



Your guide to citing,  
referencing and  
academic writing at QUT.

[www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au)

**2013**

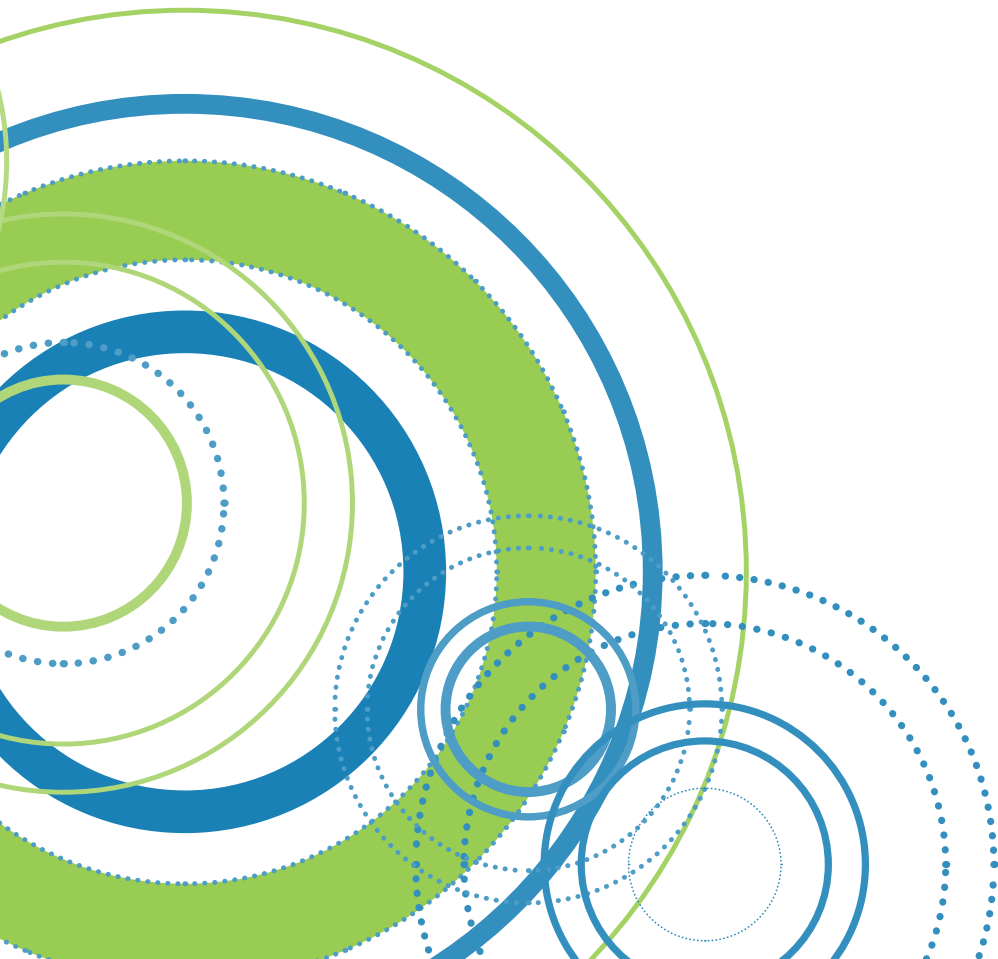
# cite | write



## Feedback

[ask.qut.edu.au](http://ask.qut.edu.au)

We welcome your comments on this booklet. If you have any suggestions or advice you can provide feedback via **AskQUT**. Go to AskQUT and **Ask a Question** or give feedback.





Find specific  
examples for QUT  
referencing styles at  
[www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au)

**cite**



# Contents

<b>Citing and referencing</b>	<b>3</b>
Why do it?	3
<b>QUT's recommended reference styles</b>	<b>4</b>
Which style do I use?	4
<b>Citing</b>	<b>5</b>
In-text citation	5
Citation using an author–date style	5
Citation using a numbered style	6
Citing legal cases and legislation	6
Direct quotations: copying words exactly	7
Short quotations	7
Long quotations	7
Acceptable changes to the original wording	8
Indirect quotations/paraphrase: rewriting original words	9
Summaries: referring to the source's main ideas	9
<b>Reference lists</b>	<b>10</b>
Referencing books	10
Referencing a chapter in an edited book	10
Referencing journal articles	11
Author–date styles (QUT APA and QUT Harvard)	11
Numbered style (QUT Numbered)	11
Legal style (QUT Legal)	12
<b>Bibliographic management tools</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Studying with academic integrity</b>	<b>14</b>
Checking your work	14



# Citing and referencing

At university, you are expected to cite and reference all information you use in your assignments.

**Citing** is when you use and acknowledge someone else's work to support your argument or illustrate your point.

**Referencing** is when you give bibliographic information—details such as author's family name and the date and title of publication—about the sources you used in your work.

## Why do it?

### We cite to acknowledge someone else's work.

You need to cite when you:

- use a *direct quote* from someone else
- give a *summary* of someone else's ideas
- *paraphrase* someone else's ideas
- *copy* some information (such as a picture, a table or some statistics).

### We reference to provide details about the sources that have been cited.

You need to reference in order to:

- support your ideas and arguments using expert facts or ideas
- acknowledge (give credit for) facts and ideas you have used
- help other readers find the original facts and ideas—or works—that you have used
- show readers the depth and quality of your reading and research.

### Citing and referencing are essential to avoid plagiarism.

Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty that incurs severe penalties at QUT. Plagiarism is when you do not give credit to the author/s for information used in your own work, by:

- copying the work of another student
- directly copying or buying any part of another author's work
- directly copying and pasting information from the Internet
- paraphrasing or summarising someone else's ideas
- using the idea or thesis from someone else's work
- using experimental results from someone else's work.



#### Did you know?

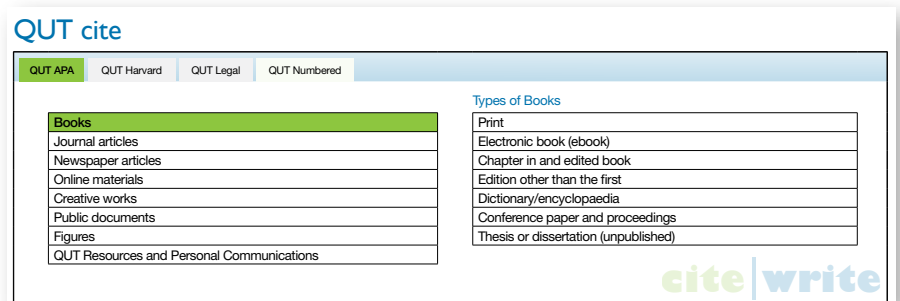
You can become familiar with your responsibilities by reading QUT's policy on Academic Integrity (C/5.3 Academic Integrity) at [www.mopp.qut.edu.au/C/C\\_05\\_03.jsp](http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/C/C_05_03.jsp)

# QUT's recommended reference styles

Universities have standard referencing styles which help you to cite consistently and avoid plagiarism. QUT recommends four referencing styles:

- *QUT APA*: an author–date style
- *QUT Harvard*: an author–date style
- *QUT Numbered (Vancouver)*: a numbered style
- *QUT Legal* a footnote style.

Go to QUT cite|write online [www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au) to see examples of how to apply each of these styles to different types of resources. The online tool shows how to format your reference list and in-text citations. It also provides rules to follow if you have incomplete reference details (e.g. no date or place of publication) or if you need to reference non-standard resources (e.g. an email or a podcast).



## Which style do I use?

Your unit outline should indicate which style to use in your work. If you have any queries about the style to use, ask your lecturer or tutor.



# Citing

## In-text citation

Any information (words, ideas, statistics, tables, data, pictures, photos, etc.) obtained from another author or source, whether it is used in a direct quotation or as a paraphrase, requires an in-text citation that will later be provided in full in a reference list.

Facts and ideas that are considered common knowledge within a discipline do not need to be cited. For example, Einstein's theory of mass-energy equivalence ( $E=mc^2$ ) would not need to be cited.

