

## Assessment Brief and Feedback Form

**Module title:** Epidemiology

**Assessment Point:** First assessment point

**Assessment task:** Essay

**Word count limit:** 2500

**Submission deadline:** Please consult the VLE.

**Submission procedure:** Please submit via the submission link on the VLE.

### Submission Record

#### Extenuating circumstances

Ensure you are familiar with the process for submitting a claim for extenuating circumstances. If you experience any extenuating circumstances that may have affected your ability to attempt or submit the present assignment, please follow the relevant instructions on the VLE in order to submit your claim for extenuating circumstance prior to your submission deadline.

#### Academic misconduct including plagiarism

Ensure that you are familiar with the relevant regulations regarding academic misconduct. By submitting the present assignment, you declare that it is your own work and that the material and sources of information used, including internet sources, have been fully identified and properly acknowledged. In addition, you confirm that the presented work has not been submitted for any other assessment. You also acknowledge that the faculty reserves the right to investigate allegations of plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct which, if proven and dependent on the severity level of the offence, will result in a penalty that may affect your progress. **Please note that any engagement with primary research activities, including data collection is strictly not allowed for any assignment on this module as well as in any other assignment on the current MSc programme modules.**

#### Late submissions

Note that all work handed in up to 3 working days after the submission deadline will be accepted and marked but the mark will be capped at 50% (if the work passes) unless you have been granted an extension to the submission deadline or a deferral in accordance with the Extenuating Circumstances Policy. Work submitted more than 3 working days after the submission deadline without a granted extension to the submission deadline or a deferral in accordance with the Extenuating Circumstances Policy will not be accepted and will be recorded as 0%.

**By submitting your work, you acknowledge that you have read and agree with the above statements.**

## **General Guidance**

Your assignment should be word processed (handwritten assignments are not accepted), using time new roman size 12 font, double spaced, with numbered pages and your student number printed as a footer on every page.

The word limits stated for this assignment excludes the reference list at the end of the assignment but includes all text in the main body of the assignment (including direct quotations, in-text citations, footnotes, tables, diagrams and graphs).

Please be aware that exceeding the word count limit will affect the academic judgement of the piece of work and may result in the award of a lower mark.

Appendices are not considered a supplement, and thus, will not be assessed as part of the content of the assignment. As such, they will not contribute to the grade awarded, however it may be appropriate to use an Appendices section for any material which is a useful reference for the reader. Please note that appendices are not included in the word count.

The majority of references should come from primary sources (e.g., journal articles, conference papers, reports, etc.) although you can also utilise area specific textbooks. You must ensure that you use the University of Suffolk's Harvard style of referencing.

Please indicate the word count length at the end of your assignment.

## **Marking and assessment**

This assignment will be marked out of 100%

This assignment contributes 50% of the total module marks.

### **Learning outcome assessed in this assessment**

2. Critically appraise epidemiological research designs, demonstrating an understanding of the strengths and limitations of the different methods, interpretations, and applications.

### **Assessment Guidelines**

Identify a communicable or non-communicable disease, or health condition of interest. Provide a critical overview of this disease or condition, including a justification of your choice in relation to its importance to public health. The essay should include a concise, critical evaluation of the existing body of evidence, underpinned by epidemiological

data and analysis that identify causation/association, risk factors, at-risk populations and trends.

Your work should include and cover the following sections/aspects and content (as shown and stated in the table below). The specific percentage marks allocated to each section/aspect of your work is stated below. Please also note that the Level 7 marking criteria (located towards the end of this assessment brief) will also be used to reflect this overall grade. Please remember that achievement and demonstration of learning outcome 2 is being assessed in this assessment.

