

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

Provides you with reference and citing examples and writing guides.

Use it for:

- planning your writing,
- citing your sources and
- compiling your reference list.

The people

www.library.qut.edu.au/help

At a Helpdesk you can ask questions about referencing and writing your assignment. You can also chat with us online.

ASK FOR HELP

The videos

www.youtube.com/libraryqut

Watch our short videos for quick tips about citing and referencing.

QUICK TIPS

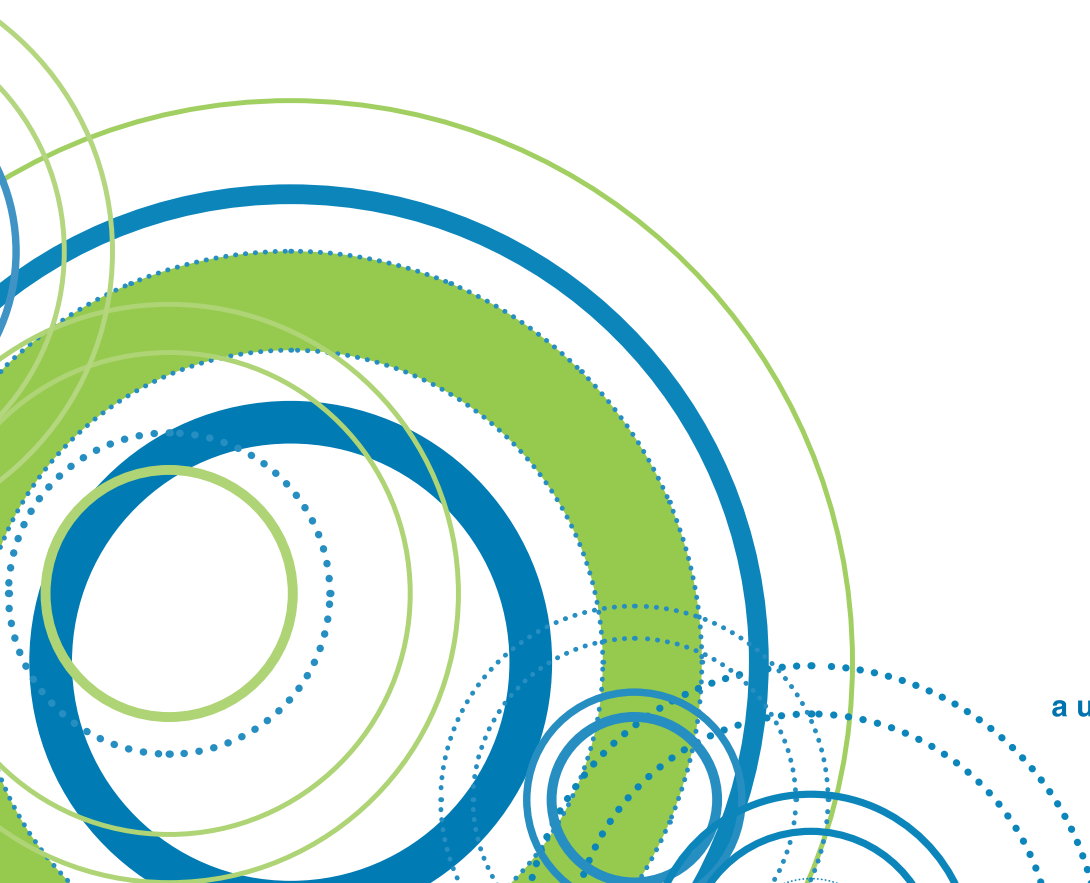


Your introductory guide to
citing, referencing and
academic writing at QUT

www.citewrite.qut.edu.au

cite | write

a university for the **real** world®





Find specific
examples for QUT
referencing styles at
www.citewrite.qut.edu.au

cite

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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.

You can watch the short video below for an overview of citing and referencing.



Referencing: The basics

www.youtube.com/libraryqut

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:

- 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 you used in your work. You may have used it by:

- copying the work of another student
- directly copying any part of another person's work (even if you bought it)
- directly copying and pasting information from the internet
- paraphrasing or summarising someone else's ideas without citing the author
- using the main 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 about academic honesty at www.citewrite.qut.edu.au/academichonesty



Academic integrity QUT

www.youtube.com/libraryqut

QUT's recommended reference styles

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

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

This print guide provides examples using *APA*. Examples using other styles can be found at www.citewrite.qut.edu.au

Which style should 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.