## Citation using an author–date style

When you add a citation into your text using an author–date style (such as *QUT Harvard* or *QUT APA*), you need to include the following information in the sentence or paragraph:

- Author's family **name** or name of the source (organisation, government department, etc.)
- **Year** of publication—look for the copyright symbol © in the source. This is usually in the front pages of a book or at the bottom of an Internet page.
- **Page number** where you found the information (or paragraph (¶) number if there is no page number on it). Summaries of information/sources often do not require page numbers if the information comes from many pages.

### Example

"You must cite the sources of each idea or item of information you use, whether you quote, paraphrase or summarise or merely refer to it" (Harris 2005, 5).

↑ ↑ ↑  
**author's family name year page**

Go to [www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au) to see examples in QUT APA, QUT Harvard, QUT Numbered and QUT Legal.

This information can be included either at the beginning or the end of the sentence or paragraph:

### Example

#### **At the beginning:**

Marras et al. (1995) note that peak load moment has been suggested to play a major role in defining lower back disorder risk.

#### **At the end:**

Peak load moment has been suggested to play a major role in defining lower back disorder risk (Marras et al., 1995).

Go to [www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au) to see examples in QUT APA, QUT Harvard, QUT Numbered and QUT Legal.

## Citation using a numbered style

When adding a citation in your text, either place a superscript number (start at<sup>1</sup>) or a number in brackets (1) at the end of the information you are citing.

### Example

#### **At the beginning:**

Marras et al.<sup>1</sup> note that peak load moment has been suggested to play a major role in defining lower back disorder risk.

Go to [www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au) to see examples in QUT APA, QUT Harvard, QUT Numbered and QUT Legal.

This number is then used to indicate the bibliographic information in the reference list.

## Citing legal cases and legislation

Legal writing employs a numbered note style to reference its footnotes. This refers the reader to the relevant numbered note at the bottom (or 'foot') of the page where the information is provided.

Students studying Law units at QUT are required to use the citation standard *Australian Guide to Legal Citation*, 3rd ed, (AGLC3), the most commonly used rules of which have been extracted in the publication, *Written Assessment to the Law School*, (WALS), (referred to in citelwrite as QUT Legal).

The one major exception to AGLC3 is that in Rule 5.3, Books/Publication details, the place of publication is added after the publisher details.

If you are using a 'non-law' reference style such as QUT Harvard for your writing, follow the requirements for that style for referencing sources.

## Direct quotations: copying words exactly

When directly quoting, remember to:

1. Copy the words exactly from the original source.
2. Include the author–date or number as the in-text citation.



### Did you know?

Some students think it is okay if you copy and paste more than three words as long as you add the author/source name. This is *not* true. If you copy more than three words *you must also have quotation marks*.

## Short quotations

Add quotation marks around the copied words.

Example

### author's family name

### year page

Harris (2005, p. 5) writes "you must cite the sources of each idea or item of information you use, whether you quote, paraphrase or summarise or merely refer to it".

**Note quotation marks to open and close**

If the quotation includes another quotation made in the original, use the opposite type of quotation marks (i.e. '...') to those ("...") that you used first.



### Did you know?

You can use your own judgement on what constitutes a short quote. As general rules: APA suggests fewer than 40 words and Harvard suggests fewer than 100 words.

## Long quotations

Long quotations use a different style to distinguish them from your normal text.

- Use a block quotation (i.e. not part of the sentence)
- Indent the block from the left and right margins
- Between the lines, use a single space only
- Do not use quotation marks for the block
- Include citation details either as a lead in to the block or at the end (see example for 'end' placement).

### Example

In *Using Sources Effectively*, Harris describes many different ways students should reference their work in academic institutions. The author believes that students must understand the importance of referencing:

An important part of using sources effectively lies in distinguishing between your own ideas and the ideas that come from outside sources ... When you make use of words, ideas or any information from a source other than your own knowledge and experience, you must give credit to the source in a citation. (Harris 2005, 1)

Referencing is clearly an important skill for students who wish to succeed in academic courses.



### Did you know?

It is important not to use too many direct quotations in your writing—always check the assignment criteria for information about the use of direct quotations. A common rule is to use a maximum of 10 per cent of the word count as direct quotes in your assignment.

## Acceptable changes to the original wording

If the original source has a grammar or spelling mistake that might be confusing, you should copy the mistake and add *[sic]* after the mistake. Note that *[sic]* must be in italics and in square brackets.

**However, there are three situations where it is acceptable to change the original words slightly:**

1. **You can change the capitalisation of the letter of the first word** of the quotation to fit the flow of your sentence. In the example below, the 'A' of 'As' has been changed to a lower case 'a':

Harris (2005, p. 35) says "as you work on your paper visit your instructor to ask for input".

2. **You can add words in square brackets [ ]** to make the meaning of the quote clearer to the reader:

"Government [Queensland State] is concerned about the cost of water"  
(Courier Mail, 2007, p. 1).

3. **You can use an ellipsis ( ... )** to show that you are leaving words out:

"There is one exception to the rule of citing outside information. Common knowledge does not need to be cited ... whatever an educated person would be expected to know or could locate in an ordinary encyclopedia" (Harris, 2005, p. 17).

## Indirect quotations/paraphrase: rewriting original words

Paraphrasing is writing the ideas of another author in your own words.

- You may use technical words that cannot be substituted.
- Make sure you accurately represent the source/author's ideas.
- If you paraphrase another author, you still need to provide an in-text citation.

### Example

#### Direct quotation

Cope (2007, 21) says that "plagiarism, a failure to acknowledge sources of material correctly, is an offence against professional standards and is a form of academic dishonesty".

#### Paraphrase

According to Cope (2007, 21) plagiarism occurs when writers do not reference ideas, and this is a very serious offence.

Go to [www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au) to see examples in QUT APA, QUT Harvard, QUT Numbered and QUT Legal.

or

#### Paraphrase

Cope (2007) mentions that plagiarism happens when writers do not give credit to authors; it is dishonest and not professional.

## Summaries: referring to the source's main ideas

All ideas that are not your own should be cited (and later referenced). When you refer to general ideas or just want to acknowledge that an idea came from a secondary resource, then your in-text citation does not require a page number.

### Example

Plagiarism is an issue that all students should be aware of (Cope 2007).

If you read from many sources and have written ideas in your own words, but you know that you learned these ideas from other people, list their names alphabetically in your in-text citation using a semicolon (;) to separate the sources.

### Example

Academic writing is more formal and complicated than informal writing, especially when authors need to consider acknowledging referencing (Cope, 2007; Oshima & Hogue, 1991; Putnis & Petelin, 1999).

# Reference lists

A reference list contains details of every resource cited in your assignment. The reference list is placed at the end of your assignment.

- If you are using an author–date system, sources are listed in alphabetical order.
- If you are using a numbered system, sources are listed in numerical order.

When you research and prepare for assessment, it is important to take down the full bibliographic details (including the page numbers) of the source from which the information is taken. It is very time consuming to follow up references later.



## Did you know?

Bibliographies are different from reference lists. They include references used in the assignment *plus* other relevant or useful sources not quoted from but used in the preparation of the assignment.

**Below are general guidelines about the information that is to be included in your reference list and how to find it. However, the format and punctuation depend on the referencing style required for the particular assignment.**

Go to [www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au) to see examples in QUT APA, QUT Harvard, QUT Numbered and QUT Legal.

## Referencing books

For a book, 'full bibliographic details' include:

- book author/editor family name and first name initial/s, or organisation's name. Include these details for as many authors or editors as the book recognises
- year of publication
- book title in full (main title and any subtitle)
- edition statement (unless it is the first)
- place of publication
- publisher.

You can find this information from the book's first few pages or the library catalogue.

## Referencing a chapter in an edited book

For a book chapter, 'full bibliographic details' include:

- chapter authors/editors family name and first name initial/s. Include these details for as many authors or editors as the chapter recognises
- year of publication
- chapter title
- book title in full
- book authors/editors first name initial/s and family name
- edition statement (unless it is the first) and page numbers
- place of publication
- publisher.

