



Marking Criteria - And why it's important.

The marking criteria for the Hallam Award have recently been reviewed to be clearer and to help you to get the best award possible.

The mark you receive for your Hallam Award submission will be based on a calculation made up of two separate scores, one for Reflection and one for Skills Development/Involvement.

Reflection

This section of the criteria has been included because reflecting on your experiences is an important skill to develop and is a key focus of the Hallam Award. When marking your Hallam Award, the marking team will be assessing how much reflective writing you have included in your submission and how much you have made reference to personal development, action planning and your career aspirations.

Reflective writing is a skill that takes time and practice to develop but has great benefits to both your study and future career. The ability to think and write critically about your experiences and individual performance is greatly valued by tutors and employers alike - and the Hallam Award team! So make sure you include where things have (and haven't) gone well - and how you moved forward from this.

An example of a statement that does not include reflection is as follows:

"I went to the society committee meeting. I volunteered to be Secretary and took notes of the meeting."

Although the statement above tells us what the student did, it doesn't tell us how the meeting made them feel or more importantly, what they learnt from the experience. Therefore, this statement would receive a mark of 0 for reflection.

Here is the same statement again with reflection included:

"I went to the society committee meeting. I was nervous beforehand as I had never been to a formal meeting before. I volunteered to be Secretary and took notes of the meeting. I feel I did well in this role and I was satisfied that I wrote the notes from the meeting well, although they could have been more thorough."

This statement would receive a mark of 1 for reflection. To improve this score even more, the student would then need to make reference to their personal development in the statement. It is important to include comments about your personal development to show how you have developed throughout the year. For example:

"I went to the society committee meeting. I was nervous beforehand as I had never been to a formal meeting before. I volunteered to be Secretary and took notes of the meeting. I feel I did well in this role and I was satisfied that I wrote the notes from the meeting well, although they could have been more thorough. This meeting has shown me that I definitely need to work on building my confidence in meetings."

The statement above would have received a mark of 2. To improve on this statement further, the student would then need to include some reference to action planning. It is important to talk about how you are going to improve in the future and where things haven't gone to plan, how you will try to make sure it doesn't happen again. For example:

"I went to the society committee meeting. I was nervous beforehand as I had never been to a formal meeting before. I volunteered to be Secretary and took notes of the meeting. I feel I did well in this role and I was satisfied that I wrote the notes from the meeting well, although they could have been more thorough. This meeting has shown me that I definitely need to work on building my confidence in meetings. In future, I will make sure that I read the agenda before the meeting and speak to the Chair beforehand to ensure that I am well prepared for the meeting and am not so nervous."

The statement above is a great example of a statement to go in a log sheet or key activity form as part of a Hallam Award submission and would receive a mark of 3 for reflection. To make this statement EVEN better and to achieve a top mark of 4, you could then add in some reference to future career aspirations. For example:

"I went to the society committee meeting. I was nervous beforehand as I had never been to a formal meeting before. I volunteered to be Secretary and took notes of the meeting. I feel I did well in this role and I was satisfied that I wrote the notes from the meeting well, although they could have been more thorough. This meeting has shown me that I definitely need to work on building my confidence in meetings and that I need to practice note taking so I can develop this skill. In future, I will make sure that I read the agenda before the meeting and speak to the Chair beforehand to ensure that I am well prepared for the meeting and am not so nervous. I am keen to develop my confidence as much as possible as I want to be confident in my future career both when attending interviews and in the job when I'm sure I will need to attend formal meetings."

If you follow the guidance above and take the opportunities available to get feedback on your Hallam Award, there's a great chance you could get top marks in this area!

Skills Development/Involvement

This section of the criteria has been included because it is important for the Hallam Award that you have been actively involved with your chosen activity (or activities) and that you have developed both your transferable and specific skills as much as possible throughout the year.

When marking your Hallam Award, the team will be assessing how much detail you have given about your involvement in your chosen activity and how much you have made reference to your individual contribution and the level of responsibility you have taken. The team will also be assessing what you have written about your skills development and how you have progressed throughout the year. Don't worry if you haven't developed as much as you wanted to or you have developed in different areas to the ones you originally chose, just make sure you reflect on why this is the case.

Individual contribution - To achieve good marks for this, you need to demonstrate well what you have done to support the activity you have been involved with. For example, the following statement would receive a mark of 0 for individual contribution:

"We ran a volunteering project a local school. We organised some games for the children."

To receive a mark of 1 for this section, you at least need to refer to some things that you individually have achieved. For example:

"We ran a volunteering project a local school. We organised some games for the children. I bought the equipment for the day and helped prepare snacks for the children."

To improve your score, you should then add as much detail as possible to this in order to evidence your individual contribution.

Skills development - To achieve good marks for this, you need to demonstrate well what transferable skills you have developed whilst taking part in your chosen activity. For example, the following statement would receive a mark of 0 for skills development:

"We ran a volunteering project a local school. We organised some games for the children. I bought the equipment for the day and helped prepare snacks for the children."

To receive a mark of 1 for this section, you at least need to refer to some level of skill development. For example:

"We ran a volunteering project at a local school. We organised some games for the children. I bought the equipment for the day and helped prepare snacks for the children. This project developed my organisational and team working skills"

To improve your score, you should then add as much detail as possible to this in order to evidence your skills development.

Level of responsibility - To achieve a mark of 3 or 4 for Skills development/Involvement, you need to have taken some level of responsibility or a high level of responsibility for the activity you have been involved in. For example, a score of 3 for Skills development/Involvement, you might have supported the leader in some way and your statement might look like this:

"We ran a volunteering project at a local school. We organised some games for the children. I took responsibility for equipment for the project and for refreshments. I bought all of the equipment for the day and helped prepare snacks for the children. Volunteering on such a large project with a large, diverse team of students really helped to develop my team working skills."

To achieve a score of 4 for Skills development/Involvement, you need to have taken a high level of responsibility for the activity in some form of leadership role. An example of this level of statement is as follows:

"We ran a volunteering project at a local school. We organised some games for the children. I was chosen to lead this volunteering activity and I was responsible for organising all of the resources and supporting the other volunteers. I made sure that we had all the resources we needed and that all the other volunteers were supported. I wrote a resource list with the help of the other volunteers and then checked this with a member of staff before asking another student to buy the equipment that we needed. I also made sure that all of the other volunteers were trained and confident in their roles through activities at team meetings and also by working with each of them individually. Taking the lead on such a large project with a large, diverse team of students really helped to develop my leadership and team working skills."