Go to www.citewrite.qut.edu.au to see examples of how to apply each style to different types of resources. The online tool shows you 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).

Step 1.

QUT APA QUT Harvard QUT Legal QUT Numbered

Basic principles
Books
Journal articles
Newspaper articles
Online materials
Creative works
Public documents
Figures
QUT resources and personal communications

Types of Books

Print
Electronic book (eBook)
Chapter in an edited book
Edition other than the first
Dictionary/encyclopaedia
Conference paper and proceedings
Thesis or dissertation (unpublished)

Need help with:

Authors? DOIs? Publication details? Page, volume, issue? Building your own?

cite | write

Step 2.

QUT APA QUT Harvard QUT Legal QUT Numbered

Types of Books

Print
Electronic book (eBook)
Chapter in an edited book
Edition other than the first
Dictionary/encyclopaedia
Conference paper and proceedings
Thesis or dissertation (unpublished)

Back

Example for QUT APA - Books - Print

In-text

According to Neal (2005, p. 32) ... OR "... this is not comparable" (Neal, 2005, p. 3)

Reference List

Neal, M. J. (2005). *Medical pharmacology at a glance* (5th ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Note: For first editions, omit all edition information.

Need help with:

Authors? DOIs? Publication details? Page, volume, issue? Building your own?

cite | write

Refer to *Build your own reference* on p.10 to better understand the components of a reference. This will also help you with constructing a non-standard reference.

Citing in brief

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 *APA* or *Harvard*), 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. Check with your lecturer or tutor if you are not sure.

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, p. 5).



author's family name year page

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

to see examples in APA,
Harvard, Vancouver
and Legal.

Citation using a numbered style

When adding a citation in your text, either place a superscript number (start at¹) or a number in brackets (1) at the end of the information you are citing.

Example

At the beginning:

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

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), referred to in QUT citewrite as *Legal*.

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

Go to
www.citewrite.qut.edu.au
to see examples in APA,
Harvard, Vancouver
and Legal.

Direct quotations: copying words exactly

When directly quoting, remember to:

- copy the words exactly from the original source
- include the author, date and page number as the in-text citation.

A general guideline is to use no more than 10 per cent of the word count as direct quotes in your assignment, however check your faculty guidelines as some disciplines have different requirements.



Did you know?

Some students think it is okay to 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 a general rule, APA suggests fewer than 40 words and Harvard suggests fewer than 100 words.

Go to
www.citewrite.qut.edu.au
to see examples in APA,
Harvard, Vancouver
and Legal.

Long quotations

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

- Use a block quotation (i.e. not part of your sentence).
- Indent the block from the left and right margins.
- Use single spacing for the block.
- 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, p. 1).

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

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':

Example

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:

Example

"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:

Example

"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.

- When writing in your own words, you can still retain technical terms that do not have synonyms.
- Make sure you accurately represent the source/author's ideas.
- If you paraphrase, you still need to provide an in-text citation.
- Page numbers are not always required for paraphrases. Check with your lecturer or tutor if you are unsure.

Example

Direct quotation

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



How to paraphrase

www.youtube.com/libraryqut

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

Go to
www.citewrite.qut.edu.au
to see examples in APA,
Harvard, Vancouver
and Legal.

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 and should start on a new page.

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.

Details could include:

- Author
- Date
- Title
- Digital object identifier (doi)
- Volumes/numbers
- Journal title
- Date reviewed
- Database used
- Page numbers.

You can usually find this information at the beginning of a book or journal article.



Referencing: Using sources

www.youtube.com/libraryqut

Example reference list

Abu-Taieh, E. M. O., & El-Sheikh, A. A. (2010). *Handbook of research on discrete event simulation environments: Technologies and applications* [IGI Global edition]. doi:10.4018/978-1-60566-774-4

Fox, G., & Manley, M. (2009). Hardness methods for testing maize kernels. *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, 57, 5647–5657. doi: 10.1021/jf900623

Kildea, S. (1992). Risk and childbirth in rural and remote Australia. In J. Bailey, D. du Plessis, & D. Lennox (Eds.), *Infrontoutback: Proceedings of the 2nd Biennial Australian Rural and Remote Health Conference* (pp. 60–66). Toowoomba, Qld: Cunningham Centre.

