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# CYM Practice Portfolio Assessment Descriptors.

In completing and submitting their portfolios for assessment at different points across their degree programmes, students are required to complete a range of different tasks and activities. These might include Directed Tasks, SWOT analyses, Reflective Journals, Blogs, Vlogs, Self-Assessments, Observations of their Practice, Reports, Evidence Gathering and Artefact Production amongst others. Assessors are asked to make judgements regard the *quality* of students’ work (Refer/Pass/Pass with Merit/Pass with Distinction) that take account of their respective levels (4-7) of study. These Practice Descriptors are therefore to be read in conjunction with Newman University’s Grade Descriptors for Levels 4-7 below. In developing conclusions regarding the quality of students’ work, assessors are encouraged to consider a number of questions:

* Has the student fully completed the task in a way that demonstrates understanding of policy, context, practice and competences?
* Has the student demonstrated academic and practice acumen in ‘questioning’, ‘probing’ and reflecting on different aspects of their practice?
* Has the student challenged ‘taken-for-granted’ assumptions?
* Has the student developed theoretical and theological connections in developing reflection and action within their practice? And, where appropriate, has the student referenced sources accurately?
* Has the student presented their work in ways that are clear, engaging, well-structured and appropriate to an academic learning context?
* Has the student demonstrated deepening understanding and insight regarding practice since the previous assessment point?

Whilst assessors might rightly consider other factors, they are asked to judge the extent to which students achieve these ‘practice outcomes’ at a level appropriate to their point of study.

The table below offers further descriptors which assessors might find useful in framing their professional judgement regarding students’ work. It is recognised that students may be deemed to be crossing assessment boundaries in relation to the descriptors below; however, assessors are asked to exercise judgement regarding where they believe the majority of the student’s work is described in reaching assessment decisions.

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| **Pass with Distinction** | Presented tasks are very well-written, demonstrating clear and insightful conclusions with evidence of independent and sophisticated thinking. The work shows strong analytical skills, critical understanding of competences and a high degree of reflective self-awareness. Evidence is very well presented and set in context. The portfolio demonstrates excellent practice skills and clearly demonstrates the student’s contextualized understanding of how evidence can help develop better practice. The student presents a broad variety of coherent, and well-developed ideas in relation to practice competences with an analytical, sophisticated and critically reflective understanding of their practice. Line Manager/Practice Tutor assessments show demonstrate excellent professional practice in different areas of competence and clearly reflect the core principles of (faith-based) practice. There is strong evidence of implementing this understanding and practice in a range of less predictable and less structured contexts. The strengths of practice evidenced far outweigh the areas for development and the standard of presentation is excellent. |
| **Pass with Merit** | Presented tasks demonstrate clear and accurate conclusions with evidence of some independent thinking. The work shows critical thinking and an understanding of competences, demonstrating some self-awareness. The work shows good evidence of reading. The writing demonstrates an ability to engage in appropriate and relevant theological reflection and the ideas and examples reflect a fairly good range. The evidence is well presented and set in context. It demonstrates competence in the practice skills required and shows clearly the student’s understanding of how evidence can help develop better practice. Line Manager/Practice Tutor assessments show good professional practice in different areas of competence and clearly reflect the core principles of (faith-based) practice. The student clearly identifies and addresses areas for development and growth as a professional. The student presents a variety of coherent and fairly well-developed ideas in competence areas. There is evidence of implementing understanding and practice in a range of less predictable and less structured contexts. The strengths of practice outweigh the areas for development and the work is well presented. |
| **Pass** | The presented tasks/portfolio demonstrate some understanding of the links between theory and practice with limited development in the student’s thinking. The work is largely descriptive with some critical awareness but limited perception.The work show evidence of some appropriate reading. The writing demonstrates some theological awareness, although ideas are not fully developed. The ideas and examples reflect a limited range. About half the evidence presented demonstrates the student’s understanding of how to develop better practice. It demonstrates basic competence in practice skills. Practice assessments show good understanding of professional practice. The student recognizes their practice strengths and has planned adequately to develop identified areas for improvement. The student presents a restricted range of ideas in relation to competences with some development of thinking about their practical application. There is evidence of implementing understanding and practice in a range of predictable and structured contexts. The strengths of practice are in equal measure to the areas for further development. The work is fairly well presented. |
| **Refer** | The presented work identifies some basic ideas and principles in relation to competences, but do not adequately demonstrate the required level of understanding and practice. There is muddled or poor expression and few conclusions are drawn. There is little engagement with theory and theology and little of the presented evidence demonstrates real understanding or skill. Assessments express concerns about understanding and professional practice at this level. The student does not engage well with identifying areas for their own development. The student has insufficient awareness of the ideas and principles within the competence. They do not demonstrate the skills to recognize and implement appropriate attitudes and responses.  Presentation skills are poor. |

