The **Structure of the Observed Learning Outcomes (SOLO) Taxonomy** is a model that categorises students' learning by levels of increasing understanding.

The SOLO Taxonomy can be used to set learning objectives for where students 'should' be at particular stages of learning or, probably more appropriately, to judge or report on the learning outcomes or the levels attained.

The table below summarises the model, and provides indicative verbs that you may wish to incorporate into your teaching and assessment planning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of understanding displayed as the student learns (SOLO Taxonomy)</th>
<th>Phase of learning</th>
<th>Indicative Verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Extended Abstract**  
Student conceptualizes at a level extending beyond what has been dealt with in the actual teaching. Can generalize to a new area. | **Qualitative Phase**  
The detail in the responses becomes integrated into a structural pattern. | • Theorise  
• Generalise  
• Hypothesise  
• Reflect  
• Generate |
| **Relational**  
Indicate orchestration between facts and theory, action and purpose. Understanding of several components which are integrated conceptually. Can apply the concept to familiar problems or work situations |  | • Compare/contrast  
• Explain causes  
• Integrate  
• Analyse  
• Relate  
• Apply |
| **Multi-structural**  
Indicates understanding of boundaries but not of systems. Understanding of several components but the understanding of each is discreet. Disorganised collection of ideas or concepts around an issue. Has not been able to relate the items in the list. | **Quantitative Phase**  
The amount of detail in the students response increases. | • Enumerate  
• Classify  
• Describe  
• List  
• Combine  
• Do algorithms |
| **Uni-structural**  
Concrete, minimalistic understanding of an area. Focuses on one conceptual issue in a complex case. |  | • Identify  
• Memorise  
• Do simple procedure  
• Misses the point |
| **Pre-structural**  
No understanding demonstrated. |  |  |

Adapted from Biggs (1999) *Teaching for Quality Learning at University*, Open University Press.