For more information about formatting reference lists in the different styles you can watch a video.



Referencing: Formatting for assignments

www.youtube.com/libraryqut



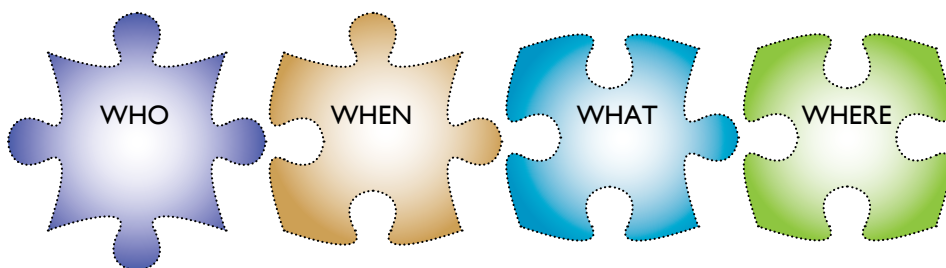
Did you know?

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.

Build your own reference!

No style guide provides examples for all possible references. You may need to construct your own using components of a variety of examples. If in doubt, ask at a helpdesk.

Regardless of style, all references are essentially made up of four key elements ...



Who is responsible for creating the work?

- Author(s)
- Organisations
- Directors
- Artists

When was the work created?

- Year
- In press
- Year, month, date (if continually updated)

What is the work called?

- Title
- Journal article title
- Book or chapter title
- Webpage title

Where can you find the work?

- Where it was published
- Journal details, name, volume, issues and pages
- Where it is archived online

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—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. However, 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.

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 a Helpdesk for more information.

QUT Library has created a subject guide that lists some strengths and weaknesses of various bibliographic management tools. It is available at the following link:

www.library.qut.edu.au/research/toolkit/referencing/other.jsp

For more help or information, ask at the library.

www.library.qut.edu.au/help

Copyright - What is it?

Copyright is an exclusive bundle of rights which protects works from unauthorised use. Copyright is automatic and exists in work once it has been expressed in writing, recorded, or captured. Copyright does not protect ideas, it protects the expression of ideas and exists in works such as literary (books, journals), artistic works (photographs and images), dramatic (plays), musical, cinematographic films, sound recordings and broadcasts.

Copyright for Students

The Copyright Act 1968 (Cth) has a number of exceptions that allow works to be used (copied, scanned or communicated) without the permission of the copyright owner. These exceptions are called 'fair dealing'. As students, the fair dealing exception for research and study will be used most frequently. You can only use a certain amount of the copyright work under fair dealing. The amounts are:

Literary works – 10% or 1 chapter of a book or journal article.

Artistic works, Sound Recordings & Films – you must consider if your use is 'fair'. Fairness is determined based on the purpose and nature of your use, the possibility of obtaining the material commercially, the effect of your use on the potential market for the work and how much of the work you intend to use in relation to the whole of the work.

For example if you wish to use a film in your research or study you can only use a small amount of the film and you must consider whether you could obtain the film commercially and whether your use would have an impact on the market before you use the film

For more information see the QUT Copyright Guide at www.library.qut.edu.au/copyrightguide/generalinfor/ or contact the University Copyright Officer at qut.copyright@qut.edu.au.





Find guides for
note taking and
writing assignments at
www.citewrite.qut.edu.au

write

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Academic writing style

At university you will be expected to write using academic style and structure. 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 rather than 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 the people involved (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. 23 for more information on how to write effective paragraphs).
- Write in third person, unless otherwise specified in your assessment guidelines (refer to p. 17 *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.
 - **Acronyms** such as TAFE or Qantas (which are 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'. Technically QUT is an initialism, although it is commonly referred to as an acronym. When using initialisms for the first time, 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

The conclusions you make from the evidence in your assignment should be fair, reasonable and provable. Definitive or absolute words make your statements 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.

Tentative words limit or modify statements to make them less than absolute.

Examples of definitive and tentative words

Definitive words	Tentative words	Example sentences using tentative language
Everyone All	Several Numerous Most Many	Several studies report ... Numerous patients have reported benefits in the first round of trials.
Definitely	Often Perhaps	This often results in ...
Prove	Indicated Suggest	It is indicated in the data ...

