

Genetics: Science and Society Assessment Rubric 2017/18

See IATL Handbook online for details of submission procedures and conventions for assessments.

In all cases, the university's 20-point mark scheme will broadly apply.

You are required to meet with your tutor at least once by the end of March to discuss your choice of Student Devised Assessment.

Student Devised Assessment Piece (50%)

Your devised piece is due 24th April 2018 @ 12.00 noon

Any physical pieces should be delivered to the IATL office.

What is a devised piece?

Your devised piece is your chance to display **your critical engagement with the themes and theories of the module** and take a considered approach as to how you might practically apply what you have learned in a medium of your choosing.

What does a devised piece look like?

The SDA's form is down to you. You should consider what issues and theories you want to address and then pick whatever form you feel best expresses them.

I recommend setting yourself some constraints early on in the process. It is advisable to start by thinking of the key question you would like to investigate or explore in your SDA. Once you have started thinking about how you might like to answer the main question, or if you are struggling to get off the ground with your thinking, make sure you contact the module tutor to discuss your approach and if it will meet the requirements of the assessment.

There is no right or wrong way of presenting your devised piece. It can take any form you wish and should display your personal experiences of and thoughts about the module's topics/questions/stimuli in the best way possible. It could be a story, workshop, presentation, blog, comic, painting, video, piece of academic writing, dance, website, poem, song, learning resource, collage, diary...anything. **An awareness of why you chose the form you chose and why you chose it above other forms will be looked for.**

Ultimately, **your engagement with theory and ideas is more important than presentation.** If you are running out of time then do not get caught up in fine polishing details. First and foremost, make sure you clearly demonstrate and critically engage with theory. **To help with this, you have to write an accompanying explanation or give an accompanying presentation to your piece. This cannot be more than 1,500 words or 10 minutes long (+/- 10% leeway, excluding bibliography).**

Your SDA will be enhanced by evidence of:

- A critical engagement with different theories concerning the links between genetics and society and different aspects of reality;

- An awareness of how your theory/theories are signalled and put into practice by your piece, i.e. the form of your piece needs to have a demonstrable relationship to the ideas behind it;
- Careful reflection on intended audience and their potential interaction with the piece;
- Effective organisation and presentation of the ideas and material;
- An informed and considered use of primary and secondary materials in the creation of your piece;
- A well-presented and, if necessary, a succinctly annotated bibliography.

Referencing and bibliographies

Bibliographies are required for this assessment. Because of the nature of the assessment you should not limit your bibliography to just those texts you cite; you can include influences and further research as well. Use the annotations outlined below to then tie these into the piece.

If your piece does not naturally include a place for a bibliography please submit one separately.

You may choose any academic style of referencing and bibliography layout you wish so long as it is thorough and consistent. **The tutor should be able to follow up and check your ideas easily** and, where quotations are given, locate that quotation within the referenced material.

If you are concerned that you have not obviously expressed where and how your piece has been influenced by material in your bibliography, then **your bibliography may include short annotations**. Any single annotation should be 25 words maximum and read along the lines of: "This work impacted upon my choice to X", "X's theory of Y influenced why I included Z", or "I rejected X's thinking on Y when I chose to Z". The purpose of this bibliography and its annotations are to avoid plagiarism and to indicate influence and/or incorporation of ideas. **The bibliography and annotations (and any appendices you use) should not include separate arguments or critically develop your theoretical position.** Such things must be demonstrated and incorporated into the piece itself or the accompanying explanation and will not be marked if present in the bibliography.

Bibliographies and their annotations do not count towards the overall word count.

Please speak to the tutor if you are unsure about any of this or have never done a bibliography before.

How will your SDA be assessed?

Although this is a creative task, the 20-point mark scale will broadly apply.

A high mark would be gained by a piece that displays a critical reflection on theories of or issues surrounding genetics in a unique and original manner. The piece and any necessary supplementation would show an informed understanding and awareness of these theories and how they are embodied in the piece and would take a considered approach to the relationship between content and form within the assessment.

A low mark would be given to a piece that shows little or no engagement with theories concerning genetics or was purely descriptive in its approach to them. A low mark could also be awarded where the form of the piece bears no obvious or explainable relationship to the theories supposedly underlying it.

Academic writing piece (50%)

Your academic writing piece will be due 24th April 2018 @ 12.00 noon.

For 15 CATS:

- 2000 word piece of academic writing (i.e. essay, scientific article, etc. - 50%)

For 12 CATS:

- 1500 word piece of academic writing (i.e. essay, scientific article, etc. - 50%)

There is a +/- 10% rule in relation to the word count.

The piece of academic writing will be marked in accordance with the university's 20-point-mark scale.

How should I approach this piece of academic writing?

As discussed in class, I take this assessment to be an academic piece of writing that takes a focused, analytic approach to a particular question, issue, or theme.

When you receive the set title question ask yourself:

- What (in your opinion) is most interesting about it,
- Where the key dilemma or issue might be, then think of different ways of narrowing it down if it's very broad, and how might they keep adapting it (if they need to) when writing, etc.,
- Which topics/questions/stimuli presented during the module can help you to answer to the question/the key dilemma/issue,
- What literature do you need to explore for addressing the points above

As discussed in class, when writing a piece of academic writing you should consider the following things:

- Make sure the position or interpretation you are arguing for is clear.
- Referencing can be of any style but must be consistent. References do not count towards the word count and this applies to referencing styles that are done via footnote. However, footnotes which contain argument or embellish upon points within the piece of academic writing *do* count towards the word count.
- You need to demonstrate a broad and deep awareness of the field and texts under discussion.
- Remember to continually anchor back to the title question to make sure you are addressing it and that the points you are making are relevant to the argument you are presenting.
- Ensure you have a clear sense of what is meant by any disciplinary terminology when using it.
- Avoid: unanswered, rhetorical questions; conclusions that go no further than saying "it all depends" or "it's all subjective"; and unreferenced expressions such as "some philosophers/scientists say..." or "one theory is". If you ask a question, put forward an answer. If it all depends, what does it depend on? What do you mean when you say "it's all subjective"? Which theory states this and which philosophers say that?
- Proof-read!

Your piece of academic writing will be enhanced by evidence of:

- A clear line of theoretical inquiry in response to the title question that reflects the particular questions and/or topics and/or stimuli arising from the module.
- A sustained and organised engagement with those questions and/or topics and/or stimuli.
- The ability to address an intelligent but non-specific audience – i.e. there is a clarity of expression and lack of unnecessary or unexplained jargon – as the discipline of your second marker is not guaranteed.
- an awareness of how the form you have chosen (i.e. essay, scientific article style, etc.) matches and best expresses the content of the position or ideas you are presenting, i.e. why is the particular form you chose the best form for your ideas?
- Clear and critical engagement with the theoretical positions arising in the module and relevant primary and secondary material.
- Rigorous and clear referencing where appropriate.
- Ability to anticipate and engage with potential counter-arguments and opposed positions to your own.

Bibliographies

As above, **bibliographies are necessary**. See above for the bibliography requirements.