

INSTRUCTIONAL WORDS

Instruction Word	What it Means	Example Question
Account for	Give reasons for something (explain causes or factors).	Account for the decline in newspaper circulation in Australia since 2010.
Analyse	Focus on the 'how' and 'why'; break the topic into parts and examine relationships—don't just describe or summarise.	Analyse how supply-chain disruptions affected small retailers during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Compare	Identify similarities and differences between two or more items.	Compare Keynesian and Monetarist approaches to managing inflation.
Contrast	Emphasise differences between two or more items.	Contrast qualitative and quantitative methods in social research.
Criticise	Assess the merit of something by considering both good points and bad points; give the results of your analysis.	Criticise the use of standardised testing as a measure of school performance.
Define	State the precise meaning and key details; examples may be useful.	Define 'ecosystem services' with reference to coastal environments.
Describe	Recall or provide detailed information about characteristics, features, or processes.	Describe the stages of cellular respiration in eukaryotic cells.
Discuss	Present a point of view after considering both sides; support with arguments and evidence.	Discuss whether social media improves or undermines democratic participation.
Evaluate	Consider strengths and weaknesses and make a judgement backed by evidence.	Evaluate the effectiveness of carbon pricing in reducing emissions in Australia.
Explain	Clarify reasons, causes, and/or processes; show how and why something occurs.	Explain how the principle of opportunity cost applies to household budgeting.
Illustrate	Use examples (or diagrams/figures) to demonstrate a point.	Illustrate the concept of network externalities using contemporary tech platforms.

Interpret	Express the meaning in your own words; explain significance (examples may be useful).	Interpret the trends shown in Figure 2 and comment on their implications for workforce planning.
List	Write an itemised series, possibly in point form, without elaboration.	List three ethical issues associated with AI in healthcare.
Outline	Provide the main points and structure; omit minor details.	Outline the key arguments for universal basic income.
Prove	Provide factual evidence, examples, or logical reasons that demonstrate validity.	Prove, using relevant case law, that duty of care can exist without a formal contract.
Relate	Tell the story in clear sequence, or show how things are connected/similar to each other.	Relate population growth trends to housing affordability in major cities.
Review	Examine a subject critically, analysing and commenting on its main points.	Review recent literature on micro-credentialling in higher education.
State	Present the main points briefly in a clear sequence.	State the assumptions underlying the Solow growth model.
Summarise	Give the main points or facts in condensed form.	Summarise the key findings of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.
Support	Provide evidence, reasoning and examples to back up your claim or argument	Develop an argument on why this policy is needed. Support your argument with relevant evidence.
To what extent	Consider both sides, make a judgement, and defend it (similar to evaluate/discuss).	To what extent does climate litigation drive corporate decarbonisation?
Trace	Relate the progress, development, or history of a subject in chronological order.	Trace the evolution of privacy law in Australia from 1988 to the present.