

## GLOSSARY OF KEY ESSAY / EXAM TERMS

<i>What they say</i>	<i>What they might mean</i>
<b>Account for</b>	Requires an explanation of the set topic; not just a description, i.e. an answer to the question "why".
<b>Analyse</b>	Requires a clear exposition of the topic, breaking complex issues /ideas into component parts and explaining their relationship(s).
<b>Argue</b>	Make a case based on appropriate evidence for / against some point of view.
<b>Assess</b>	Estimate the size, quality and value.
<b>Consider</b>	Form a carefully reasoned account giving attention to all aspects.
<b>Compare/Contrast</b>	Expects you to consider differences and similarities characteristics of the phenomena in question. (This involves more than just listing "likes" and dislikes; it involves a consideration of the implications of these).
<b>Criticise</b>	Denotes that you should use appropriate evidence to support your judgement on the value / merit of an argument.
<b>Define</b>	Set down the precise meaning of a word, phrase or concept. Take into consideration different and sometimes opposing definitions.
<b>Describe</b>	Give a detailed or graphic account.
<b>Discuss</b>	Asks you to present and consider several positions in a debate; look at the "for" and "against" of the arguments(s) you have chosen to focus on.
<b>Evaluate/Assess</b>	Asks you to consider the strengths and weakness of a particular approach / contention. (Whilst a brief description of the approach(es) is necessary, you should focus on judging the (de) merits of particular positions and providing a balanced appraisal.
<b>Examine</b>	Implies you should investigate the essential elements of an issue / topic and the relationship between them.
<b>Explain</b>	Requires you to briefly describe and then interpret and account/ give reasons for a particular phenomenon / framework.
<b>Explore</b>	invites you to consider approaches / possibilities and exercise your imagination.
<b>How far/to what</b>	Suggests you should present and evaluate the evidence for <b>extent</b> and against a particular statement / approach.
<b>Identify</b>	Pick out the key features.
<b>Illustrate</b>	Expect you to provide examples to explain / support a statement.

<b>Interpret</b>	Expound the meaning of; make clear and explicit, usually giving your own judgment also.
<b>Justify</b>	Asks you to supply the reasons / grounds for or against a particular position contention.
<b>List</b>	List relevant items, possibly in note form.
<b>Outline</b>	Give the main features of, or general principles of a subject, omitting minor details and emphasising structure and arrangement.
<b>Prove</b>	Demonstrate the truth of something by offering evidence.
<b>Relate</b>	Show how one thing is connected to another.
<b>Review</b>	Make a survey of, examining the subject carefully. Analyse the survey and come to a judgement.
<b>State</b>	Express the main points of an idea or topic.
<b>Summarise</b>	Give a brief account of the main points.
<b>Trace</b>	Follow the development or history of a topic from some point of origin.