## Level 4 Assessment Criteria

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|  | 0-29 Fail | 30-39 Resubmission | 40-49 Third | 50-59 2.2 | 60-69 2.1 | 70-80 First\* | | >80 |
| **Answering the question**  **/assessment brief** | Question misunderstood or not addressed.  Goes off the point regularly and includes irrelevant material | Some misunderstandings and question partially addressed.  Goes off the point occasionally and includes some irrelevant material | Main ideas covered, but often superficially. May have omitted some basic concepts. Generally relevant to the question | Focused on the topic and covers most of the main ideas. Relevant to the question | Addresses the issues and concepts expected to a good depth. It is well focused on the question. | Covers a wide range of related issues to a high level of detail and depth. Consistently addresses the question and is focused | | Addresses the question in great depth and complexity in a sophisticated manner |
| **Demonstration of knowledge & understanding** | Concepts, ideas and theories are not adequately discussed.  They are frequently misunderstood and superficial | There is some understanding of concepts, ideas and theories.  There is some misunderstanding, lack of clarity and depth | The main concepts, ideas and theories are present.  There is minimal depth of understanding. | The main concepts, ideas and theories are discussed with understanding with adequate depth present. | Clear evidence of understanding of even complex ideas with good depth present | An excellent depth of knowledge and understanding of complex  ideas | | An outstanding depth of knowledge and understanding demonstrated at an advanced level |
| **Critical thinking/**  **engagement with the subject/topic**  (this incorporates analysis, comparisons questioning and argument) | The piece is just descriptive. There are only a limited number or no arguments stated which may be incorrect. | This piece has a great deal of description included.  Arguments are confused/ misleading or weak and insufficient. | Description is present but there is an attempt at discussion and developing an argument. | The discussion element of the piece is developing although not in great depth. | The piece discusses different opinions. Arguments developed and alternatives compared. | The piece critically explores the topic in depth using many diverse perspectives | | The piece critically explores the topic in outstanding depth using very many diverse perspectives |
| **Range, appropriateness and amount of literature used.**  **Use of literature to support discussion appropriate to level** | Very little or no evidence of reading or research to support points made | Insufficient evidence of reading and/or research to support points.  Inappropriate sources used. | References used are limited, very simple, are from basic core texts and meet the minimal requirement. Little independent research. Arguments are not always adequately supported. | Evidence of some independent reading from appropriate sources. Attempts at supporting arguments | Evidence of a fairly wide range of reading. Arguments generally effectively supported with respected sources | Evidence of a high level of independent reading taking place. Wide range of literature cited and arguments very well supported | | Evidence of an outstanding level of independent reading taking place. Wide range of literature cited and arguments substantially supported |
| **Application and reflection on practice or experience.**  **Appropriate values demonstrated** | There is no reflection or application on/to practice or experience  No values evident or unacceptable values present. | There is little reflection or application on/to practice or experience  There are only a few values evident or inappropriate values present. | There is some reflection or application on/to practice or experience  There are values evident which are consistent to a student practitioner | There is some good reflection or application on/to practice or experience  The values applied are appropriately discussed by the student practitioner | There is some effective reflection or application on/to practice  or experience backed up with clear examples  The values applied are well discussed by the student practitioner | Excellent reflection or application on/to practice  or experience is evident which has been backed up with clear examples  The values applied are clear and discussed with insight by the student practitioner | | There has been outstanding  reflection or application on/to practice  or experience is evident which has been backed up with explicit  examples  The values applied are clear and critiqued with insight by the student practitioner |
| **Structure of piece, clarity of expression, presentation & use of conventions** | Writing poorly organised, often incoherent. Considerable and wide ranging errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation and in referencing | Some significant problems with organisation, grammar, spelling, punctuation and referencing conventions | Organisation weak, and some errors present, but generally comprehensible.  Some errors in referencing, grammar, spelling and punctuation | Writing generally well organised and in an appropriate style and with clear message. Writing and referencing mostly accurate | Writing effective with own style evident. Organisation logical and clear. Easy to read. Grammar, spelling and referencing accurate | Writing very effective. Clearly organised with excellent links. Excellent use of academic style and conventions. References effectively embedded and used in a variety of ways. | | A sophisticated academic writing style is evident with a clear flow of ideas. There are no errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation and referencing. |

