

BMAT Section 3 – marking criteria

The essays will be marked holistically, and awarded a single score that reflects the overall quality of the essay. In arriving at the score, markers will be instructed to consider:

- Has the candidate addressed the question in the way demanded?
i.e. have they:
 - rephrased the proposition or explained its implications;
 - set out reasonable or plausible counter-propositions;
 - proposed reasonable ways of assessing the competing merits of the propositions or resolved their conflict logically?
- Have they organised their thoughts clearly?
- Have they expressed themselves clearly using concise, compelling and correct English?
- Have they used their general knowledge and opinions appropriately?

Scores are awarded on the three-multiple scale (0, 3, 6, 9, 12, 15) used by Oxford. A description of the qualities of essays that would attract each of these scores is given overleaf.

Each essay is double marked. If the two marks are the same, or occupy adjacent positions on the scale, the average of the two marks is reported. If there is a larger discrepancy in the marks, the essays are marked for a third time, and the final mark awarded checked by a senior member of Cambridge Assessment staff.

Scoring scale

Score 0

An irrelevant, trivial or missing answer

Score 3

An answer that has some bearing on the question and is written, more or less, in comprehensible English but which does not address the question in the way demanded, is incoherent or unfocussed, or uses English in a confusing or grossly incorrect way.

Score 6

An answer that addresses most of the components of the question and is arranged in a reasonably logical way. The English may be rather weak or there may be significant elements of confusion in the argument. The candidate may misconstrue certain important aspects of the main proposition or its implication or may provide an unconvincing or weak counter proposition

Score 9

A reasonably well-argued answer that addresses ALL aspects of the question, making reasonable use of the material provided and generating a reasonable counter-proposition or argument. The use of English is reasonably clear and the argument relatively rational. There may be some weakness in the effectiveness of the English, the force of the argument or the coherence of the ideas, or some aspect of the argument may have been overlooked.

Score 12

A good answer with few of the weaknesses allowed for score 9 answers

Score 15

An excellent answer with compelling use of English, clear construction, unimpeachable logic and so on.