



A Guide to Command Verbs

ABMA Education Student
Resources



What are command verbs

A command verb, also known as an imperative verb, is a verb that is used to give a command or instruction. It is a verb form that directs someone to perform a specific action.

All questions in an ABMA Education examination will contain a command verb. These command verbs will direct you on how to answer the question.

You will notice the command verbs fall under categories and in some instances a command verb may fall under more than one category. All of our learning outcomes have been developed using Bloom's Taxonomy and as such learners are required to either:

- 'Analyse',
- 'Apply', or
- 'Evaluate'.

It is important that you familiarise yourself with the command verbs and categories they may fall under as this should help determine what is being asked of you within an examination question.

Below are the command verbs which may appear within an examination.

Analyse	Apply	Evaluate
Analyse Compare Contrast Describe Differentiate/Distinguish Discuss Explain Identify State	Apply Calculate Complete Design Draw Illustrate Write	Evaluate Assess Describe Discuss Explain Identify Recommend State Suggest

Below are command verbs and their associated definitions.

Command Verb	Definition
Analyse	Examine something in detail, break it down into its components, and understand its structure or elements.
Apply	Put into action, use, or implement something in a specific context.
Assess	Critically analyse or examine a situation, object, or information and form a judgment or opinion about it.
Calculate	Perform mathematical operations or computations to determine a numerical result. In a non-mathematical context, the command verb means estimating or determining something through careful consideration, analysis, or assessment.

Command Verb	Definition
Compare	Examine the similarities and differences between two or more things. Analyse and contrast the features, qualities, or characteristics of the items in question.
Complete	Finish or carry out a task, assignment or insert the information required
Contrast	Identify and emphasise the differences between two or more things. Analyse and highlight distinctions, variations, or divergences to enhance understanding.
Describe	Provide a detailed account, representation, or explanation of a particular subject, object, event, or phenomenon.
Design	Plan, conceive, or create a specific structure, system, product, or process.

Command Verb	Definition
Differentiate/Distinguish	Recognise and highlight the distinctions or differences between two or more things. Analyse and identify unique characteristics, features, or qualities that set each item apart from the others.
Discuss	Detailed consideration of a particular topic, issue, or subject. Analyse, and explore various aspects, perspectives, or implications related to the specified matter.
Draw	Create an image, diagram, chart, or any form of visual representation that conveys information or captures a concept.
Evaluate	Assess, judge, or determine the quality, value, or significance of something through a careful and systematic examination. Critically analyse, review, and form a considered opinion about a particular subject or situation.
Explain	Clarify or make something understandable by providing details, reasons, or context. Offer a clear and coherent account or description to enhance understanding.

Command Verb	Definition
Identify	Recognise, name, or point out a specific person, thing, characteristic, or element.
Illustrate	Provide clear examples or explanations to enhance the understanding of a concept, idea, or point. Offer real-world instances, analogies, or detailed descriptions to make the subject matter more comprehensible.
Recommend	Suggest, propose, or advise a particular course of action, choice, or decision based on your judgment, expertise, or knowledge.
State	Express, declare, or articulate information, facts, opinions, or views clearly and explicitly.
Suggest	Propose, recommend, or offer an idea, solution, or course of action based on their judgment, knowledge, or opinion.
Write	Compose, record, or produce written content, put down thoughts, ideas, or information into written form.