\* work of 85 or above is deemed to be of publishable quality

## Level 5 Assessment Criteria

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|  | 0-29 Fail | 30-39 Resubmission | 40-49 Third  Satisfactory | 50-59 2.2  Good | 60-69 2.1  Very good | >70 First\*  Excellent | >80  Exceptional |
| **Answering the question**  **/assessment brief** | Question misunderstood or not addressed.  Goes off the point regularly and includes irrelevant material | Some misunderstandings and question partially addressed.  Goes off the point occasionally and includes some irrelevant material | Main ideas covered, but some may need more depth. May have omitted some concepts. Generally relevant, but perhaps some drift in focus | Focused on the topic and with a good appreciation of the key concepts relevant to the brief. | Addresses the issues and concepts expected to a very good standard. Is well focused and responding to the brief. | Covers a wide range of issues and concepts and responds well to the assignment brief. | Addresses the question in great depth and complexity in a sophisticated manner with a creative innovative approach |
| **Demonstration of knowledge & understanding** | Concepts, ideas and theories are not adequately discussed.  They are frequently misunderstood and superficial | There is some understanding of concepts, ideas and theories.  There is some misunderstanding, lack of clarity and depth | The main concepts, ideas and theories are present.  There is minimal depth of understanding with no links between ideas. | The main concepts, ideas and theories are discussed in good detail, with some depth and attempts to link ideas together. | Clear evidence of understanding of even complex ideas with good depth where links between ideas are present. | An excellent depth of knowledge and understanding of complex  concepts and explaining links between ideas | An outstanding depth of knowledge and understanding , explaining links between ideas, demonstrated at an advanced level |
| **Critical thinking/**  **engagement with the subject/topic**    **(this incorporates analysis, comparisons questioning and argument)** | The piece is just descriptive. There are only a limited number or no arguments stated which may be incorrect. | This piece has a great deal of description included.  Arguments are confused/ misleading or weak and insufficient. | Explanations, discussion and arguments are present.  Arguments maybe  simplistic/inconsistent. | Explanations, discussion and arguments are clear.  There is some evidence of comparison and a  questioning approach is demonstrated | There is good evidence of critical appraisal of the material which results in an appropriate conclusion. | The piece critically explores the topic in depth using many diverse perspectives. The conclusion is well substantiated. | The piece critically appraises the topic in outstanding depth using very many diverse perspectives. There is a well-balanced argument culminating in a rational conclusion |
| **Range, appropriateness and amount of literature used.**  **Use of literature to support discussion appropriate to level** | Very little or no evidence of reading or research to support points made | Insufficient evidence of reading and/or research to support points.  Inappropriate sources used. | References used mostly from recommended texts. Little independent research but may include journals.  Arguments not always well supported | Evidence of some independent reading which  includes a few journals.  Arguments generally supported, but more evidence needed | Evidence of a wide range of independent reading which  includes a good number of journals. Arguments effectively supported with respected sources | Evidence of a high level of independent reading which includes numerous  journals. Arguments are very well supported | Evidence of an outstanding level of independent reading taking place with a vast array of quality journals cited. Arguments substantially supported |
| **Application and reflection on practice or experience.**  **Appropriate values demonstrated** | There is no reflection or application on/to practice or experience  No values evident or unacceptable values present. | There is little reflection or application on/to practice or experience  There are only a few values evident or inappropriate values present. | There is some reflection or application on/to practice or experience.  The implications of values linked to practice are appreciated | There is some good reflection or application on/to practice or experience.  Reflective analysis is developing.  Associated ethical dilemmas and values are discussed and are explored. | There is some effective reflection or application on/to practice or experience.  Reflective analyse is evident through explicit links from experience to theory to practice.  Complex ethical dilemmas and values are discussed and are explored. | Excellent reflection or application on/to practice or experience.  Reflective analyse is well developed through explicit links from experience to theory to practice.  Complex ethical dilemmas and values are critically discussed and explored. | Outstanding reflection or application on/to practice or experience.  Reflective analyse is highly developed through explicit links from experience to theory to practice.  Complex ethical dilemmas and values are critically explored in great depth. |
| **Structure of piece, clarity of expression, presentation & use of conventions** | Writing poorly organised, often incoherent. Considerable and wide ranging errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation and in referencing | Some significant problems with organisation, grammar, spelling, punctuation and referencing conventions | Organisation weak, and some errors present, but generally comprehensible.  Some errors in referencing, grammar, spelling and punctuation | Writing generally well organised and in an appropriate style and with clear message. Writing and referencing mostly accurate | Writing effective with own style evident. Organisation logical and clear. Easy to read. Grammar, spelling and referencing accurate | Writing very effective. Clearly organised with excellent links. Excellent use of academic style and conventions. References effectively embedded and used in a variety of ways. | A sophisticated academic writing style is evident with a clear flow of ideas. There are no errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation and referencing. |