<b>Section/aspect</b>	<b>Content to cover</b>	<b>Marks available</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	An introduction to the assignment that establishes the importance of the chosen communicable or non-communicable disease, or health condition of interest. Relevant information should aim to provide a critical overview of the specific disease or health condition considered, and examine its importance to public health in order to justify the choice made.	<b>15 Marks</b>
<b>Discussion</b>	Examination, taking a critical evaluation approach, of the relevant epidemiological evidence focused on the specific disease or health condition chosen (from published epidemiological studies) including identification of strengths and limitations of specific aspects of these studies (suggestions below) which are most relevant, including methods used and interpretation of results in studies, taking into consideration that it may be the case in some instances that a study fails to report some details on methodology that you wish to evaluate (e.g. details for adequate bias control measures). This examination, taking a critical evaluation approach, therefore also needs to be underpinned by epidemiological data and analysis from these studies in order to identify risk factors for acquiring the specific disease or health condition, highlight relevant trends and at-risk populations and demonstrate an understanding of	<b>40 Marks</b>

	<p>relevant measures of association and principles of causation.</p> <p>In addressing specific aspects of the studies in relation to their strengths and limitations, you may consider the most relevant of the suggested specific aspects below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Study objectives and hypothesis (the main purpose of the study, including research question, a supportive hypothesis and objective(s))</li> <li>ii) Study design (its appropriateness in reference to the research question and objective(s))</li> <li>iii) Study population (recruitment including inclusion and exclusion criteria)</li> <li>iv) Exposure and outcome &amp; their measurement (for example, for cohort studies, were outcomes defined at the start of the study; for case-control studies, did the exposure precede the outcome, etc.)</li> <li>v) Internal validity (likelihood that the results are affected by selection bias, observation/measurement bias, confounding factors, in case of an intervention whether randomization was done</li> </ul>	
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	<p>correctly &amp; the assessments of outcomes were blinded, etc.)</p> <p>vi) Data analysis and results (appropriateness of the statistical methods used and interpretation of the results)</p> <p>vii) External validity (generalizability of the study findings)</p>	
<b>Implications</b>	Consider the relevant epidemiological evidence (critically) examined from published epidemiological studies in the preceding sections of the assignment, and build up on it by proposing possible implications or applications for epidemiological research, public health practice or policy, ensuring that you identify strengths and limitations of these implications/applications.	<b>20 Marks</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	Effective summary of key points.	<b>10 Marks</b>
<b>Presentation and Referencing</b>	High quality presentation that conforms to principles of academic writing and contains minimal errors in sentence construction, grammar and punctuation. The assignment followed appropriate academic conventions regarding in-text citations and referencing.	<b>15 Marks</b>

## Marking Criteria

<b>Level 7</b>		<b>Assessment category</b>				
		<b>Coherent and detailed knowledge and understanding of the subject area, at least some of which is informed by the latest research and/or advanced scholarship within the discipline</b>	<b>Cognitive and intellectual skills</b>	<b>Application of theory to practice (for courses with a professional practice element)</b>  <b><u>THIS ASSESSMENT CATEGORY IS NOT APPLICABLE</u></b>	<b>Reading and referencing</b>	<b>Presentation, style and structure</b> Work that significantly exceeds the specified word limit may be penalized
<b>Pass mark, demonstrating achievement of all associated learning outcomes</b>	<b>90%-100%</b>	Exemplary systematic, theoretical and conceptual understanding of knowledge at or informed by the forefront of the field of study, demonstrating highly sophisticated grasp of the subject matter	Exceptional critical evaluation and awareness of current problems, and contemporary issues and debates that draws on new insights or perspectives within the field. Work demonstrates exemplary ability to synthesise current research and advanced scholarship in an original, creative and innovative manner.	Sophisticated, systematic and innovative application of knowledge and theory to professional practice within the discipline. Flawless use of systematically selected literature to justify and express reasoned judgements and decisions in relation to complex issues and problems at a professional level	A very high level of critical engagement across a systematic and fully appropriate range of relevant and current academic, research, policy- and practice-related literature demonstrating deep and selective reading and initiative along with highly consistent accurate referencing	Exemplary presentation of work that is fluent and flawless throughout.
	<b>80%-89%</b>	Excellent systematic, theoretical and conceptual understanding of knowledge at or informed by the forefront of the field of study and showing sophisticated depth, breadth, detail and clarity	Sophisticated critical evaluation and awareness of current problems, and contemporary issues and debates that draws on new insights or perspectives within the field. Work demonstrates a very high level of originality and creativity in the student's approaches to synthesising current research and advanced scholarship within the subject area	An excellent level of originality and innovation in the application of knowledge and theory to professional practice within the discipline. Demonstration of excellent critical awareness and evaluation and the ability to effectively critique and employ current academic literature in making reasoned judgements and decisions in relation to complex issues and problems at a professional level	A very high level of critical engagement across an extensive range of relevant and current academic, research, policy- and practice-related literature demonstrating deep and appropriate reading and initiative along with highly consistent accurate referencing	Outstanding presentation of work that is logically and coherently structured with a strong or original central argument(s), conveyed with a high level of fluency and eloquently communicates compelling, coherent conclusions to specialist and non-specialist audiences