## Referencing journal articles

For a journal article, 'full bibliographic details' include:

- article author family name and first name initial/s. Include these details for as many authors as the article recognises
- article title
- journal title
- date of publication
- date viewed (if article is electronic not print)
- volume and issue numbers
- page numbers
- database name/URL/DOI—see [www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au) for style requirements.

**Don't panic!** Sometimes not all these details are available. Go to [www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au) for examples of what to do.

## Author–date styles (QUT APA and QUT Harvard)

The reference list provides the full details of all works and sources that have been cited in text. The reference list is arranged alphabetically by author (or by title where there is no author) and chronologically for each author where more than one work of an author is cited.

Go to [www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au) to see examples in QUT APA, QUT Harvard, QUT Numbered and QUT Legal.

## Numbered style (QUT Numbered)

The reference list at the end of the document provides the full details of all works and sources that have been cited in text. References are in the order they appear in the document; i.e. in numerical, not alphabetical, order, with the number in square [ ] brackets.

Go to [www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au) to see examples in QUT APA, QUT Harvard, QUT Numbered and QUT Legal.

## Legal style (QUT Legal)

A bibliography created using this style will include all sources used in the preparation of the assignment, in addition to the sources cited in the assignment (and referenced in the footnotes).

The bibliography is divided into two parts with headings specifying the type of sources:

- articles/books/reports
- cases
- legislation
- treaties
- other sources.



## Bibliographic management tools

There are bibliographic management tools available to assist you with citing and referencing. These online and software applications integrate with word processing applications to automatically insert and format citations and references into your assignments.

Undergraduate essays or reports usually need only 10 to 20 references to scholarly information. In these cases, it is often easier to format your references and citations manually, using the examples in QUT cite|write online as a guide. Understanding the principles of correct referencing is an important academic skill; so formatting your references will help you build your understanding, accuracy and confidence.

Writing an extensive academic paper or report, however, means you must record many, sometimes hundreds, of references. Using a bibliographic management tool may be a more efficient solution to help you manage your references over an extended period of time. You will still need to understand the principles of referencing and citing to be able to proofread carefully to ensure that there are no mistakes in the final formatting.

It is important to choose a bibliographic-management tool that supports features that will suit your study and assessment needs. EndNote is PC-based software available in both Windows and Mac versions and can be synced across devices using *EndNote Web*. This software is provided by QUT Library and used widely at QUT and fully supported in terms of technical support, training and troubleshooting. Additional tools such as Mendeley and Zotero offer other features such as PDF annotation, mobile app versions and open source development.

QUT Library has created a subject guide which lists some strengths and weaknesses of these tools. It is available at the following link: [www.library.qut.edu.au/learn](http://www.library.qut.edu.au/learn)

If you are unsure whether to manually format your references or use a software application, ask your lecturer or tutor for their advice about which method is suitable for your assessment, or ask at the Library's Learning and Research Desk for more information.

# Studying with academic integrity

QUT is committed to maintaining high academic standards to protect the value of its qualifications. This includes assuring the academic integrity of assessment items. Be aware that any action or practice by you which defeats the purpose of assessment, such as plagiarism, is regarded as a failure to maintain academic integrity and can result in serious consequences for you, your study and possibly your future career.

Plagiarism involves representing another person's ideas or work as your own. It may also include resubmitting your own work for another assessment item or giving your work to someone else to submit as their own.

The detection and penalising of plagiarism is important for a number of reasons:

- Students who plagiarise intentionally or otherwise in assessment items are not providing appropriate evidence of the learning undertaken in the degree.
- Members of an academic community who plagiarise undermine the value of the knowledge generated by that community.
- Allowing students to obtain degrees with plagiarised assessment items lowers the quality of the university's graduates and so undermines the value of the qualifications offered and the achievements of the other students.

Plagiarism in academic work is detected in a number of ways:

- Markers are usually subject matter experts who will recognise the contributions of previous authors if they are presented inappropriately in submitted work.
- The writing style used in submitted work often indicates where plagiarism has occurred (e.g. dramatic changes in language used from paragraph to paragraph).
- Electronic detection tools are now available that identify content matches with other sources (QUT has a site licence to use a detection tool called SafeAssign). Your unit coordinator may require you to use these tools and to supply reports generated by them as part of the conditions of assessment for particular units.
- You can be asked to authenticate your learning on an assessment item (e.g. through showing notes/drafts, resource materials used in the preparation of the item or by undertaking a viva or practical-based exam).

## Checking your work

You are strongly encouraged to make use of QUT cite|write and other support materials and services to help you consider and check your assessment items. Where available, use content matching software such as SafeAssign and submit generated reports as part of the conditions of assessment for your unit. Always consult with your lecturer or tutor prior to submission if you are unsure about interpreting reports from plagiarism detection software.

Remember:

- Plagiarism is easy to avoid if you learn and apply the basic rules of referencing and citing.
- Always acknowledge the ideas and words of others applying the rules of the style you must use, such as quotation marks, indented quotations and in-text author/date. Apply the rules regardless of whether you are quoting a person directly or paraphrasing their meaning.
- Don't guess—ask! If you have any questions or concerns, visit the Library's Learning and Research Desk or online chat, or post a question to AskQUT [ask.qut.edu.au](https://ask.qut.edu.au).



Find guides for  
note taking and  
writing assignments at  
[www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au)

# write





# Contents

## Academic writing 19

---

### Academic writing style 19

---

Precise expression	19
Impersonal, objective tone	19
Formal language	19
Tentative conclusions: definitive and qualifying words	20

### Academic writing terms 21

---

Abstract	21
Active and passive voice	21
Argument	21
Authoritative source	21
Cite   citing   citation	21
Conclusion	21
Critical	21
Evidence	21
Introduction	22
Paraphrase	22
Peer reviewed (scholarly) article	22
Person	22
Point of view	22
Reference	22
Research	22
Scope	23
Thesis statement	23
Word limit	23

### Academic writing structure 24

---

Overview	24
Introduction	25
Body paragraphs	26
Conclusion	27
Linking it all together	28
Useful linking words and phrases (transitions)	28
Task words commonly used in essay questions	29

## Critical thinking 31

---





# Academic writing

At university you will be expected to write using academic style and structure.

## Academic writing style

Academic writing style describes the language you use to clearly explain the ideas that you develop based on your research. There are four main features of an academic writing style:

### Precise expression

- Be concise. Every point should relate directly to your assignment topic.
- Use verbs to describe rather than lots of adverbs (e.g. 'she argued' is shorter than 'she said forcefully').
- Keep your sentences short. Each sentence should express a single idea.
- Use the specialist and technical language of your discipline.

### Impersonal, objective tone

- Use non-emotive and non-judgemental language (e.g. the term 'killed for food' is more neutral in tone than 'cruelly massacred for meat').
- Use non-discriminatory, inclusive language (e.g. the use of 'all men' for all people is not considered inclusive as it leaves out any reference to women).
- Focus your sentences on the concepts you are discussing rather than people's actions (e.g. 'sleeping patterns are shorter' rather than 'people don't sleep as much').

### Formal language

Most writing will follow these rules but there are exceptions, so check with your lecturer or tutor.

- Write in complete sentences that are structured into paragraphs (see p. 26 for more information on how to write effective paragraphs).
- Write in third person, unless otherwise specified in your assessment guidelines (refer to p. 6 *Person* for more detail).
- Do not use contractions (e.g. rather than 'can't', 'wouldn't' or 'don't', use 'cannot', 'would not' and 'do not').
- Do not use abbreviations such as 'etc.', 'e.g.' or 'fig.'. Write these terms in full.
- In academic writing, however, there are different types of abbreviations and in some instances they are acceptable.
  - Words such as TAFE or Qantas which are **acronyms** (pronounceable words made up from the first letter of a series of words) are generally acceptable as they are common usage terms.
  - **Initialisms** contain the first letter of each word and are NOT pronounceable and not punctuated, such as 'QUT'. Although technically QUT is an initialism, it is referred to as an acronym. When using initialisms write the name in full followed by the initialism in brackets—Queensland University of Technology (QUT). Each time you refer to this again in your assignment just use QUT.
- Do not use text abbreviations such as 'lol', 'u', 'gr8' or 'IMHO'.
- Do not use colloquial or slang words or phrases.

