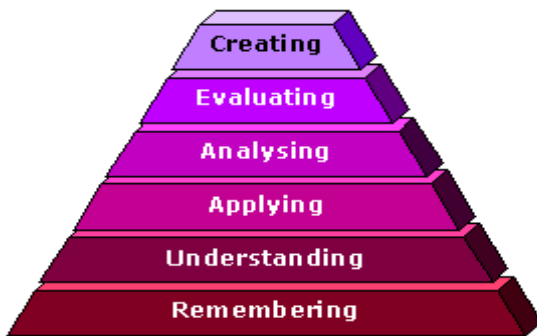# Command words explained

Term	Explanation
Advise	Make recommendations as to what should be done, on the basis of the information provided by the examiner
Assess	Evaluate or make a judgement on the basis of the information provided by the examiner
Calculate	Form an opinion, or compute an answer, using all the information available
Comment	Use your 'knowledge' to explain or express an opinion
Compare	(often written as 'compare and contrast') Bring out the similarities and differences between two or more items
Define	Produce an accurate meaning or explanation of the term(s) specified by the examiner
Describe	Produce a detailed account to indicate what something is like
Design	Draw-up a document or plan for a specific purpose
Determine	Resolve a problem or situation, or calculate something exactly, within the limits defined by the examiner
Discuss	Debate the issues (strengths and weaknesses) and come to a conclusion
Distinguish	Recognise the difference between, and make comparisons between, terms, arguments or theories
Draft	Produce a document or plan in a preliminary or initial state
Draw	Pull information together in order to compose arguments, or figures, into a specified order
Estimate	Make a judgement or preliminary calculation without having exact details

Examine	Consider or review theories, procedures or definitions, in order to arrive at a conclusion and/or recommendations
Explain	Produce a full description or interpret the information provided
Explore	Investigate theories, definitions or processes, within the limits defined by the examiner
Identify	(often used with the words 'and explain') Recognise and be able to say what the terms or concepts mean
Illustrate	Demonstrate understanding of the issues or concepts through the use of relevant examples or diagrams
List	Enumerate the points through a single word or sentence
Outline	Provide brief details or a summary
Prepare	Draft or produce a document, statement or procedure
Present	Produce a chart, graph, report or argument in the format suggested by the examiner
Produce	Generate or compose a document, communication or statement
Provide	Produce or supply the information or items requested by the examiner
Report	Provide a statement or record in a specified format
Show	Use illustrations or examples to make clear what must be done to produce a result or outcome
Solve	Use reasoning to produce an answer to a given problem
State	Provide a clear explanation
Suggest	Provide recommendations, or a solution, or advice based on the information supplied by the examiner
Summarise	Provide a concise account of the key issues (often within a specified number of words)
To what extent	Identify any limitations or restrictions, in relation to the information supplied by the examiner
Which	Choose from a number of alternatives, providing the reasons for your choice
Why	Examine the causes or reasons which inform your decision
Write	Produce or compose a communication in the specified format

*These workshop packages include 5 podcasts on non-numerical topics. The podcasts will be available to download from your workshop course page in the ACT Learning academy.

Blooms taxonomy

A common source of guidance on setting levels is Bloom's taxonomy. Bloom suggests increasing levels of intellectual challenge, as illustrated in the diagram below.

In applying the taxonomy, the first level would be focused on the basic levels of remembering and understanding, the second on applying and analysing and the third on evaluating and creating, etc. The web has a lot of useful sites on Bloom.

The levels do not strictly adhere to the QCF/Ofqual guidance on levels.

Intellectual levels – source verbs
1. *Knowledge*: arrange, define, duplicate, label, list, memorize, name, order, recognise, relate, recall, repeat, reproduce state.
2. *Comprehension*: classify, describe, discuss, explain, express, identify, indicate, locate, recognise, report, restate, review, select, translate,
3. *Application*: apply, choose, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, practice, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write.
4. *Analysis*: analyse, appraise, calculate, categorise, compare, contrast, criticie, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test.
5. *Synthesis*: arrange, assemble, collect, compose, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, manage, organize, plan, prepare, propose, set up, write.
6. *Evaluation*: appraise, argue, assess, attach, choose compare, defend estimate, judge, predict, rate, core, select, support, value, evaluate.