## Level 6 Assessment Criteria

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|  | 0-29 Fail | 30-39 Resubmission | 40-49 Third  Satisfactory | 50-59 2.2  Good | 60-69 2.1  Very good | >70 First\*  Excellent | >80  Exceptional |
| **Answering the question**  **/assessment brief** | Question misunderstood or not addressed.  Goes off the point regularly and includes irrelevant material | Some misunderstandings and question partially addressed.  Goes off the point occasionally and includes some irrelevant material | Main ideas covered, but some may need more depth. May have omitted some concepts. Generally relevant, but perhaps some drift in focus | Focused on the topic and with a good appreciation of the key concepts relevant to the brief. | Addresses the issues and concepts expected to a very good standard. Is well focused and responding to the brief. | Covers a wide range of issues and concepts and responds fully to the entire assignment brief. | Addresses the question in great depth and complexity in a sophisticated manner with a creative innovative approach |
| **Demonstration of knowledge & understanding** | Concepts, ideas and theories are not adequately discussed.  They are frequently misunderstood and superficial | There is some understanding of concepts, ideas and theories.  There is some misunderstanding, lack of clarity and depth | The main concepts, ideas and theories are present.  There is minimal depth of understanding with no links between ideas. | The main concepts, ideas and theories are discussed in good detail, with some depth and attempts to link ideas together. | Clear evidence of understanding of even complex ideas with good depth where links between ideas are present. | An excellent depth of knowledge and understanding of complex  concepts and explaining links between ideas | An outstanding depth of knowledge and understanding , explaining multiple links between different ideas, demonstrated succinctly at an advanced level |
| **Critical thinking/**  **engagement with the subject/topic**  (this incorporates analysis, comparisons questioning and argument) | The piece is just descriptive. There are only a limited number or no arguments stated which may be incorrect. | This piece has a great deal of description included.  Arguments are confused/ misleading or weak and insufficient. | There is limited evidence of critical analysis demonstrated. | There is some evidence of critical analysis demonstrated. | There is good evidence of critical appraisal of the material which results in an appropriate conclusion. | The piece critically explores the topic in depth using diverse perspectives demonstrating true insight. The conclusion is well substantiated. | The piece critically appraises the topic in outstanding depth using diverse perspectives. There is a well-balanced argument culminating in a rational conclusion, creating unique insights into the topic. |
| **Range, appropriateness and amount of literature used.**  **Use of literature to support discussion appropriate to level** | Very little or no evidence of reading or research to support points made | Insufficient evidence of reading and/or research to support points.  Inappropriate sources used. | References used mostly from recommended texts. Little independent research but may include journals.  Arguments not always well supported | Evidence of some independent reading which  includes a few journals.  Arguments generally supported, but more evidence needed | Evidence of a wide range of independent reading which  includes a good number of journals. Arguments effectively supported with respected sources | Evidence of a high level of independent reading which includes numerous  journals. Arguments are very well supported | Evidence of an outstanding level of independent reading taking place with a vast array of quality journals cited. Arguments substantially supported |
| **Application and reflection on practice or experience.**  **Appropriate values demonstrated** | There is no reflection or application on/to practice or experience  No values evident or unacceptable values present. | There is little reflection or application on/to practice or experience  There are only a few values evident or inappropriate values present. | There is some reflection or application on/to practice or experience.  The implications of values linked to practice are appreciated | There is some good reflection or application on/to practice or experience.  Reflective analysis is developing.  Associated ethical dilemmas and values are discussed and are explored. | There is some effective reflection or application on/to practice or experience.  Reflective analyse is evident through explicit links from experience to theory to practice.  Complex ethical dilemmas and values are discussed and are explored. | Excellent reflection or application on/to practice or experience.  Reflective analyse is well developed through explicit links from experience to theory to practice.  Complex ethical dilemmas and values are critically discussed and explored. | Outstanding, rich reflection or application on/to practice or experience.  Reflective analyse is highly developed through explicit links from experience to theory to practice.  Reflexivity is demonstrated with new ideas constructed.  Complex ethical dilemmas and values are critically explored in great depth with the status quo being constructively questioned. |
| **Structure of piece, clarity of expression, presentation & use of conventions** | Writing poorly organised, often incoherent. Considerable and wide ranging errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation and in referencing | Some significant problems with organisation, grammar, spelling, punctuation and referencing conventions | Organisation weak, and some errors present, but generally comprehensible.  Some errors in referencing, grammar, spelling and punctuation | Writing generally well organised and in an appropriate style and with clear message. Writing and referencing mostly accurate | Writing effective with own style evident. Organisation logical and clear. Easy to read. Grammar, spelling and referencing accurate | Writing very effective. Clearly organised with excellent links. Excellent use of academic style and conventions. References effectively embedded and used in a variety of ways. | A sophisticated academic writing style is evident with a clear flow of ideas. There are no errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation and referencing. |