## Tentative conclusions: definitive and qualifying words

- The conclusions you make from the evidence in your assignment should be fair, reasonable and provable because definitive statements are easy to disprove. For example, the statement that 'men are physically stronger than women' can immediately be disproved if any woman is shown to be physically stronger than any man.
- Qualifiers are words that limit or modify statements to make them less than absolute. Here are some examples of qualifiers:

Definitive words	Qualifying sentence starters
Everyone	Several: 'Several studies report ...' Numerous: 'Numerous patients have reported benefits in the first round of trials'
Definitely	Perhaps: 'It may, perhaps, be considered ...' Often: 'It often results in ...'
Prove	Indicated: '... as indicated in the data.' Suggest: 'The findings suggest that ...'



# Academic writing terms

These are terms that are often used at university. They may be unfamiliar or convey a different meaning from their common usage. (See also the Glossary in *Study Smart* [www.studysmart.library.qut.edu.au/help/glossary.jsp](http://www.studysmart.library.qut.edu.au/help/glossary.jsp))

## Abstract

A summary of an article or paper, often appearing at the beginning of the paper.

## Active and passive voice

In English, this refers to the way the verb is used in a sentence (the form of the verb).

- An *active* voice means the focus of the sentence is on the person, animal or thing that is *doing* the action described by the verb. e.g. 'The **dog crossed** the road'.
- The *passive* voice means the focus of a sentence is on the person, animal or thing that is *being acted upon*. e.g. 'The road is *being crossed by* the dog.'

## Argument

An **argument** is a writing structure where you state your point of view and then outline the evidence that backs that point of view. The statement of your point of view is called the thesis statement and it is the direct response to the question or task of your assignment. The evidence is outlined logically, in a series of points, written in paragraphs in the body of your essay.

## Authoritative source

Information used as evidence (references) in an assignment should only come from authoritative sources. (See also the entry below on *Evidence*).

## Cite | citing | citation

To cite is to acknowledge the author or source of the information or idea you have used as evidence to support your argument in your assignment. You *must* cite when:

- you quote someone else in exactly the same words
- you summarise someone else's ideas
- you paraphrase someone else's ideas
- you copy or reproduce information or data (such as a picture, a table or statistics). (See also p. 5 of *Cite and Study Smart* module 4.5 for more information [www.studysmart.library.qut.edu.au/module4/4\\_5/](http://www.studysmart.library.qut.edu.au/module4/4_5/)).

## Conclusion

The end of your assignment which should repeat the topic, summarise the structure and restate the thesis statement of your essay. (See also p. 27).

## Critical

To be critical in an academic context does not mean being negative. It means to consider an idea, a reading, a website or a solution to a problem, examine all the different aspects, and then evaluate how good the information or idea is in terms of its purpose. A critical analysis may include some positive as well as negative points. (See also p. 31).

## Evidence

Evidence is a piece of information that *supports a conclusion*. Evidence for academic assignments comes from research in authoritative books, journals, websites and other sources. It may take the form of quotes from experts, data from experiments, statistics, pictures, graphs and tables.

## Introduction

The beginning of your essay should introduce the topic, state the thesis and outline the structure of the essay. (See also p. 25).

## Paraphrase

This involves expressing the same meaning as a text using different words. Paraphrased text should look substantially different from the original, but still retain the same meaning. (See also p. 9).

## Peer reviewed (scholarly) article

A peer reviewed article is information written by an academic or expert in the field or discipline which has been reviewed by her/his peers to ensure that it has been properly researched and developed.

## Person

Person refers to the perspective of the writing, and the writer's 'voice'.

- *First person* refers to the *writer*. This style of writing uses the pronouns I, me, myself, my, mine, we, us, ourselves, our and ours. You might use this style when you are writing reflection, or a report on an experiment where you are required to present information from a subjective, or personal viewpoint.
- *Second person* refers to the one being *spoken to*, using the pronouns you, yourself, your and yours. You might use this style when you are writing a review on someone else's work, production or presentation.
- *Third person* refers to the one being *spoken about*, and uses the pronouns he, she, it, him, her, himself, herself, his, her, hers, its, they, them, themselves, their and theirs. This style is used to present information from an objective or detached viewpoint.

Most academic writing uses third person, however there are exceptions. Seek clarification from your lecturer or tutor if you are unsure.

## Point of view

In assignments, you are often asked to defend your point of view or develop your argument relating to your topic. This does not mean that you are expected to write your personal *feelings* about the topic. In academic terms, developing a point of view or argument means to research the evidence known on that topic and develop and present your conclusions based on the evidence. Your personal ideas are not considered relevant in this context.

## Reference

A reference is when you give detailed information—such as author, date, title and publishing details—about a source used in your work. A reference list usually appears at the end of your assignment. (See also p. 10).

## Research

For undergraduates, to *research* a topic means to write your assignment based on knowledge that has already been researched, reviewed and accepted by the academics in your professional field. This knowledge is found in academic books, journals and other sources that are considered authoritative or scholarly.

## Scope

Scope refers to how widely a topic is covered in an essay and is dependent on the word length of the assignment, with longer essays expected to cover the topic in more depth. Also, the scope reflects the extent to which the evidence can justify your argument. For example, if all your evidence is related to Australia, you can argue that your point of view may be relevant in Australia, but you cannot argue that it can be generalised to all the countries of the world.

## Thesis statement

This is the most important sentence in the introduction. It is often the main sentence in the introduction and indicates your point of view (position or argument) on a topic. The thesis statement should be a direct answer or response to your assignment question or task.

## Word limit

The word limit provides you with a guide as to how much work you are expected to present as your final piece of work.

If you have exceeded your word limit, reread and remove any unnecessary language. If you have not reached your word limit you might need to broaden your research. Always read the assignment instructions to make sure you understand the expectations—for example, if it specifically states 'no more than 500 words' then do not go over that limit or you may be penalised in the marking.

There are variations as to what is included in the word count. Appendices, abstracts, executive summaries and reference lists are not usually counted as part of the word limit. Quotations in the body of your paper are usually counted. A margin of 10 per cent over or under the word length is often acceptable. *Always* seek clarification from your lecturer or tutor on these points.

# Academic writing structure

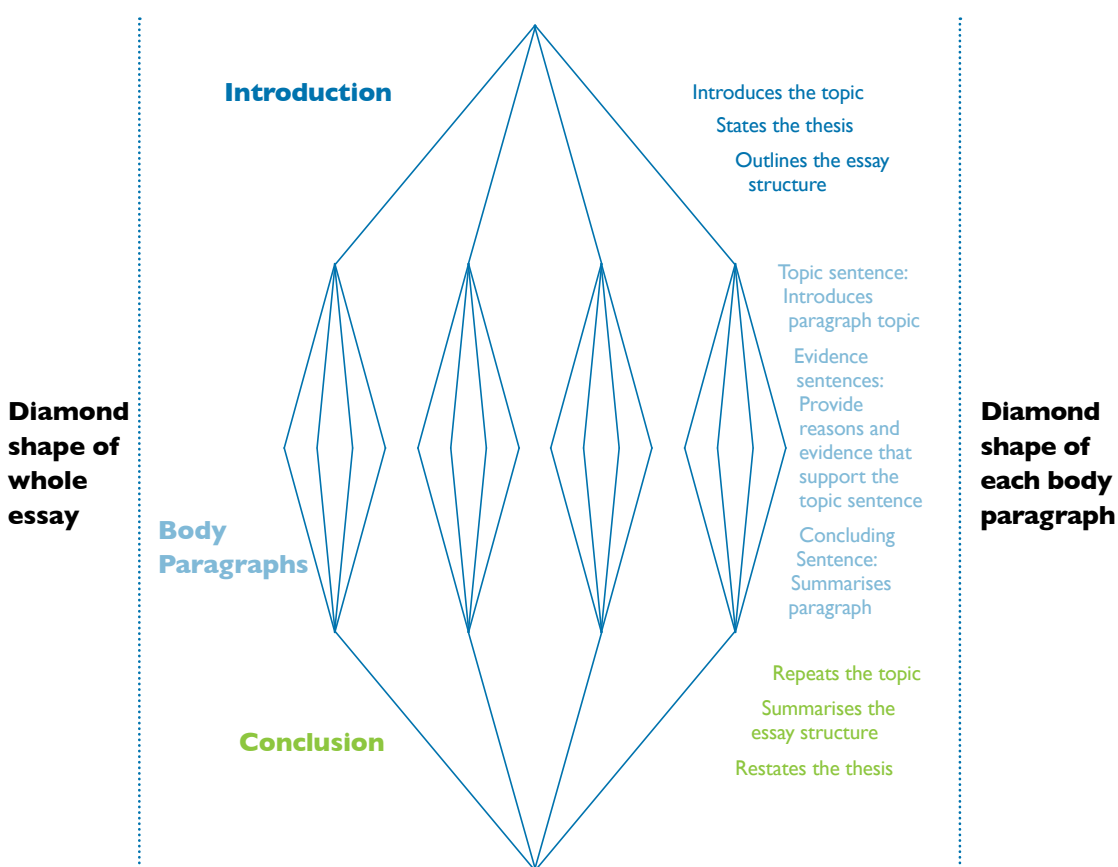
Academic writing structure is the format used to clearly express the ideas that you develop based on your research. It may take many forms such as essays, reports, literature reviews, annotated bibliographies or reflective journals.