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.

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 provide evidence to support 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. Your argument and supporting evidence is outlined logically, in a series of points, written in paragraphs in the body of your work.

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. 4 of *Cite*)

Conclusion

The end of your assignment should repeat the topic, summarise the structure and restate your key message, such as the thesis statement in an essay. (See also p. 24.)

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. 27.)

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 assignment should introduce the topic, state the thesis and outline the structure of the assignment. (See also p. 22.)

Paraphrase

This involves expressing the same meaning as a text using different words from the original. Paraphrased text should be referenced. (See also p. 8.)

Peer reviewed (scholarly) article

A peer reviewed article is information written by an academic or expert in the field or discipline that 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 a 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, 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. 9.)

Research

For undergraduates, to *research* a topic means to write your assignment based on knowledge that has already been investigated, 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 and is dependent on the word length of the assignment, with longer assignments 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 in your assignment.

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 variations.

Task analysis

Before you start researching and writing your assignment, it is important you understand what the question is asking. Understanding the key words in the question will assist you with the research process and to more clearly structure your writing. The table below explains task words commonly used in assignment questions.

Task words commonly used in assignment questions

Account for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain why something has occurred.
Analyse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take apart a concept or statement in order to consider its elements. Answers should be very methodical and logically organised.
Argue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An argument means to clarify, prove or accuse (see <i>Critical thinking</i>, p. 27). You must have a particular point of view supported by evidence from reliable sources.
Assess	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This requires a judgement about an idea or subject. You may need to state whether the idea or subject being discussed is valuable or relevant after acknowledging points for and against it. Your judgement should be influenced by other authors' views as well as your own opinion (similar to <i>Evaluate</i>).
Comment on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State your opinion on a topic or idea. You may explain the topic or idea more fully. Your opinion must be supported by evidence from reliable sources.
Compare and contrast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires a balanced answer that sets items side by side and shows their similarities and differences.
Contrast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires an answer that points out only the differences between two or more topics.
Critically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often used in conjunction with other directive words, such as <i>critically discuss</i>, <i>critically examine</i> or <i>critically analyse</i>. It does not mean criticise. Requires a balanced answer that points out mistakes or weaknesses and indicates any favourable aspects of the subject of the question. The decision or overall judgement you make must be supported with evidence from reliable sources.
Define	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires an answer that explains the precise meaning of a concept. A definition answer will include a discussion of a concept and may also state the limits of a concept.
Describe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires you to identify and outline the attributes or characteristics of a subject.
Differentiate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Contrast.
Discuss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. This can be one of the most difficult types of assignment question.
Enumerate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires you to list or specify and describe items or ideas one by one.
Evaluate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Assess.

Examine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires you to investigate a topic thoroughly.
Explain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer a detailed and exact rationale behind an idea or principle, or a set of reasons for a situation or attitude. The explanation should increase the reader's understanding of a topic or idea.
Explore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Examine.
Generate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This often requires you to come up with new ideas or interpretations on a subject.
Hypothesise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A hypothesis is a theory regarding particular occurrences. You confirm hypotheses through testing. Suggest the reasons for and processes by which something has occurred.
Illustrate/ demonstrate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires an answer that consists mainly of examples to demonstrate or prove the subject of the question. It is often accompanied with further instructions.
Interpret	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very similar to Explain. Describe what your subject means. Examine the key components of a topic or idea and evaluate it.
Investigate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research, study and carefully survey all areas of the subject.
Justify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give only the reasons for a position or argument. The proposition to be argued may be a negative one. It should convince the reader of your point of view.
Outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarise information about a subject. Only the main points and not the details should be included. Questions of this type often require short answers.
Prove/disprove	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both of these require answers that demonstrate the logical arguments and evidence connected with a proposition. Prove requires the points 'for', and disprove requires the points 'against'.
Relate (relationship)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make links or connections between two or more ideas, and show how these ideas are associated, as well as the nature of the relationship.
Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse, criticise and comment on the main ideas of a topic.
State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires an answer that expresses the relevant points briefly and clearly, without lengthy discussion or minor details.
Summarise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Outline.
Trace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is frequently used in historical questions (but not only in history courses). 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.



