



DistanceLearningCentre.com

EXAMPLE STUDENT ASSESSMENT TAQ SHEET

COURSE: Access to Higher Education Diploma
SUBJECT: Biology/Human Physiology
UNIT TITLE: Introduction to Cell Biology
LEVEL: 3 (Ungraded)
CREDITS: 3

Every assessment has guidance on how to use it.

How to use this document

This document contains your Tutor Assessed Questions (TAQs) for this assessment, as well as information about formatting your work (including word counts and references) and deadlines. Although this is an ungraded assessment, we have also included indicative grade descriptors so that you can begin to familiarise yourself with them.

Do not attempt to fill in this document. Please use the related Student Assessment Answer Sheet to answer your TAQs.



Further resources:

You will need to be logged in to your Learner Account to access these resources.



We advise that you check the [Ascentis – Subject Set Unit Specifications – Biology](#) for the 'indicative content' of the unit, as this may help you to understand how you could meet specific assessment criteria.



[DLC Student Handbook](#)

DLC Library: Log in to your Learner Account and click on 'Library' to view various resources to help you with your learning.

There is always a link to the specification, the Student Handbook and the library on every assessment.

Course: **Access to Higher Education Diploma**
Subject: **Biology/Human Physiology**
Unit title: **Introduction to Cell Biology**
Level: **3 (Ungraded)**
EXAMPLE STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Ungraded level 3 units are given an 'indicative grade'. This means that you know what grade your work would have achieved if it had been graded. Your tutor gives you written feedback on how to improve in future work, so that an ungraded unit is always a springboard to achieving the highest grade possible as soon as you start on the graded units.

TAQs for this unit

Your Tutor Assessed Questions (TAQs) for this unit are:

	<p>NOTE:</p> <p>Although this is an ungraded unit, we are going to use indicative grade descriptors to help you understand how these work when you start on the graded units. The indicative grade descriptors in the next section of this document are there to help you understand the type of areas that you will need to work on to achieve a Merit or Distinction.</p>
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<p>AIMS AND OBJECTIVES</p>	<p>This assessment will check your learning on the cells in the body, their nature, structure and function.</p>
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	<p>You will need to be logged in to your Learner Account to access these resources, which may also require a password:</p> <p> DLC Learning materials: Study Skills – How to Understand Grading</p> <p> DLC Learning materials: Introduction to Cell Biology –Topic 1</p>
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Any resources that you should refer to when completing this assessment are linked in 'assessment tools'.

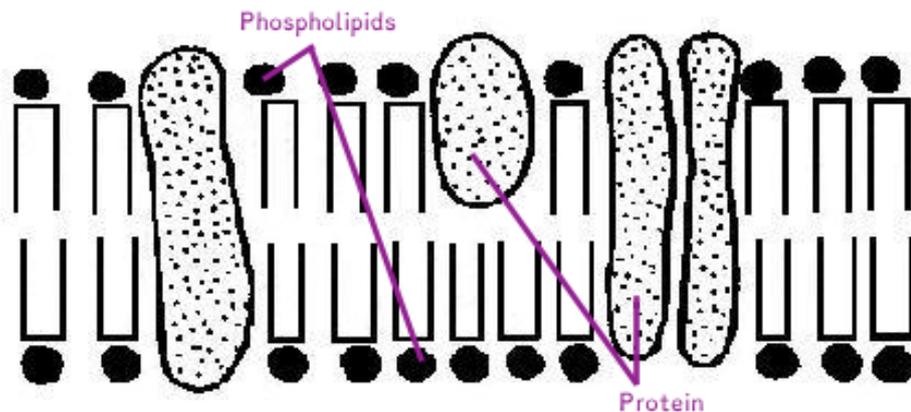
Here is an example TAQ that assesses Assessment Criteria 2.1 and 3.1. See the student assessment answer sheet to clarify this further.



TAQ 1:

Assessment criteria 2.1, 3.1

This diagram shows a model of the plasma membrane:



Part 1:

- a) Why is this membrane described as a fluid mosaic model?
- b) Explain how and why phospholipids are important for the stability of this membrane.
- c) Explain the function of proteins in a cell membrane.

Part 2:

Compare and contrast active and passive transport, using at least two examples to support your answer.



WORD COUNT:

Part 1: 200 words

Part 2: 200 words

Word counts are given as a guide for each TAQ. The whole assessment should be answered in 1000–1500 words for a 3 credit unit, and 2000–2500 words for a 6 credit unit.



NOTE:

Completion notes:

Part 1: The different structures of a membrane are just as important as the components themselves. Here you are being asked to **explain** how the membrane uses different parts to fulfil its role, as such this is more than **describing** the structure of a cell membrane.