This section focuses on essay writing as this is the foundation of all writing at university. An essay is composed of an introduction, body paragraphs and a conclusion.

For more information on structure for other writing genres go to [www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au)

## Overview

The essay structure can be seen as a diamond with the introduction and conclusion at the top and bottom and the body paragraphs fitting into the middle of the diamond in a series of smaller diamond shapes.



This shape may need to be modified depending on the aspects you need to cover in your task. For example, you may have fewer or more than the four body paragraphs, or the assignment may have separate sections.

It is essential that you check your unit details on QUT Blackboard or ask your lecturer or tutor for clear instructions about how to structure your assignment.

**Note:** Before you start researching and writing your assignment it is important that you understand what the question is asking you to do. For more information on assignment tasks refer to p.29: *Task words commonly used in essay questions.*

## Introduction

An introduction is a map for your reader and should be approximately 10 per cent of the total word count of your essay.

An introduction should:

1. Reword the assignment topic to set the context of the essay.
2. Provide background information on the topic. This may include definitions of any important terms and the scope defining the limits of what you will discuss in the essay.
3. State your thesis. This is the main point of your essay. The thesis statement is usually the answer to the question or main response to the task.
4. Outline the main points of the essay which back up your thesis statement. These should be listed in the order in which they are addressed in the essay.

## Example of an introduction

### The assignment question

Australia's tourism industry is the third largest in the country in terms of contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Much of its success is due to Australia's unique geography. Analyse the geographical factors that both contribute to and hinder the success of tourism in Australia.

### Introductory paragraph

Paragraph element	Purpose	Example
1. Topic introduction	The first sentence should introduce the topic—in this case the success of Australia's tourism industry. It should reflect the first sentence of the question to set the context for your response.	Australia's tourism industry contributes 3.9 per cent of the country's gross domestic product and Australia has been in the top ten of most desirable places to go on holiday 2000–2004 (Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism (RET), 2009).
2. Background information	This outlines the main factors involved in this discussion about Australian geography and tourism success. The scope of the essay will only cover these factors. They are landforms, flora and fauna and Australia's distance from other parts of the world.	There are many reasons for this success but two major factors are Australia's distinctive geography, particularly its unusual landforms (Georgiou, 2007) and unique flora and fauna (Zeehan, 2008). However, a complication for the success of Australian tourism is the tyranny of distance and the high costs involved for travellers, particularly those from the Northern hemisphere (Proctor & Thomas, 2004).
3. Thesis statement	This next sentence is the main point of the essay. It defines the relationship between these geographic factors and tourism success by stating how and to what extent these factors influence tourist numbers. This statement is the main response to the assignment task outlined in the last sentence of the question.	It will be argued that although logistical concerns warrant consideration, the value of the unique geography and wildlife outweigh the difficulties of Australia's remote location.
4. Essay outline	This needs to be a summary of the main points of your essay in the order in which they will be addressed in the body paragraphs.	In this essay the role of these three geographic factors—landscape, wildlife and distance—will be analysed.

## Body paragraphs

These paragraphs are the building blocks of an essay. They outline the points which link the main idea of the thesis to the evidence found in your research.

Each paragraph (or group of paragraphs) should:

1. Start with a topic sentence which links the point of the paragraph with the main thesis statement of your essay.
2. Provide extra information to clarify or define terms or ideas in the point.
3. Cite evidence from your research to support the point you are making.
4. End with a concluding sentence which links the paragraph back to the main thesis or on to the next paragraph.

### Example of a body paragraph

This paragraph supports the third point made in the essay previously outlined.

Paragraph element	Purpose	Example
1. Topic sentence	This sentence starts by referring to the thesis which is that Australia's geography accounts for much of its tourism success. However, it continues to include the main point of this paragraph which is that one aspect of Australia's geography, its remoteness, reduces that success.	Australia's geography accounts for much of its success as a tourist destination, yet it is also one of the most remote countries on earth.
2. Additional information	This explains further the point made in the topic sentence.	Both the proximity and the availability of other competing destinations put pressure on the Australian tourism industry.
3. Evidence sentences	These are essential to justify your point. Your evidence comes from your research and may include examples, data, quotes, statistics, graphics and illustrations. All supporting evidence must be from authoritative sources and cited in your essay.	Overseas visitors take an average of 17 hours to reach Australia, twice as long as travel to other geographically unique locations (Proctor & Thomas, 2004). Physical landmarks such as The Grand Canyon, Mount Fuji and the Amazon Rainforest are all more accessible than Uluru for the majority of world travellers (Proctor & Thomas, 2004). Wildlife tourism such as in Tanzania and Kenya or the biodiversity of Costa Rica provide travellers cheaper experiences than visiting Australia (Proctor & Thomas, 2004). Also, international zoos frequently enable people to see Australian wildlife without leaving their home countries (Proctor & Thomas, 2004).
4. Concluding sentence	Again, this sentence links the main thesis of the essay with the main point of the paragraph.	It is likely that Australia misses out on potential tourism dollars due to physical separation from world population hubs.

## Conclusion

The conclusion is similar to the introduction except that the elements are placed in a different order.

A conclusion should:

1. Restate the topic by paraphrasing the question.
2. Sum up the main points made in your essay.
3. Link these back to the thesis statement which is the main point of your essay.

### Example of a conclusion

This is the conclusion of the example essay above.

Paragraph element	Purpose	Example
1. Topic restatement	This paraphrases the language of the question.	Australia's abundant and unique geographical features make it a very desirable tourist destination.
2. Summary of main points	Include a brief summary of the main points in the body of your essay in the order in which they were addressed.	Tourists visit Australia for its incredible landforms, beaches and rainforests. They are captivated by Australia's distinctive wildlife both in the wild and within zoological gardens. While it is true that Australia is one of the more remote tourist locations on earth, this distance offers an additional component to a traveller's experience and sense of adventure.
3. Thesis restatement	Link these points back to the main thesis statement made in your introduction.	Australia's tourism success benefits from geographic features, both geological and ecological, that set it apart from any other destination on earth. The distance from other countries mostly enhances the unique travelling experience offered by the land 'Down Under'.

For an example of a completed essay go to 'Writing Structure Overview' in the Writing section of [studywell.library.qut.edu.au](http://studywell.library.qut.edu.au)

## Linking it all together

As well as structuring each individual paragraph in the body of your essay, you need to ensure that there is a logical flow to your essay.

This is done by using transitions signals which are words and phrases that show the relationship between the information of one paragraph and the information of the next. These transition signals are mostly found in the topic and concluding sentences of the paragraphs.

