



THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND  
FACULTY OF LAW

## **GUIDELINES ON THE PRESENTATION AND SUBMISSION OF The LLB(Hons) DISSERTATION**

This document is a general guide to the presentation and submission of the LLB(Hons) dissertation. It contains information about related policies and procedures, and should be read alongside the relevant regulations the dissertation candidate is registered under and The University of Auckland Calendar. It is derived from the School of Graduate Studies “Guide to Dissertations and Theses” that can be found at

[www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/cs-pg-doc-theses-dissertations](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/cs-pg-doc-theses-dissertations)

See also: <https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/law/study-with-us/bachelor-of-laws/honours-frequently-asked-questions.html>

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

“A dissertation is an extended piece of writing divided into chapters, in which an overall argument is developed in response to a research question.”<sup>1</sup>

**1.1** The Honours dissertation (LAWHONS 789) is worth 40 points and should be 15,000 words in length, including footnotes. There is a 5 per cent leeway for Honours dissertations (i.e. limit of 15,750 words). Excluded in the limit are: Title page, Table of Contents, Abstract, Acknowledgement, Bibliography and any tables. The abstract has a separate limit of 250 – 350 words.

**1.2** In creating a dissertation, a student has two tasks:

1. To undertake a project to find the answer to a research question.
2. To write up the project in the form of a dissertation, in which the findings are presented, their significance discussed and a conclusion is reached.<sup>2</sup>

This guide discusses both of these – the research and the writing. Both are equally important and present different challenges.

## 2 THE DISSERTATION

**2.1 Formalities:** There are two formal aspects to enrolling in the dissertation:

- (i) approval of topic and (ii) formal enrolment in the dissertation through SSO.

**2.2 Selecting a topic:** Students should aim to select and register their dissertation topic as far ahead as possible. Students in their Part IV year who intend to submit in summer school should have selected their topic, and approached a supervisor by the end of the second week of the second semester, and should be working on their dissertation during the second semester, so that it is ready for submission by the end of January. Students who decide to leave their dissertation to the first semester of the following year should not underestimate the difficulty of completing their dissertation once they are in full-time employment.

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted at <http://www.professays.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/law-dissertation-free-sample.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> P Levin *Excellent Dissertations* (Oxford University Press, England, 2005).

2.2.1 It is essential that students choose a topic that really interests them. If they do not, this will make the task of writing a comprehensive and well-argued dissertation that much harder. Consider these aspects of the topic:

- Is there a good research question arising from it?
- Can you engage with the literature, so that it informs your analysis?

2.2.2 A student's preliminary research should be designed to ascertain that there is sufficient academic material relating to the topic they have chosen to allow them to formulate a specific question that can be explored in depth. This may involve consulting an existing literature review, or carrying out their own review of literature on the topic.

2.2.3 The most common mistake that students make is to formulate a question that is too broad. The research question should raise some significant issues and should require more than a descriptive answer. A dissertation is not a work that gathers together everything that a student knows about a particular topic. It is a work that poses a specific question and uses material to answer that question.

**2.3 Approaching a supervisor:** Once a student has decided on a research area, they should discuss this with a member of staff teaching or working in that field. Your chosen supervisor will advise whether the area of study, or the specific question you have chosen, seems unsuitable.

There is a list of supervision areas available on the Law Faculty website. This provides information about the subject-areas in which supervisors are available to supervise topics for Honours dissertations. See:

<https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/law/our-research/supervisors.html>

**2.4** When there is no lecturer available on the academic staff of the Faculty to supervise a topic a student wishes to pursue, the student should consult the Programme Adviser Postgraduate). Students should note that as lecturers cannot supervise unlimited numbers of dissertations, EARLY contact and registration is recommended.

**2.5 Registration of topic:** Once a topic is chosen and is approved by the staff member concerned, a dissertation **Topic Approval Form** should be submitted along with email approval from the supervisor for approval by the LLB(Hons) Programme Director. The form is available here: <https://www.forms.auckland.ac.nz/en/student/law/honours-dissertation-topic-approval-form.html>. An email will be sent from the Law School confirming the name of your supervisor and the topic.

**Enrolment:** After the Topic Approval Form is approved, the student should formally enrol on SSO. The LLB(Hons) regulations require that formal enrolment for the dissertation must take place in the 9<sup>th</sup> semester of the LLB(Hons) i.e., the semester following the completion of Part IV, unless the student chooses to skip enrolment in the summer semester following completion of the Part IV year and to enrol in semester 1 of the following year instead.