Task analysis: Starting your assignments
www.youtube.com/libraryqut

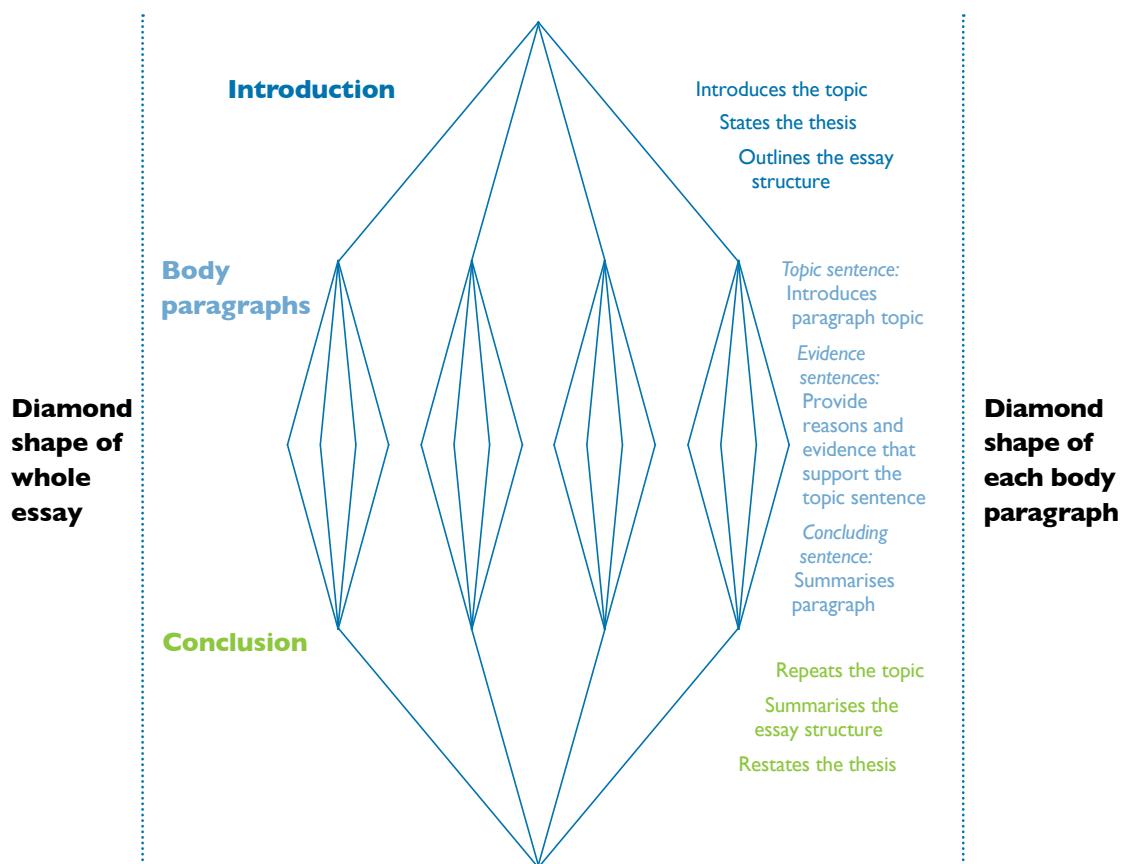
Academic writing structure

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 writing at university. An essay is composed of an introduction, body paragraphs and a conclusion.

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.

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 that 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

Tourism is the third largest industry in Australia 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 that 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 that 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 related to this topic.
3. Cite evidence from your research to support the point you are making.
4. End with a concluding sentence that 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 in the table on p. 22.

Paragraph element	Purpose	Example
1. Topic sentence	This sentence starts by referring to the thesis 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 correctly 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 that is the main point of your essay.

Example of a conclusion

This is the conclusion of the example assignment question on p. 22.

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 your essay. These should be 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 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'.

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 transition 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 ... 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 ...

Integrating evidence

In addition to ensuring logical flow in your writing, it is important to incorporate evidence from academic sources to support your arguments.

Example

According to Proctor and Thomas (2004), it is Australia's isolation that is a key factor in tourists' decision making.

Example

Harris disputes this argument, noting that "..."(2009).

Example

Proctor and Thomas' (2004) rationale is supported by Brown and Clark (2012) who state that ...