<b>Level 7</b>	<b>Coherent and detailed knowledge and understanding</b>	<b>Cognitive and intellectual skills</b>	<b>Application of theory to practice</b>  <b><u>THIS ASSESSMENT CATEGORY IS NOT APPLICABLE</u></b>	<b>Reading and referencing</b>	<b>Presentation, style and structure</b>
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<b>Pass mark, demonstrating achievement of all associated learning outcomes</b>	<b>70% – 79%</b>	A high level of systematic, theoretical and conceptual understanding of knowledge at or informed by the forefront of the field of study and showing considerable depth, breadth, detail and clarity	A high level of critical evaluation and awareness of current problems, and contemporary issues and debates that draws on new insights or perspectives within the field. Work demonstrates a significant level of originality and creativity in synthesising current research and advanced scholarship within the subject area	A high level of originality and innovation in the application of knowledge and theory to professional practice within the discipline. Demonstration of excellent critical awareness and evaluation and the ability to select and use academic literature in making reasoned judgements and decisions in relation to complex issues and problems at a professional level	A high level of critical engagement across an extensive range of relevant and current literature demonstrating wide and appropriate reading and initiative along with highly consistent accurate referencing	Excellent presentation of work that is logically and coherently structured with a strong or original central argument(s), conveyed with a high level of clarity of expression and which clearly communicates valid, coherent conclusions to specialist and non-specialist audiences
	<b>60% – 69%</b>	An effective, systematic, theoretical and conceptual understanding of knowledge mostly at or informed by the forefront of the field of study and showing good depth, breadth, detail and clarity	An effective level of critical evaluation and awareness of current problems and contemporary issues and debates that draws on new insights or perspectives within the field. Work demonstrates some effective originality and creativity in synthesising current research and scholarship within the subject area	A good level of originality and innovation in the application of knowledge and theory to professional practice. Demonstration of consistently good critical awareness and evaluation and reasonable ability to use the academic literature in making reasoned judgements and decisions in relation to complex issues and problems at a professional level	A good level of critical engagement across a good range of relevant and current academic, research, policy- and practice-related literature demonstrating appropriate reading and some initiative along with consistent accurate referencing	High quality presentation of work that is largely logically and coherently structured with a generally strong central argument conveyed with a clarity of expression and which communicates clear conclusions to specialist and non-specialist audiences
	<b>50% – 59%</b>	A sufficient but limited level of systematic, theoretical and conceptual understanding of knowledge at times at or informed by the forefront of the field of study but showing adequate depth, breadth, detail and clarity	A sufficient but limited level of critical evaluation and awareness of current problems and contemporary issues and debates, with some reference to new insights or perspectives within the field. Limited evidence of originality and creativity in synthesising current research and scholarship within the subject area	A reasonable but limited level of originality and innovation in the application of knowledge and theory to professional practice within the discipline. Demonstration of some good critical awareness and evaluation and some ability to use the academic literature in developing judgements and decisions in relation to complex issues and problems at a professional level	Sufficient critical engagement with a reasonable range of relevant and current academic, research, policy- and practice-related literature demonstrating mainly appropriate reading but limited initiative and/or some minor inconsistencies and inaccuracies in referencing	Generally good presentation of work that is sufficiently logical and coherent in structure with a discernible central argument. May present limited originality and lack some clarity of expression, but an identifiable conclusion reasonably communicated to specialist and non-specialist audiences