If you intend to enrol in the summer semester, the Programme Adviser (Postgraduate) will enroll you on your behalf (as the 40 points for the dissertation exceed the usual summer school limit of 30 points – a concession will be needed). An email will be sent confirming enrolment in LAWHONS 789.

### **3 AVAILABLE HELP**

**3.1 Libraries:** Staff in the Davis Law Library can assist with literature searching, and dissertations. Contact a Subject Librarian or visit the website [www.library.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz) to get help with literature searching.

The Theses and Dissertations page, [www.library.auckland.ac.nz/thesis/](http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/thesis/) provides advice on how to search for local and international theses.

**3.2 The Student Learning Services** team provides workshops, online resources and advice on most aspects of the thesis and dissertation writing process, including research and data analysis, critical analysis in the literature review, self-

management, computing and presenting at conferences. Details of the postgraduate courses and resources provided by Student Learning Services can be found at [www.library.auckland.ac.nz/student-learning/](http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/student-learning/).

3.2.1 Within Student Learning Services, the English Language Enrichment (ELE) team can provide online and face-to-face advice for students who want assistance with academic English. Visit [www.library.auckland.ac.nz/ele/](http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/ele/) for more information.

**3.3 Computing Services:** IT literacy is an essential aspect of writing a thesis. The University of Auckland provides a range of IT services to assist you with your course of study. Consult Student IT Essentials on the University website for further information:

[www.auckland.ac.nz/uaa/home/for/current-students/cs-student-it-essentials](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uaa/home/for/current-students/cs-student-it-essentials)

## **4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS**

**4.1** Once the topic is chosen, students and supervisors should meet to discuss and agree on clear goals and the frequency of supervisory meetings. Students are reminded that compliance with the degree regulations and the quality of their work is ultimately their responsibility. The role of the supervisor is to assist them to achieve the best research results of which they are capable.

<http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/cs-pg-doc-theses-dissertations>

### **4.2 The responsibilities of the student include:**

- (a) taking the initiative in raising problems or difficulties, including difficulties with accessing sources or resources;
- (b) discussing with the supervisor the type of guidance and comment he or she finds most helpful, and agreeing on a schedule of meetings;
- (c) responding to the arrangements proposed and the advice and instruction given by the supervisor;
- (d) maintaining the progress of the work in accordance with the stages agreed with the supervisor, including, in particular, the presentation of written material as required in sufficient time to allow for comments and discussion before proceeding to the next stage. For example, you cannot expect your supervisor to respond overnight to a 10,000-word draft document.

### **4.3 The responsibilities of the supervisor**

As part of the general supervision of a student's dissertation research, a supervisor should:

- (a) give guidance about the nature of research and the standard expected, about the planning of the research programme, about literature and sources, resources and their availability;
- (b) discuss with the student the level of contact needed, for example through meetings and/or email, and ensure as far as possible that this contact is maintained;
- (c) be accessible to the student at other appropriate times when he or she may need advice;
- (d) give advice on the necessary completion dates of successive stages of the

- work so that the whole may be submitted within the scheduled time;
- (e) receive written work as appropriate, and provide prompt and appropriate written comment
  - (f) organise for an assessor to assess the dissertation as part of the examination process.

## **5 INTEGRITY IN RESEARCH**

**5.1 Applying for Ethics Approval:** Research projects which involve human subjects (including those participating in surveys) require the prior approval of the University's Human Subjects Ethics Committee. Information can be found on the website <http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/home/about/research/re-ethics>.

5.1.1 If the research being undertaken requires ethics approval before the research can be initiated, your supervisor will discuss the ethical issues and give guidance on the ethics approval process. It is the student and supervisor's joint responsibility to ensure that formal ethics approval is obtained. It is important to note that if you do need to submit an ethics application, this must be done by your supervisor on your behalf. The process is rigorous and will need careful planning.