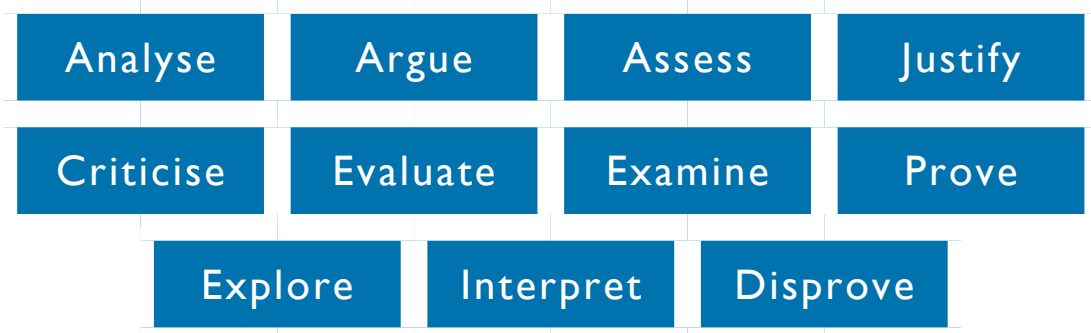
Useful words for integrating evidence

Useful words for integrating references and quotes into your assignments		Useful words for integrating additional sources into your work to agree with existing evidence	Useful words for integrating additional sources into your work to refute existing evidence
Articulates	Demonstrates	Affirms	Argues
Asserts	Explains	Corroborates	Challenges
Claims	Hypothesises	Supports	Contradicts
Comments	Observes	Substantiates	Contrasts
Indicates	Predicts	Verifies	Debates
Reports	Reasons		Disputes
States			Doubts
Suggests			Rejects
			Refutes
			Opposes

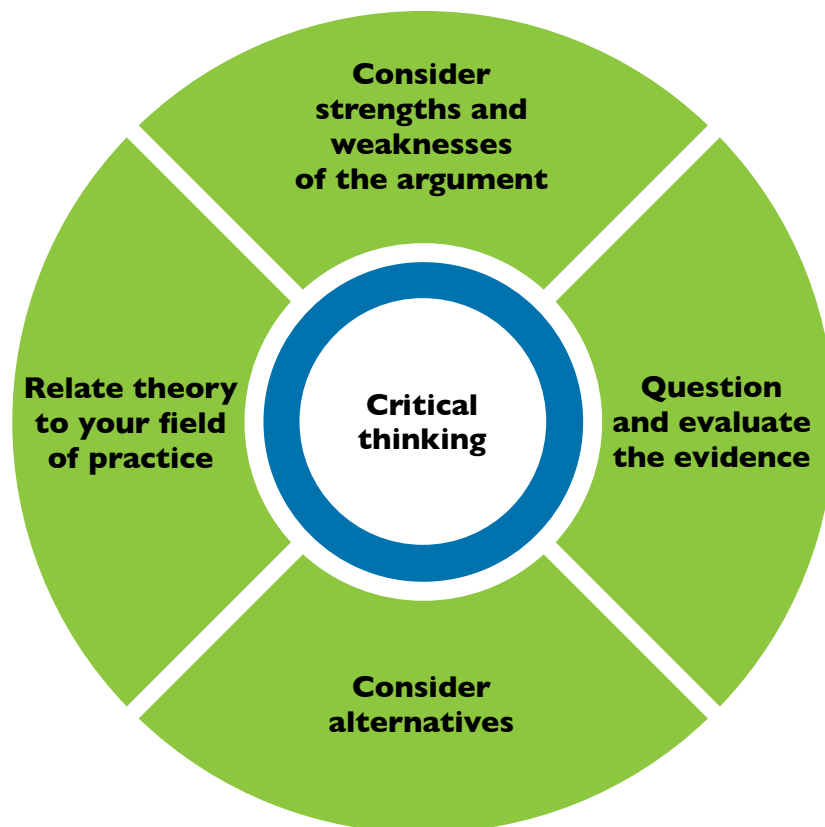
Critical thinking

Critical thinking is a questioning process that is central to writing, reading and learning at university.

Critical thinking is required when an assignment asks you to:



Critical thinking is a skill used to develop new knowledge or understanding about a subject. When you are asked to 'be critical', this means you need to question the arguments being made, either by yourself in your own writing, or by others in your readings. The following are options to consider when thinking critically.



