

406/2

Original:
1989

Revised:
2001



HUMAN BIOLOGY

(Year 12 E406)

Grade-Related Descriptors

GRADE-RELATED DESCRIPTORS

THE GRADING PROCESS

The current model for assigning grades at the conclusion of a subject is “standards-referenced”. In such a system each student’s performance in a subject is considered with reference to a set of predetermined standards at each grade level. The “predetermined standards” are defined through the use of grade-related descriptors.

Grade-related descriptors aim to capture and describe (as explicitly as possible and in relatively broad terms) those behaviours expected to be typically displayed by students at each grade level for each subject. For teachers they are a *point of reference* against which they must match their professional judgment in determining students’ final grades.

FEATURES OF GRADE-RELATED DESCRIPTORS

As a general principle, grade-related descriptors should:

- summarise the *general characteristics* of student performance at each level of achievement
- express, in *positive terms*, what a student knows, understands and is able to do
- *clearly define* on a continuum of performance the level of proficiency for *all grades* (A, B, C, D and E)
- be readily *usable* by teachers in making judgments about final grades to be assigned
- provide a *‘target’* for students in their efforts to obtain various grades
- be developed with reference to student work samples as *source material* at each grade level
- relate directly to the content of the course

USING GRADE-RELATED DESCRIPTORS

In planning the assessment program and developing each component task teachers will need to ensure that:

- the nature of each task takes account of the ways that students typically develop over the period of studying the subject
- the rubric for numerical assessment (marking key) for each task is designed with reference to the grade-related descriptors.
- each task that counts towards the awarding of a grade provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate achievement across the full range of performance described in the relevant section/objective of the grade-related descriptors.

The *critical use* of grade-related descriptors is to assist teachers in making comparable judgments about the grades to be awarded at the conclusion of a subject. They do not stand alone. They are *one of a number* of mechanisms available to teachers in deciding summative assessments to be reported to Curriculum Council. They are best used as a point of reference in determining cut-offs after the evaluation of the assessment data collected.

When applying grade-related descriptors, it is also necessary to note that an A student, for example, need not achieve an ‘A’ on all objectives. Teachers will develop a *profile* of achievement of their students across different aspects of the subject and must themselves, with reference to exemplars and moderation procedures, make the *final judgment* of the grade achieved.

GRADE-RELATED DESCRIPTORS: YEAR 12 HUMAN BIOLOGY

An 'A' student will:

Knowledge (Weighting 60-70%)

1. Demonstrate a sound knowledge of a wide range of facts and principles.
2. Use a detailed knowledge of biological principles and processes in a variety of situations and apply this to unfamiliar situations.
3. Demonstrate a full understanding and give a full explanation of inter-relationships between different body structures and functions.

Science Process Skills (Weighting 20-30%)

1. Construct an hypothesis, design a controlled experiment to test the hypothesis, criticise the design and suggest improvements.
2. Observe and record relevant data, make accurate measurements using appropriate units and display these in a variety of formats.
3. Analyse biological information to produce detailed inferences and interpretations.
4. Interpret and reach several logical conclusions from complex data.
5. Accurately communicate complex information to avoid misunderstanding both orally and in written format using various modes of presentation such as, graphs, tables, diagrams etc.

Sensori-motor Skills (Weighting 5-10%)

1. Conduct a controlled experiment in a sound, safe, reliable way using equipment carefully and effectively.

A 'B' student will:

Knowledge (Weighting 60-70%)

1. Demonstrate a sound knowledge of basic facts and principles.
2. Use knowledge of biological principles and processes in a variety of situations and apply this to unfamiliar situations.
3. Understand and give detailed explanations of inter-relationships between different body structures and functions.

Science Process Skills (Weighting 20-30%)

1. Construct an hypothesis, design a controlled experiment to test the hypothesis and offer some criticism of the experimental design.
2. Observe and record data, make accurate measurements using appropriate units and display these in an appropriate format.
3. Analyse biological information to produce inferences and interpretations.
4. Interpret and reach logical conclusions from complex data.
5. Accurately communicate information to avoid misunderstanding both orally and in written form using various modes of presentation.

Sensori-motor Skills (Weighting 5-10%)

1. Conduct a controlled experiment in a safe, reliable way using equipment carefully.

A 'C' student will:

Knowledge (Weighting 60-70%)

1. Easily recall basic facts and principles.
2. Use knowledge of biological principles and processes in a variety of situations.
3. Understand and give simple explanations of inter-relationships between different bodily structures and functions.

Science Process Skills (Weighting 20-30%)

1. Construct an hypothesis and design an experiment controlling most variables.
2. Make accurate and detailed observations and record these in an appropriate format.
3. Draw simple inferences and make basic interpretations from these.
4. Interpret and reach conclusions from data.
5. Accurately communicate information to avoid misunderstanding.

Sensori-motor Skills (Weighting 5-10%)

1. Conduct an experiment in a safe and reliable way, controlling most variables

A 'D' student will:

Knowledge (Weighting 60-70%)

1. Recall limited facts and principles.
2. Use knowledge of biological principles and processes in familiar situations.
3. Demonstrate limited understanding of inter-relationships between bodily structures and functions.

Science Process Skills (Weighting 20-30%)

1. Construct an hypothesis in a simple situation and design a simple experiment.
2. Make observations and record these in simple formats.
3. Draw simple inferences from biological information.
4. Interpret and reach some conclusions from simple data.
5. Communicate simple information to avoid misunderstanding.

Sensori-motor Skills (Weighting 5-10%)

1. Conduct a simple experiment in a safe and reliable way.

An 'E' student will:

Knowledge (Weighting 60-70%)

1. Recall limited facts.
2. Use knowledge of biological processes in familiar situations.
3. Demonstrate limited understanding of different body structures and functions.

Science Process Skills (Weighting 20-30%)

1. Make a simple prediction and design a simple experiment.
2. Make and record simple observations.
3. Identify patterns within biological information.
4. Describe trends seen in simple data.
5. Communicate only the simplest of information.

Sensori-motor Skills (Weighting 5-10%)

1. Conduct a simple experiment safely.