**5.2 Avoiding plagiarism:** In any thesis, dissertation, report or project, unacknowledged copying or plagiarism is not acceptable. Plagiarism is defined as follows:

Plagiarism means using the work of others in preparing an assignment and presenting it as your own without explicitly acknowledging — or referencing — where it came from. Plagiarism can also mean not acknowledging the full extent of indebtedness to a source. Work can be plagiarised from many sources including books, articles, the internet, and other students' assignments. Plagiarism can also occur unconsciously or inadvertently. Direct copying is definitely plagiarism. Paraphrasing of another work without attribution is also plagiarism. Submitting someone else's work or ideas without acknowledgement or attribution is not evidence of your own grasp of the material and cannot earn you marks.

5.2.1 Thesis and dissertation candidates are governed by the University's Student Academic Conduct Statute, which defines 'academic misconduct', explains the procedures for investigating claims of academic misconduct, and outlines the penalties for students found guilty of academic misconduct. All dissertations will be processed through Turnitin on final submission before being graded.



**5.3 The Academic Integrity Course** provides information about academic integrity at university, avoiding academic dishonesty, acknowledging the work of others, using copyrighted material correctly and the consequences of academic dishonesty at the University of Auckland. Further information can be found at [www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/home/about/teaching-learning/academic-integrity](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/home/about/teaching-learning/academic-integrity) including a link to the University of Auckland Academic Integrity Course.

## **6 WRITING THE DISSERTATION**

**6.1 Getting started:** Students often have difficulty structuring their dissertations. They ask questions such as “Should I devote the first section to a literature review?” “Should I include a section on the history of my topic?” “Should I compare the law of New Zealand with the law of some other jurisdiction or jurisdictions?” The answer to all such questions is surprisingly simple. The point of the dissertation is *to demonstrate the significance and validity of the conclusion*. Every word of the dissertation should be carefully chosen to achieve that end. For example, if you can think of no better way of demonstrating the significance and validity of your conclusion than by referring to the law of New Zealand, then do so. Otherwise, don’t.

6.1.1 If you are unsure of how to begin, try this: “The aim of this dissertation is...” Complete the sentence, formulating the aim of your dissertation as precisely as you can. Typically this will entail explaining what your conclusion is and why it matters. Then proceed to justify your conclusion.

6.1.2 Your dissertation should not consist of a mere record of your research. Rather, it should seek to persuade the reader of the significance and validity of your conclusion. Its structure should therefore be designed with the reader in mind.

6.1.3 Think of the dissertation as the tip of an iceberg – you can see only ten percent of an iceberg because the rest of it is under water. Similarly, your dissertation should set out only a small part of your research – the part that relates directly to demonstrating the significance and validity of your conclusion.

**WARNING:** In the course of your research you will discover many interesting things. You will want to include many of these in your dissertation, both because they are interesting and because they show how much research you have done. Doing this is, however, a weakness. So be ruthless; if it is not needed to demonstrate the

significance and validity of your conclusion, cut it out.

**6.2 Research – analysing the literature:** Students often think that they should do all the research *first* and then, when they've finished the research, write it up. This may be a mistake. You can easily spend three months or more reading around a topic without focusing your thinking and analysing the key issues.

6.2.1 A good approach would be to do just enough research to formulate a tentative conclusion in relation to your research question – and then to start writing. As soon as you have formulated a tentative conclusion, write it down. Then, having written it down, you should proceed to justify it – in writing. At least in theory, you will then continue writing until you have fully justified your conclusion. At that point, your dissertation will be complete.

6.2.2 It will be clear from the advice in this section so far, that we are recommending that students always research *to a purpose* – that purpose being to justify the dissertation's conclusion. This means that you should be analysing all the material that you are reading, asking yourself some of the following questions:

- What does this have to say about my research question?
- Does it raise counter arguments that I should address?
- Does it support my tentative conclusion and if so, how?
- Do I need to find additional support for, or alternative perspectives from, this material?
- What are the strengths/weaknesses of the arguments in this material?

6.2.3 It is never enough, when writing a dissertation, simply to provide descriptive material. If you just set out information about the law and other material, without analysing it, your work will attract a low mark. If you are discussing cases, it is not enough to say what the outcomes were. You need to consider principles, policies and legal developments that may arise from the judgments.

**6.3 Clarity of writing:** Most students think that the larger part of the job is the research (say 80 percent), and the smaller part is the writing (say 20 percent). Consequently they think that when they have completed a first draft of their dissertation, they have almost finished. Depending on how well-developed the draft is, this may be a mistake. If you leave only a couple of weeks for rewriting after you have completed that first draft, it may be that your supervisor considers

that significant additional work is required before submission work and you will have placed yourself in a very stressful situation.