## Useful linking words and phrases (transitions)

Continuing an idea or introducing another idea		Showing cause and effect	
In addition ... Similarly ... Furthermore ... Continuing this idea ... Pursuing this further ... Additionally ...	Consequently ... Because ... Also ... In the same way ... Moreover ... Clearly then ...	Following ... Therefore ... For this reason ... Thus ... Consequently ...	In response ... As a result of ... The result ... Due to this ... The reaction ...
Providing a contrasting or alternative view		Showing sequence or time relationship	
On the other hand ... Or ... Yet ... In opposition to ... Whereas ... Unlike the previous example ... Instead ... Although ... However ...	While ... In contrast ... Nonetheless ... Even though ... Nevertheless ... Contrary to these findings ... In spite of ... Despite these findings ...	Firstly ... After ... Later ... Sometime ... Thereafter ... Secondly ... As soon as ... Meanwhile ... Presently ...	Then ... Finally ... In the meantime ... Next ... Eventually ... Soon ... In the first place ... Afterwards ...
Restating a point or giving an example			
In other words ... For instance ...	To demonstrate ... Specifically ...	For example ... To illustrate ...	One such occurrence ... Also ...



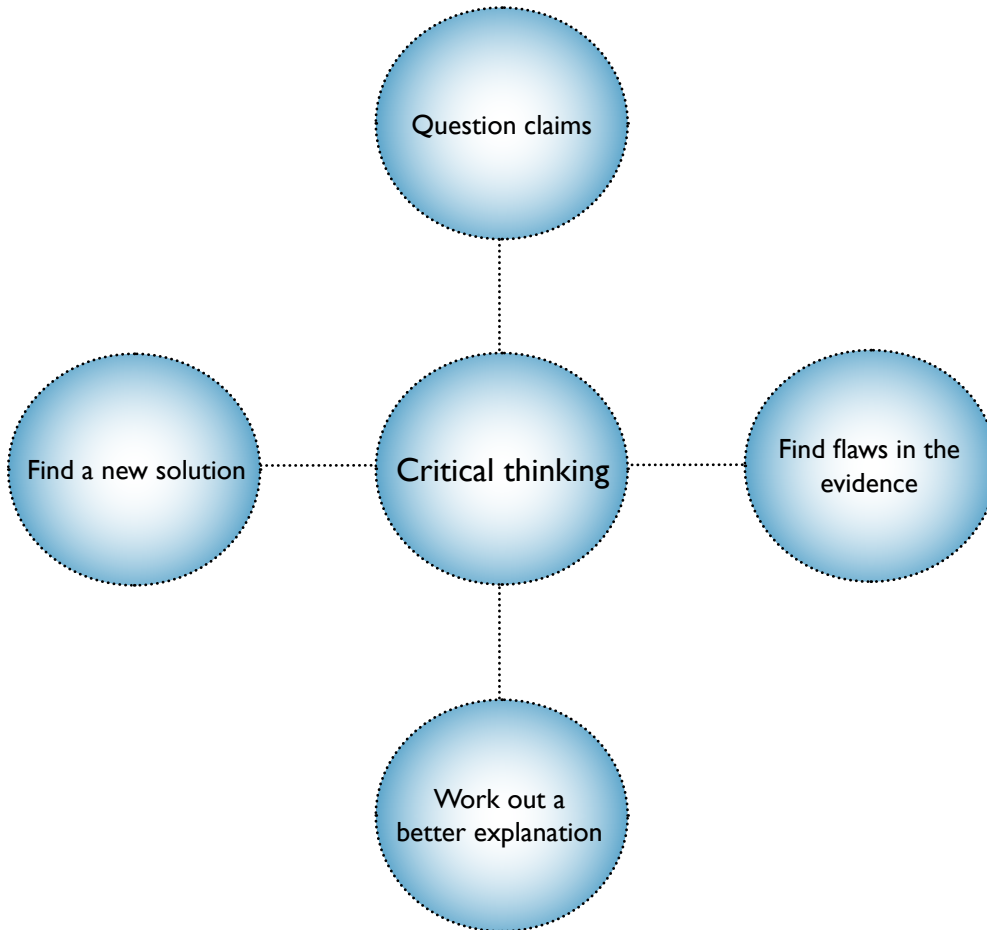
## Task words commonly used in essay questions

<b>Account for</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain why something has occurred.</li> </ul>
<b>Analyse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take apart a concept or statement in order to consider its elements.</li> <li>Answers should be very methodical and logically organised.</li> </ul>
<b>Argue</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An argument means to clarify, prove or accuse (see <i>Critical thinking</i>, p. 15).</li> <li>You must have a particular point of view supported by evidence from reliable sources.</li> </ul>
<b>Assess</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This requires a judgment about an idea or subject.</li> <li>You may need to state whether the idea or subject being discussed is valuable or relevant after acknowledging points for and against it.</li> <li>Your judgment should be influenced by other authors' views as well as your own opinion (similar to <i>Evaluate</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>Comment on</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State your opinion on a topic or idea.</li> <li>You may explain the topic or idea more fully.</li> <li>Your opinion must be supported by evidence from reliable sources.</li> </ul>
<b>Compare and contrast</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires a balanced answer that sets items side by side and shows their similarities and differences.</li> </ul>
<b>Contrast</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires an answer that points out only the differences between two or more topics.</li> </ul>
<b>Critically</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Often used in conjunction with other directive words, such as <i>critically discuss</i>, <i>critically examine</i> or <i>critically analyse</i>.</li> <li>It does not mean criticise.</li> <li>Requires a balanced answer that points out mistakes or weaknesses and indicates any favourable aspects of the subject of the question.</li> <li>The decision or overall judgment you make must be supported with evidence from reliable sources.</li> </ul>
<b>Define</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires an answer that explains the precise meaning of a concept.</li> <li>A definition answer will include a discussion of a concept and may also state the limits of a concept.</li> </ul>
<b>Describe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires you to identify and outline the attributes or characteristics of a subject.</li> </ul>
<b>Differentiate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See <i>Contrast</i>.</li> </ul>
<b>Discuss</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the item or concept, and then give details about it with supporting information, examples, points for and against, plus explanations for the facts put forward from various points of view.</li> <li>This can be one of the most difficult types of essay question.</li> </ul>
<b>Enumerate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires you to list or specify and describe items or ideas one by one.</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See <i>Assess</i>.</li> </ul>
<b>Examine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires you to investigate a topic thoroughly.</li> </ul>
<b>Explain</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer a detailed and exact rationale behind an idea or principle, or a set of reasons for a situation or attitude.</li> <li>The explanation should increase the reader's understanding of a topic or idea.</li> </ul>
<b>Explore</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See <i>Examine</i>.</li> </ul>
<b>Generate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This often requires you to come up with new ideas or interpretations on a subject.</li> </ul>
<b>Hypothesise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A hypothesis is a theory regarding particular occurrences. You confirm hypotheses through testing.</li> <li>Suggest the reasons for, and processes by which something has occurred.</li> </ul>

<b>Illustrate/ demonstrate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires an answer that consists mainly of examples to demonstrate or prove the subject of the question.</li> <li>• It is often accompanied with further instructions.</li> </ul>
<b>Interpret</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very similar to <i>Explain</i>.</li> <li>• Describe what your subject means.</li> <li>• Examine the key components of a topic or idea and give an evaluation of it.</li> </ul>
<b>Investigate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research, study and carefully survey all areas of the subject.</li> </ul>
<b>Justify</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give only the reasons for a position or argument.</li> <li>• The proposition to be argued may be a negative one.</li> <li>• It should convince the reader of your point of view.</li> </ul>
<b>Outline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarise information about a subject.</li> <li>• Only the main points and not the details should be included.</li> <li>• Questions of this type often require short answers.</li> </ul>
<b>Prove/disprove</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both of these require answers that demonstrate the logical arguments and evidence connected with a proposition.</li> <li>• Prove requires the points 'for', and disprove requires the points 'against'.</li> </ul>
<b>Relate (relationship)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make links or connections between two or more ideas, and show how these ideas are related, as well as the nature of the relationship.</li> </ul>
<b>Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyse, criticise and comment on the main ideas of a topic.</li> </ul>
<b>State</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires an answer that expresses the relevant points briefly and clearly, without lengthy discussion or minor details.</li> </ul>
<b>Summarise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See <i>Outline</i>.</li> </ul>
<b>Trace</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is frequently used in historical questions (but not only in History courses).</li> <li>• Requires a statement and brief description—in logical order—of the stages in the development of a theory, a person's life, a process, etc.</li> </ul>

