



The Beadling Academy

"Fencing for All"

Improving Students' Examination Technique

DEFINE	a precise statement is required, or the formula stated with symbols explained.
EXPLAIN	normally implies that some sort of definition or law should be given together with some relevant comment about what will happen. Always try to use the word 'BECAUSE' and look at the mark allocation as a guide to the number of points you need to make.
STATE	only a concise answer is needed with little or no supporting argument.
LIST	requires a number of points with no elaboration.
DESCRIBE	requires candidates to state in words (using diagrams where appropriate) what will happen in a given situation. An explanation is not normally required (often the full explanation is too difficult and beyond the requirements of the specification).
PREDICT	implies that candidates are normally expected to produce the required answer by recall but by making logical connections between pieces of information normally given in the question.
SUGGEST	candidates are normally expected to apply their general knowledge to a 'novel' situation, one that formally may not be in the syllabus.
CALCULATE	is used where a numerical answer is required – working SHOULD be shown and the final answer quoted with an appropriate unit.
DETERMINE	implies that the quantity cannot be calculated simply but may require substitution into one or more formulae – the method of determination must be clearly shown with all formulae used being explicitly stated before substitutions are made.
SHOW	is used when an algebraic deduction has to be made to prove a given equation or derive a given numerical value.
ESTIMATE	implies a reasoned order of magnitude statement or calculation of the quantity concerned – candidates should state the assumptions being made.
SKETCH	when applied to GRAPH WORK, implies that the shape and/or position of the curve need only be qualitatively correct.
SKETCH	when applied to DIAGRAMS, implies that a simple freehand drawing is acceptable – labelling is always wise!