6.3.1 The reason for this is that it takes time to ensure that the language you are using in your dissertation is precise and expresses your arguments clearly and persuasively. Read over what you have written. Is it absolutely clear to the reader what you mean? Almost all student writing benefits from rewriting. Often, imprecise writing obscures weak analysis. The more clearly you understand the issues and the points that you wish to make, the more clearly you will express yourself.

**6.4 Getting feedback from your supervisor:** The purpose of reviewing and giving feedback on a draft is to help you to improve your arguments and your writing. You are entitled to reach conclusions that your supervisor does not agree with. It is the quality of your reasoning that is key. If your supervisor does not agree with or is unconvinced by your arguments, it is in order to make your arguments more robust. Your supervisor will be looking for how well you present your arguments, how deep your analysis is, and how clearly and logically you present your work to your reader.

6.4.1 The most important thing to remember about preparing a draft for review and feedback is to do this *as early as you can*. Do not leave it until the last minute. Your supervisor cannot be expected to read work overnight. Almost any written work will be substantially improved through re-writing and this takes time.

6.4.2 Your supervisor cannot provide you with an estimated grade. The assessment process is rigorous and requires a third-party assessor.

**6.5 Extension of time:**

See:

<https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/law/study-with-us/bachelor-of-laws/honours-frequently-asked-questions.html>

**6.6** Backing up your work. The importance of backing up your work cannot be over-emphasised. Back up your computer files regularly, name the different versions of your documents appropriately, and keep these copies in a separate safe location. It is also a good idea to retain copies of collected data, notes, drafts and any other material that might be necessary to reconstruct your thesis in the event that something goes wrong.

**6.7** Careful proofreading for grammar, punctuation, spelling and general consistency is essential. Do not rely on the spellchecker in your programme to pick up errors. It is also a good idea to have someone else read through your work to pick up any mistakes that you may have overlooked. A high standard of presentation is very important, so allow plenty of time for this before you submit your dissertation.

A practical guide to punctuation is J Buxton, S Carter and S Sturm *Punc Rocks: Foundation Stones for Precise Punctuation* (2nd ed, Auckland, Pearson New Zealand, 2012).

## **7 FORMAT AND STYLE REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESENTATION**

**7.1 Word length:** Dissertations should be 15,000 words in length, including footnotes. There is a 5 per cent leeway for Honours dissertations (i.e. limit of 15,750 words). Excluded in the limit are: Title page, Table of Contents, Abstract, Acknowledgement, Bibliography and any tables. The abstract has a separate limit of 250 – 350 words.

**7.2 Footnotes and referencing:** Students must comply with the requirements of the *New Zealand Law Style Guide* available at:

<http://austlii.community/foswiki/NZLawSG/NZLawStyleGuide>

- 7.2.1 Inadequate footnoting and referencing, either in terms of supporting propositions with authority or failure to comply with the Style Guide, is likely to result in lower grades/marks.

### 7.3 Format

- Your dissertation should be typed on A4 paper
- Pages must be numbered
- Text should be clear and legible. Text should be in 12-point script. Lines can be 1 1/2 line space or double in the text
- Footnotes may be set in an appropriately compact style, in terms of size of script and line spacing
- A Table of Contents should indicate the divisions of the work
- A Table of Cases and a Table of Statutes may be included
- An acknowledgement page should be included that recognises any assistance you have received
- An abstract of between 250 - 350 words must be included
- A full bibliography should be included at the end of the work
- Recommended order of material — title page, abstract, acknowledgments, table of contents, text, appendices, bibliography.

**7.4 Title page:** Your dissertation title should be centred in the top third of the title page, and should describe the content of your dissertation accurately and precisely. The word length must be honestly and accurately stated. Your full name should be centred in the middle of the title page. Information regarding the degree, subject, university, and date is centred in the lower third of the page. The preferred form of wording is “A dissertation submitted in [partial] fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Laws (Honours), the University of Auckland”, and the date.

**7.5 Submission:** The dissertation must be submitted electronically by the due date, so that the word limit can be checked and it can be processed through Turnitin. Instructions on how to submit electronically will be posted on Canvas at the relevant time (towards the end of each semester, shortly before submission dates).

