

Glossary of command terms

Command terms with definitions

Students should be familiar with the following key terms and phrases used in examination questions, which are to be understood as described below. Although these terms will be used frequently in examination questions, other terms may be used to direct students to present an argument in a specific way.

The assessment objectives (AOs) listed in the table are those referred to in the economics syllabus.

Command term:		Definition asks students to:
Analyse	AO2	Break down in order to bring out the essential elements or structure.
Apply	AO2	Use an idea, equation, principle, theory or law in relation to a given problem or issue.
Calculate	AO4	Obtain a numerical answer showing the relevant stages in the working.
Comment	AO2	Give a judgment based on a given statement or result of a calculation.
Compare	AO3	Give an account of the similarities between two (or more) items or situations, referring to both (all) of them throughout.
Compare and contrast	AO3	Give an account of similarities and differences between two (or more) items or situations, referring to both (all) of them throughout.
Construct	AO4	Display information in a diagrammatic or logical form.
Contrast	AO3	Give an account of the differences between two (or more) items or situations, referring to both (all) of them throughout.
Define	AO1	Give the precise meaning of a word, phrase, concept or physical quantity.
Derive	AO4	Manipulate a mathematical relationship to give a new equation or relationship.
Describe	AO1	Give a detailed account.
Determine	AO4	Obtain the only possible answer.
Discuss	AO3	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.

Distinguish	AO2	Make clear the differences between two or more concepts or items.
Draw	AO4	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.
Evaluate	AO3	Make an appraisal by weighing up the strengths and limitations.
Examine	AO3	Consider an argument or concept in a way that uncovers the assumptions and interrelationships of the issue.
Explain	AO2	Give a detailed account including reasons or causes.
Identify	AO4	Provide an answer from a number of possibilities.
Justify	AO3	Give valid reasons or evidence to support an answer or conclusion.
Label	AO4	Add labels to a diagram.
List	AO1	Give a sequence of brief answers with no explanation.
Measure	AO4	Obtain a value for a quantity.
Outline	AO1	Give a brief account or summary.
Plot	AO4	Mark the position of points on a diagram.
Show	AO4	Give the steps in a calculation or derivation.
Show that	AO4	Obtain the required result (possibly using information given) without the formality of proof. "Show that" questions do not generally require the use of a calculator.
Sketch	AO4	Represent by means of a diagram or graph (labelled as appropriate). The sketch should give a general idea of the required shape or relationship, and should include relevant features.
Solve	AO4	Obtain the answer(s) using algebraic and/or numerical and/or graphical methods.
State	AO1	Give a specific name, value or other brief answer without explanation or calculation.
Suggest	AO2	Propose a solution, hypothesis or other possible answer.
To what extent	AO3	Consider the merits or otherwise of an argument or concept. Opinions and conclusions should be presented clearly and supported with appropriate evidence and sound argument.