Key words of Academic Assignments

Examine your Assignment/Essay title for any of the words below:

Key words: Meaning:

Account for  Give reasons for; explain
Analyse    Break up into parts; investigate
Apply      Analyse one idea in terms of another; connect two ideas
Collate    Bring together; compare critically
Compare    Look for similarities and differences between; perhaps conclude which item is preferable
Consider   take into account; weigh up advantages/disadvantages
Contextualise  Put in context
Contrast   Bring out the differences between
Critique   Criticise; give your judgement on the good or bad points, backing up your views with evidence and explanation
Define     Give the precise meaning of; explain in detail
Demonstrate     Prove with examples; show
Describe   Give a detailed account
Develop   Explain in detail; elaborate on
Discuss   Consider an issue in writing, weighing up points for and against
Evaluate  Weigh up and judge the merits, giving evidence
Examine   Look closely into
Explain    Make clear; interpret; give reasons for
Explore   Consider thoroughly from a variety of viewpoints
Identify  Point out and describe
Illustrate Give examples which make the point clear
Interpret Explain in your own words; give your own understanding of
Investigate Examine in detail
**Justify**  
Give reasons to support an idea or action

**Outline**  
Give the main features or general principles of a subject, emphasising structure and arrangement

**Reflect on**  
Think about; evaluate

**Relate**  
Show the connections between

**Review**  
Make a survey of, examining the subject carefully

**State**  
Express in words; present in a brief, clear form

**Summarise**  
Give a brief account of the main points, omitting details and examples

**Synthesise**  
Bring elements together to make a complex whole; draw together or integrate issues

**Trace**  
Follow the development of