## 8. SUBMISSION DATES

The submission date for the final dissertation for the relevant semester will be available on the LAWHONS 789 Canvas page. It is the student's responsibility to obtain these dates and work within them.

Approximate timeframes are:

### Summer Semester

September: Selection of supervisor and approval of topic

November: Submission of completed draft to supervisor

Jan (end)/ early February: Final Submission

### Semester 1

March: Selection of supervisor and approval of topic

April: Submission of completed draft to supervisor

June (last day of lectures): Final Submission

### Semester 2

July: Selection of supervisor and approval of topic

Sept: Submission of completed draft

October (last day of lectures): Final Submission

## 9. DISSERTATION SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

- Have you provided a final draft for your supervisor's feedback?
- Have you received your supervisor's feedback?
- Have you included an abstract of not more than 350 words?
- Is the word length of your dissertation within the allowable limit?
- Have you proofread your dissertation carefully for spelling and typographical errors (and ideally had someone else proofread it for you)?
- Have you checked that the presentation of your dissertation meets departmental or University style and format guidelines?
- Have you complied with the Law Style Guide?
- Are the page numbers in sequence?
- Have you backed up the final version of your dissertation?
- Is your title page set out correctly?

## 10. GRADING SCHEDULE

The following two tables show the relationship of marks to grades on the nine-point scale used by the Faculty of Law for assessed work as well as descriptors appropriate to the requirements of the course, corresponding to the level of attainment within each of the letter grades on the scale. For a comprehensive explanation of the descriptors please visit [www.law.auckland.ac.nz/grading](http://www.law.auckland.ac.nz/grading)

Students will note that the descriptors are broadly banded in the grades of A, B, C, and D, with the finer gradings reflecting “shades” or “levels” of achievement within the broad bands.

### Research – based work

Grade	% value	Comprehension	Synthesis and Analysis	Evaluation	Sources, Citations and Presentation
A+	90-100	<p>Work of exceptional quality showing excellence in, or advanced knowledge and understanding of, subject matter, and appreciation of the issues.</p> <p>In short, the “A+” student will have attained an “in-depth” knowledge and understanding of the subject matter, and may have undertaken extensive reading beyond that which is required.</p> <p>Holistically, across all four skills, the work is exceptional and even original or creative, which sets it apart from the “A” grade.</p>	<p>Outstanding marshalling and analysis of the appropriate legal rules, principles, legislation and/or policies relevant to the question or topic.</p> <p>Extremely well-formulated arguments based on strong and sustainable evidence and/or supporting authority.</p> <p>Analysis shows high level of critical thinking, and will ordinarily exhibit creativity or originality.</p>	<p>Demonstrates exceptional critical evaluation of the issues or debates, and of the strengths and weaknesses of competing arguments or views.</p> <p>The answer displays critical insight throughout. Sometimes generates original perspectives of topic area.</p> <p>The student will have consistently demonstrated an exceptional level of proficiency in understanding and applying relevant tools and methodologies to the subject area and in addressing relevant debates in the area.</p>	<p>Identification of an impressive range of primary and secondary sources; full and accurate referencing of these sources in compliance with the <i>New Zealand Law Style Guide</i>.</p> <p>Impeccable use of English. Free from grammatical or typographical errors.</p> <p>Polished presentation in appearance, style and formatting e.g. in headings, sub-headings, paragraph numbering, and footnotes.</p>