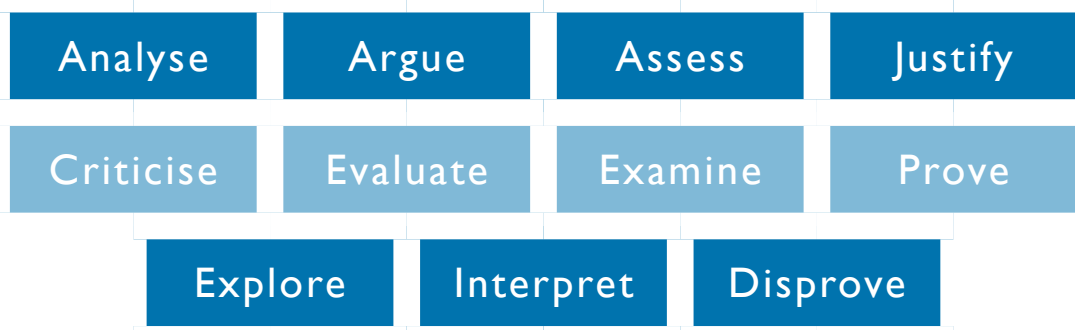
# Critical thinking

Critical thinking is used to develop new knowledge or understanding about a subject. When your lecturer or tutor asks you to 'be more critical', they are asking you to take an 'objective' view and to question or reflect upon the claims being made, either by yourself or others.

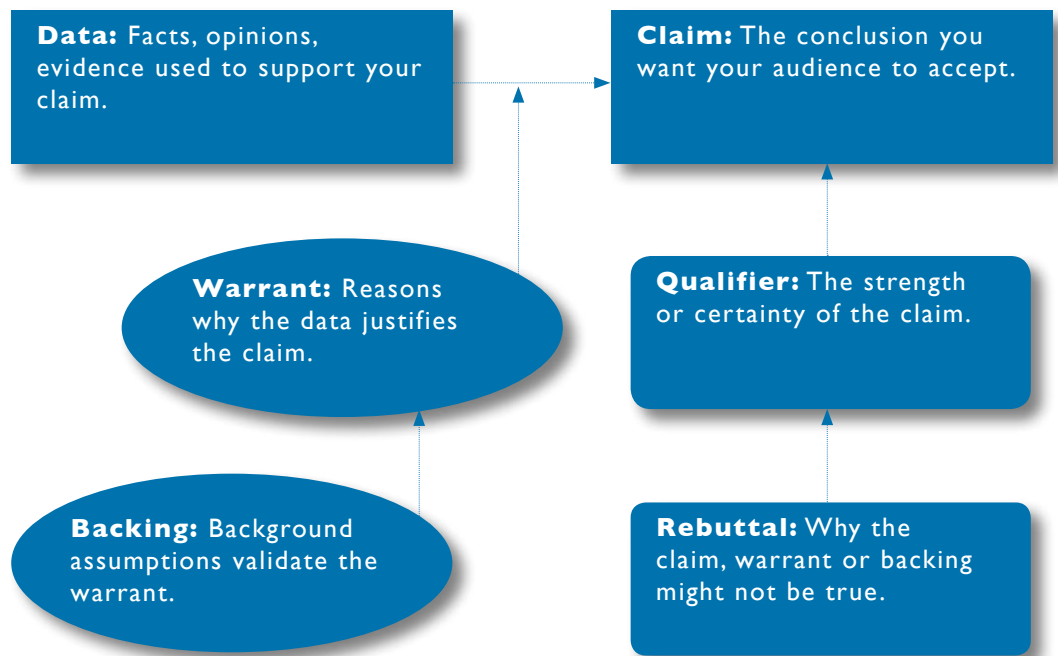


Critical thinking is a questioning process where you can find flaws in the evidence. This pushes you to find a better explanation or form a new solution to a problem.

Critical thinking is required when an assignment asks you to:



You can improve your critical thinking by separating the ideas in your readings and your own writing into different parts in order to consider how they fit together (see the Critical thinking template in the Templates section).



**The Toulmin Model.** Toulmin, S., Rieke, R. & Janik, A. (1985). *An Introduction to Reasoning*, New York: Macmillan.

Critical thinking element	Purpose	Example
1. Claim	The claim is the argument you want your audience to accept. You summarise your argument in the thesis statement of an essay.	It will be argued that although logistical concerns warrant consideration, the value of the unique geography and wildlife outweigh the difficulties of Australia's remote location as a tourist destination.
2. Data	Data is the evidence that supports your claim. You should source data from academic sources such as peer reviewed articles, government publications or other types approved by your lecturer and available via the library.	Australia's Tourism Commissioner states that 87 per cent of tourists (2000–2004) cited extraordinary natural phenomena as a significant motivating reason for their visit to Australia (RET, 2009). A study with Australia Post found postcards featuring Australian animals were sent overseas more frequently than all other postcard types combined (Zeehan, 2008, 52). ...tourists often cite remoteness as a positive reason to travel to Australia. A British backpacker claims that he, 'came to Perth because it was the most isolated city on earth' (Georgiou, 2007, 30).
3. Warrant	Warrant is what explains <i>why</i> the data supports the claim. Thinking about warrant can improve your argument, helping you to avoid simplistic or invalid thinking. Sometimes you need to explain your warrant explicitly in your essay or sometimes it can be assumed depending on your reader.	What people say actually influences what they do. International postcards are most frequently sent by tourists. The experience of a British backpacker is representative of tourists more broadly.
4. Backing	Backing is the principle or underlying authority that grounds the warrant. Backing can be a rule, theory, law or fact that persuades your audience to accept that the warrant is reasonable. Just like warrant, backing can be part of your critical thinking process and may or may not end up explicitly discussed in your essay.	87 per cent is a statistically significant number of tourists. Tourists do not choose their stamps randomly. Tourists chose their stamps based on their own preferences, rather than the preferences of the people they are sending the postcard to. Backpackers spend 68 per cent of total tourist dollars spent in Australia.
5. Rebuttal	Rebuttal is any evidence that counts against the data, warrant or backing of an argument.	Overseas visitors take an average of 17 hours to reach Australia, twice as long as travel to other geographically unique locations (Proctor & Thomas, 2004, 35).
6. Qualifier	A qualifier is used to alter the strength of a claim.	While it is true that Australia is one of the more remote tourist locations on earth, this distance offers an additional component to a traveller's experience and sense of adventure.

Use the critical thinking elements to:

- Summarise the argument structure of an author.
- Evaluate the claims made by an author.
- Structure your own assignment.
- Assess your own assignment for logical weaknesses.

