations of your approach named, assessed, and discussed openly rather than concealed?

3. Literature & Theory (LIT, 15%)

This dimension assesses how you engage with scholarly literature and the theoretical grounding of your work.

Table 5

Criterion	Description
Relevant, sufficient and current sources	Are the key and recent works on the topic included, and is coverage sufficient?
Theoretical framework appropriate	Is a coherent theoretical framework chosen and justified?
Critical engagement with the literature	Is the literature critically engaged with, not merely summarised?

4. Results & Analysis (RES, 25%)

This dimension assesses how findings are presented, analysed and interpreted – including whether alternative readings are considered.

Table 6

Criterion	Description
Findings clearly presented	Are the results presented in a clear and accessible way?
Analysis depth and rigour in handling the material	Does the analysis go beyond the superficial, and are data or material used appropriately?
Results address the research question	Do the findings relate clearly to the research question posed at the outset?
Alternative interpretations and broader implications discussed	Are alternative interpretations considered and wider consequences discussed?

5. Academic Craft (CRF, 20%)

This dimension assesses formal aspects such as language, structure, citation practice, and formatting.

Table 7

Criterion	Description
Structure and coherence (red thread)	Is the work logically structured with a clear thread running through it?
Language and expression	Is the language precise, clear, and appropriate for an academic context?

Criterion	Description
Citation and referencing	Are citations consistent and correct, and is the bibliography complete?
Formatting, figures, indices	Do formatting, figures, and indices meet the stated requirements?

6. Independence & Difficulty (IND, ± 5 pp)

This dimension recognises intellectual independence and the ambition of the chosen topic. It works differently from the other five dimensions and carries **no weight of its own**: it does not enter the weighted sum, but is applied to the result *afterwards*.

It is assessed on its own five-level scale, which shifts the overall result by up to ± 5 percentage points:

Table 8: Scale of the IND dimension

Level	Assessment	Adjustment
1	far above expectations	+5.0 pp
2	above expectations	+2.5 pp
3	appropriate to the scope of the work	± 0 pp
4	below expectations	-2.5 pp
5	clearly below expectations	-5.0 pp

Level 3 is the normal case and leaves the result **unchanged**. Since one grade step on the scale below spans exactly five percentage points, this dimension can move your grade by **at most one step** – never more. An ambitious, independently developed piece of work can thus be lifted from 2.3 to 2.0, for instance; a topic handled without any recognisable independent contribution is lowered by one step accordingly. Unlike the other dimensions, it is not built up from individual passages but assessed as an overall impression of the work as a whole.

Table 9

Criterion	Description
Ambition of topic	How challenging is the chosen topic?
Originality of approach	Is there an independent, creative approach to the subject?
Independent intellectual contribution	Does the work make its own intellectual contribution beyond mere summary?

How the Overall Grade Is Calculated

Step 1 – weighted points. Each dimension grade corresponds to the point value in Table 2. These points are summed with their weights:

$$P = \sum_{d=1}^5 w_d \cdot p_d$$

where w_d is the weight of dimension d and p_d the points of its grade. P is therefore directly the share of the achievable points.

Because the points across grades 1 to 4 are exactly $p = 110 - 15 \cdot \text{grade}$, a simple equivalence holds:

The result is the weighted average of your five dimension grades, rounded to the next official grade step.

A dimension assessed at 5 weighs more heavily than that equivalence suggests: it is set at 0 points, not 35.

Step 2 – adjustment for independence and difficulty. The level assigned in the IND dimension shifts this percentage by up to ± 5 percentage points (see section 6):

$$P^* = P + \text{adjustment}_{\text{IND}}$$

Step 3 – grade. The adjusted percentage P^* is translated into a grade using the scale below.

From Percentage to Grade

The grading scale follows § 15 (1g) and § 17 RaPO (Europa-Universität Flensburg): the pass mark is 50% of the achievable points, and the grades above it are distributed linearly in nine equal steps of five percentage points.

Table 10: Percentage-to-grade mapping

Percentage	Grade	Rating
95% and above	1.0	Very good
90–94.9%	1.3	Very good
85–89.9%	1.7	Good
80–84.9%	2.0	Good
75–79.9%	2.3	Good
70–74.9%	2.7	Satisfactory
65–69.9%	3.0	Satisfactory
60–64.9%	3.3	Satisfactory
55–59.9%	3.7	Sufficient

Percentage	Grade	Rating
50–54.9%	4.0	Sufficient
below 50%	5.0	Fail