<b>Level 7</b>		<b>Coherent and detailed knowledge and understanding</b>	<b>Cognitive and intellectual skills</b>	<b>Application of theory to practice</b>	<b>Reading and referencing</b>	<b>Presentation, style and structure</b>
<b>Marginal fail</b>	<b>45% – 49%</b>	Knowledge and understanding of the subject matter is incomplete, uninformed or limited in its scholarship within the field of study, or lacking sufficient depth, breadth, detail or clarity	Critical evaluation is limited or lacks awareness of current problems and contemporary issues and debates. Insufficient reference made to new insights or perspectives within the field, or insufficient evidence of originality and creativity in synthesising current	<b><u>THIS ASSESSMENT CATEGORY IS NOT APPLICABLE</u></b>	Insufficient critical engagement with relevant and current academic, research, policy- and practice-related literature. Lack of evidence of wider reading or a lack of initiative or inconsistent and inaccurate referencing	Presentation of work shows insufficient organisation or central argument, and is lacking in logical and coherent structure. Poor clarity of expression weakly communicating to specialist or non-specialist audiences

			research and scholarship within the subject area	issues and problems at a professional level		
<b>Fail</b>	<b>30% – 44%</b>	Limited knowledge and understanding of the subject matter shown. Work is not sufficiently informed by scholarship within the field of study and is insufficient in depth, breadth, detail or clarity	Insufficient evidence of critical evaluation and awareness of current problems and contemporary issues and debates. Insufficient reference to new insights or perspectives within the field and lacking in originality and creativity in synthesising current research and scholarship within the subject area	Little evidence of originality and innovation and a significant lack of application of knowledge and theory to professional practice demonstrating little critical awareness and evaluation and a lack of ability to use the academic literature to make judgements and decisions in relation to complex issues and problems at a professional level	Little evidence of critical engagement with relevant and current literature. Poor use of appropriate sources and/or inconsistent and inaccurate referencing	Often poorly presented work that is disorganised, has an ill-formed central argument, and lacks a logical and coherent structure. A lack of clarity of expression or fails to communicate effective conclusions to specialist or non-specialist audiences
	<b>&lt; 30%</b>	Inadequate and limited knowledge and understanding of the subject matter shown. Work is not informed by scholarship within the field of study and significantly lacks depth, breadth, detail or clarity	Descriptive work with little or no evidence of critical evaluation and awareness of current problems and contemporary issues and debates. No evidence of awareness of new insights or perspectives within the field. Little or no synthesis of current research and scholarship within the subject area	No evidence of originality and innovation and little to no application of knowledge and theory to professional practice. Demonstrates no critical awareness and evaluation and a distinct lack of ability to use the academic literature in an effective manner	No evidence of critical engagement with relevant and current literature. Lack of use of appropriate sources and inconsistent and inaccurate referencing	Poorly presented and disorganised work that lacks a logical and coherent structure, lacks a well-formed central argument and shows a significant lack of clarity of expression with very weak or irrelevant conclusions, that may be incoherent to specialist or non-specialist audiences



**Feedback form**

**Student Number:**

<b>Section/aspect</b>	<b>Tutor Feedback</b>	<b>Mark</b>
<i>Introduction</i>		/15
<i>Discussion</i>		/40
<i>Implications</i>		/20
<i>Conclusion</i>		/10
<i>Presentation and Referencing</i>		/15
<i>Additional/overall comments</i>		

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Mark:</b>	<b>Marker's name and signature:</b>
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Provisional mark subject to External Examiner and Assessment Board approval.