Part 2: **Comparing and contrasting** is a form of **evaluating**. This means that while it is important to understand the different forms of transport, it is just as important to follow this through by demonstrating an understanding of the importance of each type of transport and the role they fulfil within the cell.

Diagrams could be used to enhance your answer further.

Where completion notes are helpful, you'll find them under each TAQ.

These are the (indicative) grading descriptors for this unit. You should always use them to assess your work and to determine if your work meets the grade you're aiming for.



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Criteria for Merit and Distinction

This unit is ungraded, which means that the highest grade you can achieve is a Pass. However, we have identified some indicative grade descriptors to give you a chance to find out the type of things you would need to do to gain a Merit or Distinction in a graded unit. Your tutor will give you feedback on these indicative grades when they mark your work. The indicative grade descriptors for this unit are as follows:

QAA Grade descriptor 1: Understanding the subject	
Indicative content for Merit	Indicative content for Distinction
The student's work demonstrates a very good grasp of the relevant knowledge base and is generally informed by the major conventions and practices of the area of study.	The student's work demonstrates an excellent grasp of the relevant knowledge base and is consistently informed by the major conventions and practices of the area of study.
Extra help and pointers (this help is not exhaustive):	
You need to show that you have understood the subject matter you have used in your assessment very well. Make sure that you write your assessments in the third person unless you have been asked for your own thoughts on the subject and that you reference using the Harvard referencing system. For a Merit, there may be some inconsistencies in your referencing, though these should be few. Pay attention to the assessment criteria and use evaluation where required to a very good level.	You need to show that you have an excellent understanding of the subject matter you have used in your assessment. Make sure that you write your assessments in the third person unless you have been asked for your own thoughts on the subject and that you reference using the Harvard referencing system. For a Distinction there should be no inconsistencies in your referencing. Pay attention to the assessment criteria, especially when evaluation of the theories is asked for. Evaluation should be up to date, comprehensive and concise , using multiple points of evaluation.

QAA Grade descriptor 2: Application of knowledge	
Indicative content for Merit	Indicative content for Distinction
The student's work makes use of relevant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ideas • facts • theories • perspectives • concepts with either breadth or depth that goes beyond the minimum required for a Pass.	The student's work makes use of relevant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ideas • facts • theories • perspectives • concepts with both breadth and depth.
Extra help and pointers (this help is not exhaustive):	
For this grade descriptor you need to know how to apply your knowledge and the research you have done. You need to be mindful of the word count for each of the TAQs. The work should show that you are able to cover the criterion in your own words and at the correct breadth or depth for the subject.	For this grade descriptor you need to know how to apply your knowledge and the research you have done. You need to be mindful of the word count for each of the TAQs. The work should show that you have accurate and excellent detailed identification and explanation of areas of study, which demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding .



QAA Grade descriptor 4: Use of information	
Indicative content for Merit	Indicative content for Distinction
The student's work identifies new information from sources which are generally appropriate, and generally appraises the relevance and value of new information accurately.	The student's work identifies new information from sources which are consistently appropriate, and consistently appraises the relevance and value of new information accurately.
Extra help and pointers (this help is not exhaustive):	
This is where you show how you have used all the research you have found, making sure that you only use information that is relevant, up to date, reliable and valid. You will show that you are able to use your understanding of the subject to advance your arguments and ideas to a very good standard.	This is where you show how you have used all the research you have found, making sure that you only use information that is relevant, up to date, reliable, and valid. You will show that you are able to use your understanding of the subject to advance your arguments and ideas to an excellent standard, taking into account the assessment criteria and the other grade descriptors used in the assessment.

QAA Grade descriptor 7: Quality	
Indicative content for Merit	Indicative content for Distinction
The student's work is structured in a way that is generally logical and fluent.	The student's work is structured in a way that is consistently logical and fluent
Taken as a whole, demonstrates a very good response to the demands of the brief/assignment.	Taken as a whole, demonstrates an excellent response to the demands of the brief/assignment.
Extra help and pointers (this help is not exhaustive):	
This grade descriptor looks at the overall quality of your work. Is it set out properly? Have you numbered the pages? Does the work read well and uses the appropriate language and terminology? This grade descriptor looks at the quality of the work as a whole.	

There are 7 grading descriptors all together, but only the ones that are applicable to that unit/assessment are applied.

Guidance and advice is always given on how to present your assessments. Your tutor will also support you with this.

