Command terms with definitions

These command terms indicate the depth of treatment required for a given assessment statement and relate to the course objectives in the “Assessment objectives” section. Objectives 1 and 2 are lower-order skills and objectives 3, 4 and 5 relate to higher-order skills. These terms will be used in examination questions, and so it is important that students are familiar with the following definitions.

Objective 1

**DEFINE:** Give the precise meaning of a word, phrase, concept or physical quantity.

**DRAW**: 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.

**LABEL**: Add labels to a diagram.

**LIST**: Give a sequence of brief answers with no explanation.

**MEASURE** Obtain a value for a quantity.

**STATE**: Give a specific name, value or other brief answer without explanation or calculation.

Objective 2

**ANNOTATE**: Add brief notes to a diagram or graph.

**APPLY**: Use an idea, equation, principle, theory or law in relation to a given problem or issue.

**CALCULATE**: Obtain a numerical answer showing the relevant stages of working.

**DESCRIBE**: Give a detailed account.

**DISTINGUISH**: Make clear the differences between two or more concepts or items.

**ESTIMATE**: Obtain an approximate value.

**IDENTIFY**: Provide an answer from a number of possibilities.

**OUTLINE**: Give a brief account or summary.

Objectives 3, 4 and 5

**ANALYZE**: Break down in order to bring out the essential elements or structure.

**COMMENT**: Give a judgment based on a given statement or result of a calculation.

**COMARE** & CONTRAST: Give an account of similarities and differences between two (or more) items or situations, referring to both (all) of them throughout.

**CONSTRUCT**: Display information in a diagrammatic or logical form.

**DEDUCE**: Reach a conclusion from the information given.

**DERIVE**: Manipulate a mathematical relationship to give a new equation or relationship.

**DESIGN**: Produce a plan, simulation or model.

**DETERMINE**: Obtain the only possible answer.

**DISCUSS**: 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.

**EVALUATE**: Make an appraisal by weighing up the strengths and limitations.

**EXPLAIN**: Give a detailed account, including reasons or causes.

**JUSTIFY**: Give valid reasons or evidence to support an answer or conclusion.

**PREDICT**: Give an expected result.

**SOLVE**: Obtain the answer(s) using algebraic and/or numerical methods and/or graphical methods.

**SUGGEST**: Propose a solution, hypothesis or other possible answer.