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| **DCT ID:**  | **ABAOMS DCT Essay Marking Criteria** |
|  | **Excellent** | **Very good** | **Good** | **Just passing** | **Just failing** | **Clear fail** | **Mark** |
| **Outline of the clinical question/issue****20 marks** | Clearly and succinctly outlines the clinical question/issue. Comprehensive, clear, relevant and yet concise. | A very good outline of the clinical question/issue. Understanding evident with comprehensive and clear relevance. | A good outline of the clinical question/issue. Understanding evident with clear relevance. | A basic outline of the clinical question/issue. Limited understanding but some relevance | A poor attempt to outline the clinical question/issue. With very limited understanding and relevance. | A complete inability to effectively understand and identify the clinical question/issue. Completely misses the point.  | /20 |
| **Content, evidence of research and discussion****40 marks** | Evidence of excellent researching a range of high quality, most relevant and current sources. It is clear the sources are fully understood and appropriately contextualised. Able to eloquently use evidence to substantively support arguments made. Reference to source materials entirely appropriate and the ability to fluently weave these in to enhance the discussion / arguments. Publishable in current form. | Evidence of very good researching an appropriate range of relevant and current sources. It is clear that there is a very good working understanding of the evidence, and this is appropriately contextualised. Able to use evidence to support arguments made. Reference to relevant sources to strengthen the discussion / arguments.  | Evidence of researching a range of sources, most of which are relevant and mostly supportive of the discussion. References are understood and used appropriately. Key sources cited and used to support the discussion / arguments.  | Evidence of some researching a reasonable range of sources, not all of which are relevant or supportive of discussion and/or some key sources may be omitted. Some misunderstanding or use out of context. Uses little evidence to defend arguments made. Some lack of balance and/or one sided.  | Evidence of limited research and/or failure to refer to or incorporate these into the discussion. Inclusion of irrelevant or poor quality sources. Misunderstanding or misquoting from sources. Limited or inappropriate use of evidence to defend statements made. May contradiction self in discussion.  | Very poor research with key sources entirely absent. Insufficient reference materials used to support range of topic. Failure to incorporate any research into discussion and/or incorporation of irrelevant sources. No evidence used in defence of arguments or evidence does not support argument at all. Failure to present a coherent argument  | /40 |
| **Summary, conclusions and recommendations****20 marks** | An excellent, persuasive and logical summary with no contradictions. No new material introduced. Follows logically on from discussion. Conclusion is balanced and eloquent. | A clear persuasive and logical summary of the argument with no new material introduced. Conclusion relates well to discussion and is balanced. | A clear and logical summary of the argument with no new material introduced. Conclusion defensible and related to discussion.  | A basic summary attempting to pull together some arguments to form a reasonably sensible conclusion. May introduce new ideas or evidence. | Vague summary which fails to bring in important points from the discussion and/or fails to define a conclusion. May introduce new ideas or evidence. | Completely inadequate. No conclusion or conclusion with no foundation and not supporting or supported by main discussion. | /20 |
| **Presentation** **20 marks** | Word count accuratelystated, logical order, excellent use of figures/ tables where appropriate.Correct citation and referencing style. Excellent grammar and structure. Publishable in format and structure. | Word count accurately stated, proficient use figures/tables where apt. Correct citation and referencing style. Very good grammar and structure. | Word count accuratelystated, figures/ tables appropriately used. Correct citation and referencing style. Minor grammatical errors. Good structure. | Word count accuratelystated, any use of figures/ tables mostly appropriate. Minor errors in citation and referencing style. Minor grammatical errors. Sound structure. | Word count accuratelystated, poor use of figures/ tables if used. Significant errors in citation and referencing style. Substantial grammatical errors. Poorly structured. | Word count inaccurately stated and/or dramatically under or over the limit. Illogical order, incorrect and/or inappropriate use of figures/ tables. Incorrect citation and referencing style. Very poor grammar / structure. | /20 |
| **General feedback:** | Total /100 |
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Include **full name, affiliation, contact email and ABAOMS membership number** at the start of the essay**.**

Word limit set to **1500 (+/- 200 words)** EXCLUDING references, tables and figures. Please state total number of words at the end of the essay.

**Vancouver** **or Harvard** referencing style is suitable.

Reference should **not exceed** **20.**

Submitted in **Word format** (not PDF) using **Arial font size 12 with double spacing.**

**All submissions should be made via the ABAOMS website, please wait to ensure the upload is COMPLETE to guarantee submission. Partial or incomplete entries will NOT be processed or accepted. Entries received after the stated deadline will be automatically rejected.**

Please ensure the Word Document file name **includes your name**, and is written in the following format: **DCT-Essay-2025\_full name**

**The deadline for submission is midnight on the date specified on the website.**

Essays submitted will be subject to **satisfactory checks for plagiarism and use of large language model AI tools like ChatGPT.** The Committee reserve the right to disqualify any entries which do not meet these standards.

**Please note that entry to this competition assumes consent for sharing of the winning entry amongst the ABAOMS Education Committee.** The essay will not be shared beyond this group without formal request.

Essays not compliant with the above will **automatically fail and/or be ineligible for the national prize.**