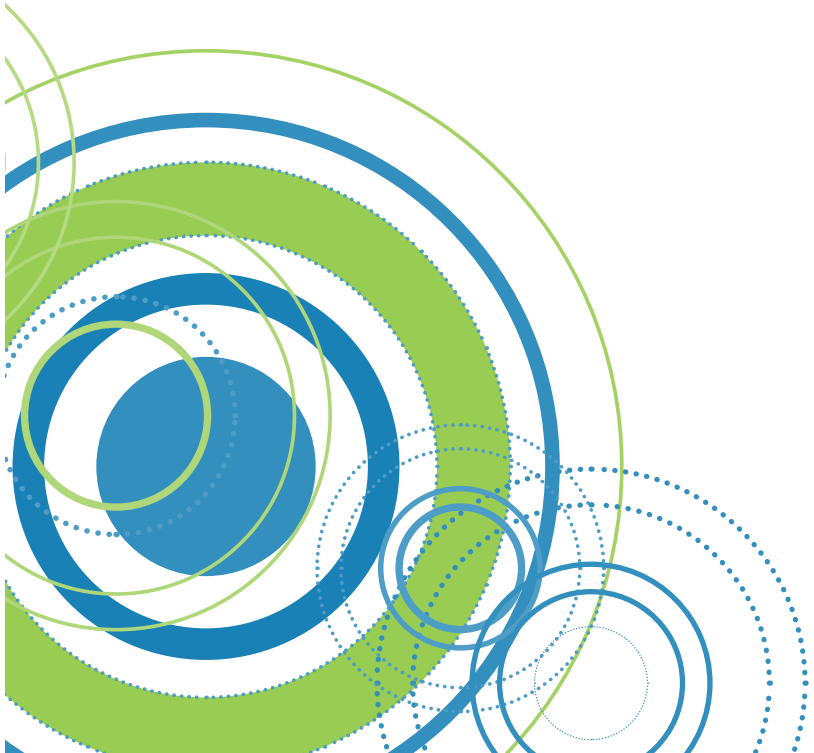




Use and photocopy  
templates to help  
when studying for your  
assignments:

[www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au)

**cite | write**  
TEMPLATES









## REFERENCING AND NOTETAKING TEMPLATE

On the following pages are useful templates for you to copy.

**First, record all the important reference details for** the information sources you use for your study and assignment, such as books, book chapters, journal articles and websites. Once you have these details, you can easily adapt the information to suit the referencing style you are required to use for your assessment (QUT Harvard, QUT APA, QUT Numbered or QUT Legal).

**Next, record extra details about those sources** so that you can find the information again and recall particular facts or details about the information that might assist you in your writing task. Note down keywords you used to find the information, and other details such as a call numbers or web addresses.

**Then,** use the lower section of the template to **write notes from your reading and research**, organising them into the three columns:

- 1st column: record themes or key ideas from your reading.
- 2nd column: record the page number that the key idea was on and some notes or a direct quote.
- 3rd column: record your own comments and questions about the key idea/s. This may be how you will use the idea in your assignment, or how this idea relates to other ideas you have found in your research. Also, list new questions the idea raises that might need further clarification or investigation. This column helps you to think critically about the information you are finding for your assignment.



Details	Tip	Your notes
WHO?	Record the <b>name</b> of the person, people or organisations that have written, compiled or produced the article, book, book chapter, website, DVD, etc. These may be authors, producers, editors, directors, government bodies or companies.	
WHAT?	Record the <b>title</b> of the information. This might be a single title, such as a book, government report or Act, or you might need to record two titles—e.g. a book title and the title of a book chapter, or a journal article title and the title of the journal.	
WHEN?	Record the <b>date</b> the information was published, released or produced. For websites, this is the date you visited the site and retrieved the information. If there is no date, make a note so you know you have not forgotten this detail.	
WHERE?	Record the <b>place</b> the information was published, released or produced. For websites, this is the site address of the information.	
WHAT ELSE?	Record <b>other details</b> that you might need to use in your referencing, citing and writing. These might include page numbers, volume and issue numbers of journal articles, DOI numbers and names of databases.	
KEYWORDS	Record <b>key words and concepts</b> you used to find this information. This will help you find the information again or to search for related information in other sources.	



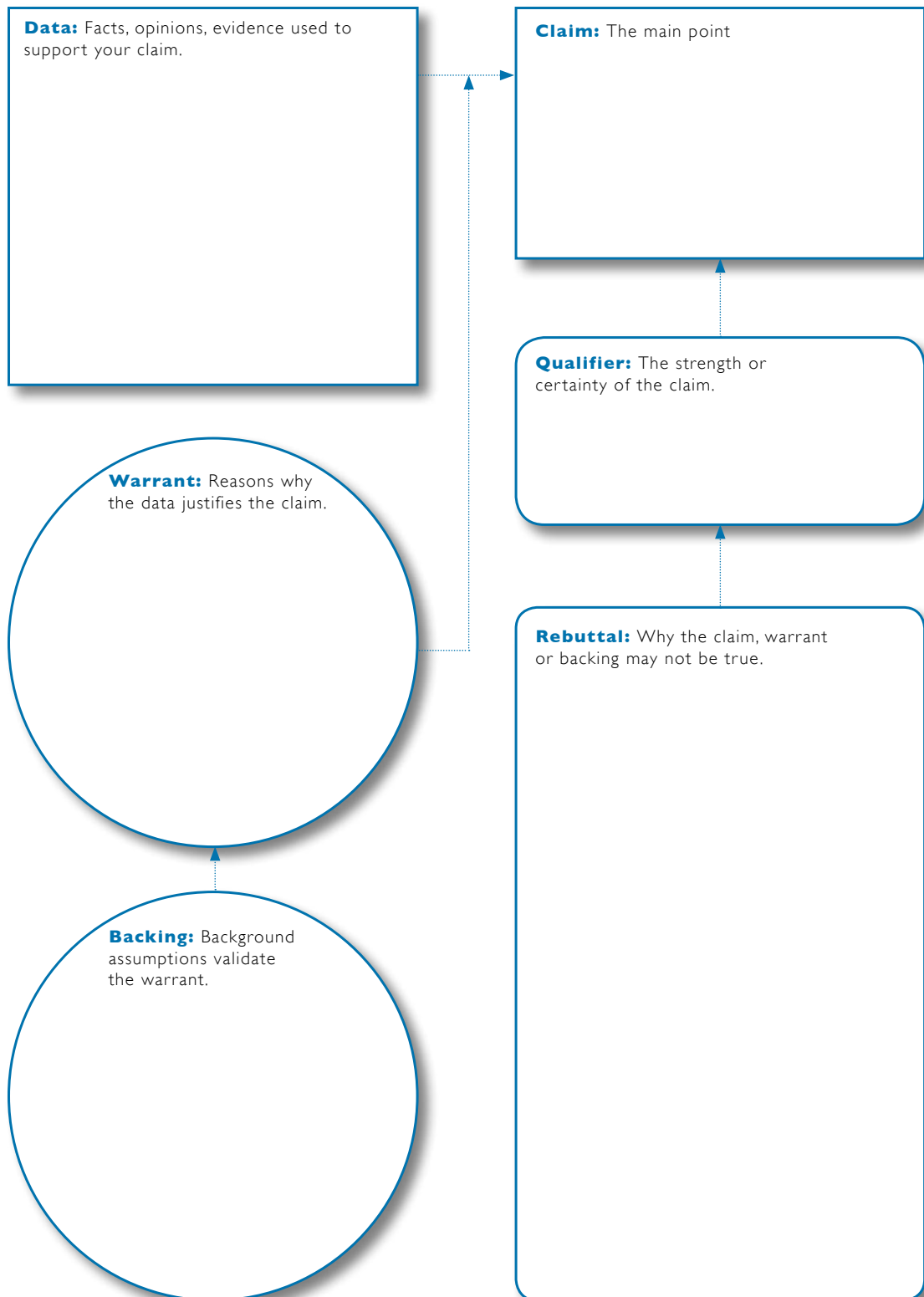
**Extra notes:**

Themes/key concepts	Notes/quotes (and page numbers)	Your comments, questions or new ideas

# Critical thinking template

Use this template to:

- Analyse the argument of an author.
- Evaluate the claims made by an author.
- Structure your own assignment.
- Edit your own assignment for reasoning weaknesses.









# How to use QUT **cite | write**

READ THIS TO BEGIN

## **The booklet**

Explains the different styles used at QUT and why you need to reference carefully.

It also explains how to write academically.

USE THIS ALL THE TIME

## **The website**

[www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au)

Provides you with reference and citing examples and writing guides.

Use it for:  
planning your writing  
citing your sources  
compiling your reference list.

## **The people**

[www.library.qut.edu.au/help](http://www.library.qut.edu.au/help)

At the Learning and Research Desks you can ask questions about referencing and writing your assignment. You can also chat with us online.

ASK FOR HELP