## Level 7 Assessment Criteria

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|  | ***Fail/Refer***  ***0 – 49%*** | ***Pass*** ***50 – 59%*** | ***Merit*** ***60 – 69%*** | ***Distinction*** ***70+%*** |
| **Quality of the Work**  (Communication) | Work that fails to engage the reader due to poor grammar, lack of an overall structure, or inappropriate language.  Irrelevant material detracts from the overall assignment. | A coherent and well-presented piece of work that guides the reader through the whole paper in a logical and readable way.  The contents are relevant to the remit of the assignment. | A strong and well-structured assignment that engages the reader; has informative comments which are developed as the assignment progresses.  The majority of the material introduced is valid and is well blended into the overall structure of the work. | A convincing and well-structured assignment that totally engages the reader. Has concise and informative preliminary comments which are well developed as the assignment progresses.  All the material introduced is valid and is well blended into the overall structure of the work. |
| **Knowledge base**  (Knowledge and Understanding) | Work that shows only a superficial knowledge base and/or a failure to recognise current thinking of the topic.  The literature presented is not current and key references are omitted. | The assignment demonstrates knowledge in relation to the topic.  Complex work and concepts at the leading edge of knowledge within the field are presented.  Key texts are recognised and utilised. | The assignment demonstrates a sound knowledge base in relation to both the breadth and depth of the topic.  Complex work and concepts at the leading edge of knowledge within the field are presented.  Key texts are recognised and utilised. | The assignment recognises the current limits of the knowledge base and issues of debate within the literature. Theoretical and complex work of this nature is well integrated with personal, applied knowledge.  Key texts are used effectively. |
| **Perception**  (Reflection) | The assignment does not convey a sense of understanding about the major theoretical and applied issues relevant to the topic. | Understanding of relevant issues is shown and demonstrated in the writing | Clear understanding of relevant issues is shown and this is captured in writing in a skilful and coherent manner. | Demonstrates a full understanding of multiple facets of current thinking and is able to convey this, with clarity, in the narrative.  Can isolate the issues of importance. |
| **Analysis** | Unable to dissect the ideas and theories of others in a rational way.  Work tends to simply describe these and fails to deal with controversial and/or debatable viewpoints. | The assignment presents a range of issues and recognises the similarities and contradictions existing between different viewpoints and theoretical models. | The assignment shows an ability to enquire into a range of complex issues and to recognise the similarities and contradictions existing between different viewpoints and theoretical models. | The assignment contains a clear authoritative critique across the full range of opinion and theories relevant to the topic.  New and novel comment on the work of others is convincingly introduced. |
| **Synthesis**  (Application) | The assignment does not present any fresh ideas.  The reader remains unconvinced of the category for the ideas presented. | Judgement is shown in developing concepts.  Evidence is given for fresh ways of approaching problems and answering fundamental questions within the topic. | Creativity and sound judgement is shown in developing new concepts.  Convincing evidence is given for fresh ways of approaching problems and answering fundamental questions within the topic. | New ideas are well developed with cogent evidence presented in clear and creative way.  The student shows confidence in his/her ability and indicates the capacity to think autonomously in complex and demanding situations. |
| **Judgement**  (Learning) | An inability to make sound assessments.  The reader has a sense of not knowing what the assignment was trying to say. | The assignment assessed the work of others and self and there is a clear summary present. | The assignment contains evidence that the work of others and self can be accurately, objectively and sensitively assessed.  A concise and explicit summary is present. | The assignment contains sound and convincing evaluative comment on all aspects of the topic, both theoretical and methodological. The conclusions drawn are precise reflections of prior expositions. |