Formatting your assignment, word counts and

a) Formatting your assignment

Where possible, please **present all of your work in word processed form**. If the work is handwritten material, please take a copy for your own records before sending the original to your tutor, so that if any of your work gets lost in the post you will have a copy.

b) Word counts

Please include a word count for each Tutor Assessment Question (TAQ) at the end of the TAQ. A target word count for each TAQ is provided above. The overall word count for a six credit unit is 2000-2500 words and for a three credit unit 1000-1500 words.

Why do we have a word count? The purpose of the word count is to ensure that the assessment across all units within every Access to HE Diploma is standardised and equal. Writing to a word count is a skill which will be required at university and in many professions. The addition of the word count gives you a guide to the amount of work that is expected, the level of detail that is required and the amount time that should be spent on each assignment.

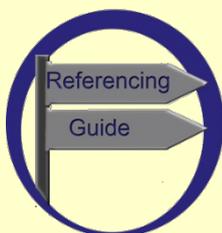
What is included in the word count? The word count takes into account everything in the main body of text. This includes quotations, citations, headings and tables. However, the word count does not include the title, footnotes, any appendices, reference list or bibliography. You must remain within the word count range. If the assessment contains a table or a diagram that you have been asked to complete, the words that are already in the table or diagram are not counted in the word count.

If your work does not fit within the word count it will be returned by your tutor before it is marked for you to either make additions or to reduce the number words.

c) References

A good approach when it comes to referencing is to always reference and to do so after each TAQ. Your references should follow the Harvard system, and Anglia Ruskin University produce a useful guide to the Harvard system of referencing (see below).

In more detail the advice for referencing of Biology, Chemistry and Physics is:



At the end of all pieces of academic writing you need to list all the sources that you have used or referred to. This list of sources used should be under the heading **Bibliography**.

You should also include a bibliography **after each TAQ**.

The object of the assessment is for you to show **your knowledge and understanding** of the subject. You have of course used other people's ideas and theories to help you develop this understanding so you do need to acknowledge their work in a reference list, called a **Bibliography**.

You do not need to quote their ideas and must not reproduce their words. In other words, your sentences should be **written in your own words** and not contain any quotes.



The purpose of the Bibliography is to supply the information needed to allow your tutor to find a source.

Therefore:

1. The convention for assessments in science is to compile a **bibliography**.
2. A good approach when it comes to citing sources for a completed unit assessment in Science is to always compile a bibliography or a list of references **after each TAQ**.
3. Your bibliography should follow the **Harvard system** and Anglia Ruskin University produce a useful guide to the Harvard system of referencing.
4. In text referencing in the body of the assessment is **not required** for science assessments.

There are also websites that will generate a Harvard reference for you. It is a good idea to get into the habit of referencing, as this is a skill which will be required throughout your studies.



Further resources:



[Anglia Ruskin University – January 2015: Guide to the Harvard Style of Referencing](#)



[Anglia Ruskin University - Guide to the Harvard System of Referencing \(online version\)](#)

Guidance and advice is always given on how to plan your studies. Your tutor will also support you with this.

Deadlines

a) If you are completing your course in 12 months:

On a **12-month programme** it is advisable to set your deadline as **two weeks**.

b) If you are completing your course in less than (or more than) 12 months:

Please refer to your Individual Learning Plan (ILP) if your target course completion date is less than (or more than) 12 months in total, to set your own appropriate deadlines. It is your responsibility to keep to your ILP and to return your completed work according to your ILP. For help in completing your course in the time you have allotted for it and to negotiate your deadlines with your tutor, please refer to the table below.

12 months	10 months	8 months	6 months
Just over 1 credit per week (1.15)	Just under 1 ½ credits per week (1.38)	Just under 2 credits per week (1.73)	Just over 3 credits per week (2.31)

You must inform your tutor of your target completion date if you are aiming to complete your course in less or more than 12 months.

c) If you need an extension to a deadline:

If you are unable to meet your deadline you must apply for a **formal extension** to a unit assessment deadline. This must be done on the working day (excluding weekends) that a unit is due to be assessed, at the very latest. To do this, **you must contact your tutor by email requesting a formal extension for a unit assessment, and giving the reasons for the extension.**

d) If you have been unable to request an extension or to meet a deadline:

If you do not ask for an extension because exceptional circumstances (such as serious illness or bereavement) have made it difficult to do so, you must complete and submit an **Extenuating Circumstances form**, which is available to download from the Policies and Procedures page of the DLC website (see below).

If you do not submit an Extenuating Circumstances form, you will only be able to attain a Pass.



Further resources:



[DLC Extenuating Circumstances form](#) (scroll down the page to download the form)