

# PHY324 History of Astronomy

## Essay Assessment Guide

The table below is a brief guide to typical levels of achievement for different degree classes. Obviously not all scripts will conform to this pattern: for example, a script may have a first-class source list but provide no in-text references. In such cases, use sensible judgment! Comments in the proforma should provide reasonable grounds for the mark awarded.

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Typical levels of achievement</b>
<p><b>Sources and References</b> Is the cited source material appropriate? Has an adequate range of sources been consulted? Do the source citations provide enough information? Are there any cases where it seems likely that cited sources have not been read (e.g. that they are another source's references), or, conversely, have been paraphrased too closely? Are the sources properly referenced in the text?</p>	<p><b>I:</b> good range of sources, minimal use of web-based material; no reason to believe that sources have not been read; sources cited in standard style and properly referenced in text (in standard style). Good first should include some primary sources.  <b>II.1:</b> adequate range of sources including some non-web-based material; no reason to believe sources have not been read; sources cited in adequate detail and properly referenced in text  <b>II.2:</b> limited range of sources with heavy reliance on web; may include some references which have not been read; source citations may lack information, and sources probably inadequately referenced in text.  <b>III/P:</b> inadequate and/or inappropriate sources, probably all web; source citations may lack information; minimal or no referencing of sources in text.  <b>F:</b> no source list.</p>
<p><b>Content and Level</b> Is the coverage of the subject adequate? Is it at the appropriate level for a 3<sup>rd</sup> year essay? The intended audience is scientifically educated non-specialists (not historians) – does the level and approach reflect this? Does it appear that the student has understood the material? Has material from different sources been adequately assimilated to produce a coherent narrative? Is there evidence of critical assessment of sources and/or subject matter?</p>	<p><b>I:</b> good coverage at appropriate level, well explained and showing good understanding. Coherent narrative with some evidence of critical thinking. Good first class marks (&gt;80%) should show clear evidence of critical thinking and a mature appreciation of the subject matter.  <b>II.1:</b> good coverage at appropriate level, adequately explained, showing understanding. Coherent narrative with source material well assimilated. May show some evidence of critical thinking in upper half of class.  <b>II.2:</b> fair coverage at reasonable level, with genuine attempt to explain and fair understanding. May show the joins between different sources, especially in lower half.  <b>III:</b> patchy coverage; level may be inappropriate or inconsistent; some evidence that material is only partially understood. Material from different sources inadequately reconciled. Much paraphrasing of source material.  <b>P:</b> inadequate coverage; level may be inappropriate or inconsistent; some material not understood or used out of context. Little attempt to reconcile material from different sources. Much paraphrasing of source material.  <b>F:</b> grossly inadequate coverage and/or clear lack of understanding, or failure to address correct topic.</p>
<p><b>Presentation and Style</b> Is the piece written in good formal English, without errors of grammar or spelling? Is it well structured, with an introduction and conclusion and appropriate use of subheadings? Does it read* and flow well? If there are illustrations, are they well chosen and appropriately captioned? (If there are no illustrations, should there have been?)  <i>* Starred items should be relaxed if the candidate is not a native English speaker.</i></p>	<p><b>I:</b> good formal English with very few errors, none affecting sense. Well structured with good introduction and conclusion and good use of subheadings. Reads and flows well. Illustrations present if needed, well chosen and captioned and appropriately used.  <b>II.1:</b> good, fairly formal English with few serious errors, none affecting sense. Well structured with introduction, conclusion and use of subheadings. Reads and flows well. Illustrations present if needed, suitably chosen and appropriately used.  <b>II.2:</b> satisfactory English; there may be errors of style, spelling or grammar, but in general they do not affect sense. Fair structure with recognisable introduction and conclusion. Reads and flows adequately. Illustrations may not be well chosen, or may be absent when they would have been useful (or vice versa!).  <b>III:</b> poor English, not in correct formal style, with errors which may affect sense. May be poorly structured and/or read and flow poorly. Illustrations do not meet needs of text.  <b>P:</b> as above, but worse: serious errors affecting sense, poor structure affecting readability.  <b>F:</b> should occur in exceptional circumstances only – text rendered almost impossible to make sense of by poor quality of presentation.</p>