A	85-89	<p>Work of excellent quality showing excellent knowledge and understanding of the subject matter, and appreciation of the issues.</p> <p>Holistically, across all four skills, otherwise meets many but not all of the requirements for an A+.</p>	<p>Excellent marshalling and analysis of relevant legal content, and excellent arguments based on strong and sustainable evidence and authority.</p> <p>The analysis shows critical thinking but does not necessarily display creativity or originality.</p>	<p>Excellent critical evaluation of the issues / debates and competing arguments or views, and demonstrates excellent level of proficiency in understanding and applying relevant tools, methodologies, and addressing relevant debates.</p>	<p>Excellent identification and referencing of relevant sources; full or nearly full compliance with the <i>New Zealand Style Guide</i>; and excellent presentation.</p>
A-	80-84	<p>Work of very good quality showing very good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter, and appreciation of the issues.</p> <p>Holistically, across all four skills, otherwise meets most of the requirements for an A.</p>	<p>Very good marshalling and analysis of relevant legal content, and very good arguments based on strong and sustainable evidence and authority.</p>	<p>Very good critical evaluation of the issues / debates and competing arguments or views, and demonstrates very good level of proficiency in understanding and applying relevant tools, methodologies, and addressing relevant debates.</p>	<p>Very good identification and referencing of relevant sources; nearly full compliance with the <i>New Zealand Style Guide</i>; and very good presentation.</p>
B+ B B-	75-79 70-74 65-69	<p>Work shows a good to sound grasp of subject matter and understanding of the major issues, although not necessarily of the finer points.</p> <p>In short, the "B" student will have attained a "good" to "sound" knowledge and understanding of the issues relevant to the task.</p>	<p>Good to sound marshalling of the relevant material and application of the appropriate legal rules, principles, legislation and/or policies relevant to the task.</p> <p>Arguments are generally well developed and based on sound evidence and/or legal authority.</p>	<p>Attempts to evaluate the issues / debates, and the strengths and weaknesses of competing arguments or views.</p> <p>Shows familiarity with the major academic debates, and the ability to apply relevant methodologies, and conceptual tools to the subject area.</p>	<p>Good to sound identification and referencing of relevant primary and secondary sources; high level of compliance with the <i>New Zealand Law Style Guide</i>.</p> <p>Generally good use of English. Few grammatical or typographical errors.</p> <p>Very good presentation in appearance, style and formatting e.g. in headings, sub-headings, paragraph numbering, and footnotes.</p>

C+	60-64	Work shows a basic knowledge of subject matter and appreciation of the main issues, albeit with some lapses and inadequacies.  In short, the "C" student will have attained an "adequate" or "basic" knowledge and understanding of the issues relevant to the task.	Adequate to basic marshalling of the relevant material and application of the appropriate legal rules, principles, legislation and/or policies relevant to the task.  Some attempt to develop arguments and support these by evidence and/or legal authority, but work is often descriptive and non-analytical.	Evaluates some major and some minor issues. Makes only a limited attempt to evaluate competing arguments or conclusions.  Demonstrates only limited familiarity with the major academic debates, approaches, methodologies and conceptual tools to the subject area.	Adequate to basic identification and referencing of relevant primary and secondary sources; average level of compliance with the <i>New Zealand Law Style Guide</i> .  Generally adequate use of English. Some grammatical or typographical errors.  Adequate presentation in appearance, style and formatting e.g. in headings, sub-headings, paragraph numbering, and footnotes.
D+	45-49	Work lacks breadth and depth, generally has gaps of a significant nature, and may state incorrect or contradictory propositions and/or conclusions.  In short, the "D" student shows an "unsatisfactory" knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.	No or very limited marshalling of the relevant material and application of the appropriate legal rules, principles, legislation and/or policies relevant to the task.  Work is largely descriptive and non-analytical - no or very limited attempt to develop arguments and support these by evidence and/or legal authority.	Generally makes no attempt to evaluate any major or minor issues. Generally does not evaluate competing arguments or conclusions.  Demonstrates a lack of familiarity with the major academic debates, approaches, methodologies and conceptual tools to the subject area.	Limited or inadequate identification and referencing of relevant primary and secondary sources; limited or inadequate compliance with the <i>New Zealand Law Style Guide</i> .  Below average or inadequate use of English. Many grammatical or typographical errors.  Below average or inadequate presentation in appearance, style and formatting e.g. in headings, sub-headings, paragraph numbering, and footnotes.
D-	0-39	Unsatisfactory or unacceptable work which shows a profound or serious lack of knowledge and understanding of the subject matter throughout.  In short, holistically across all four skills, the "D-" student will have attained "highly deficient" knowledge and understanding.	Fails to marshal the relevant material and apply the appropriate legal rules, principles, legislation and/or policies relevant to the task.  Does not make any attempt to develop arguments and support these by evidence and/or legal authority.	Generally fails to evaluate any major or minor issues. Fails to evaluate competing arguments or conclusions.  Demonstrates no, or hardly any, familiarity with the major academic debates, approaches, methodologies, and conceptual tools of the subject.	Poor or no identification and referencing of relevant primary and secondary sources; lack of compliance with the <i>New Zealand Law Style Guide</i> .  Poor use of English. Significant grammatical or typographical errors.  Untidy or poor presentation in appearance, style and formatting e.g. in headings, sub-headings, paragraph numbering, and footnotes.