Critical thinking model

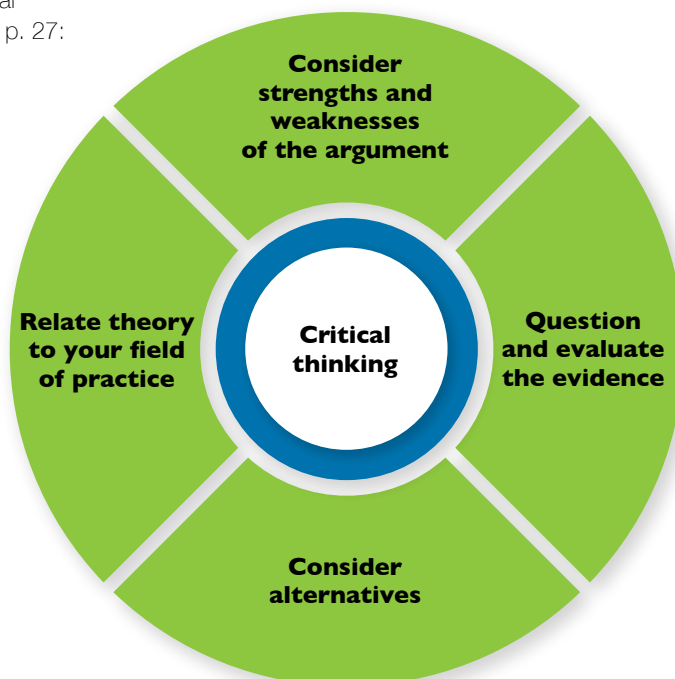
Improve your critical thinking by separating the thoughts you wish to convey in your writing into three sections. This enhances clarity for your reader.



Critical thinking: example



Remember these critical thinking elements from p. 27:



When:

- reading and selecting evidence
- explaining the relevance of your evidence to your claim.

Elements of critical thinking

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, p. 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, p. 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 postcards randomly. Tourists chose their postcards 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 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, p. 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.

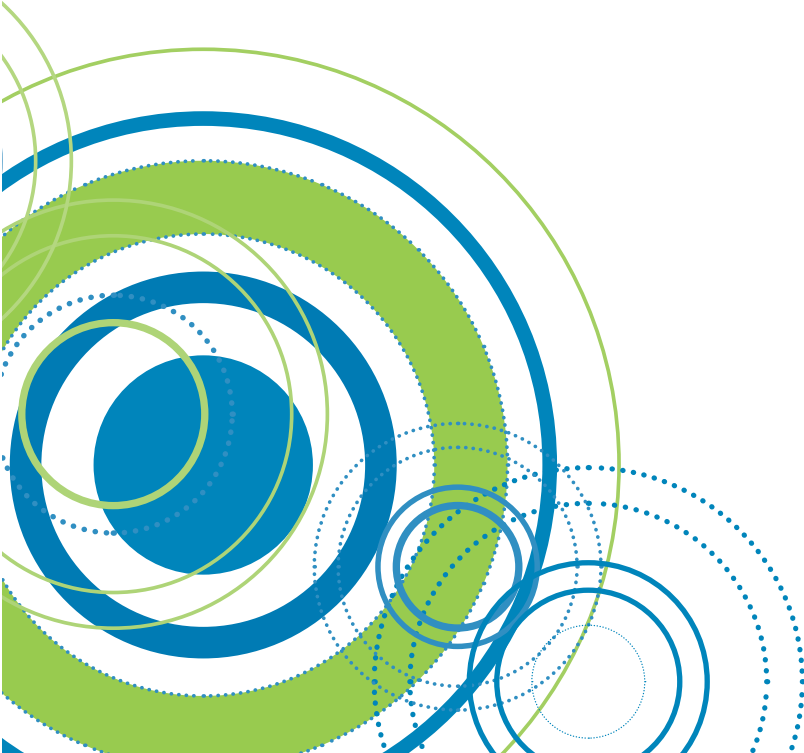
Use the critical thinking elements to:

- 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.



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TEMPLATES





Referencing and notetaking template

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 (e.g. Harvard, APA, Vancouver or 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 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 name 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 title 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 date 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 place the information was published, released or produced. For websites, this is the site address of the information.	
WHAT ELSE?	Record other details 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 key words and concepts you used to find this information. This will help you find the information again or to search for related information in other sources.	



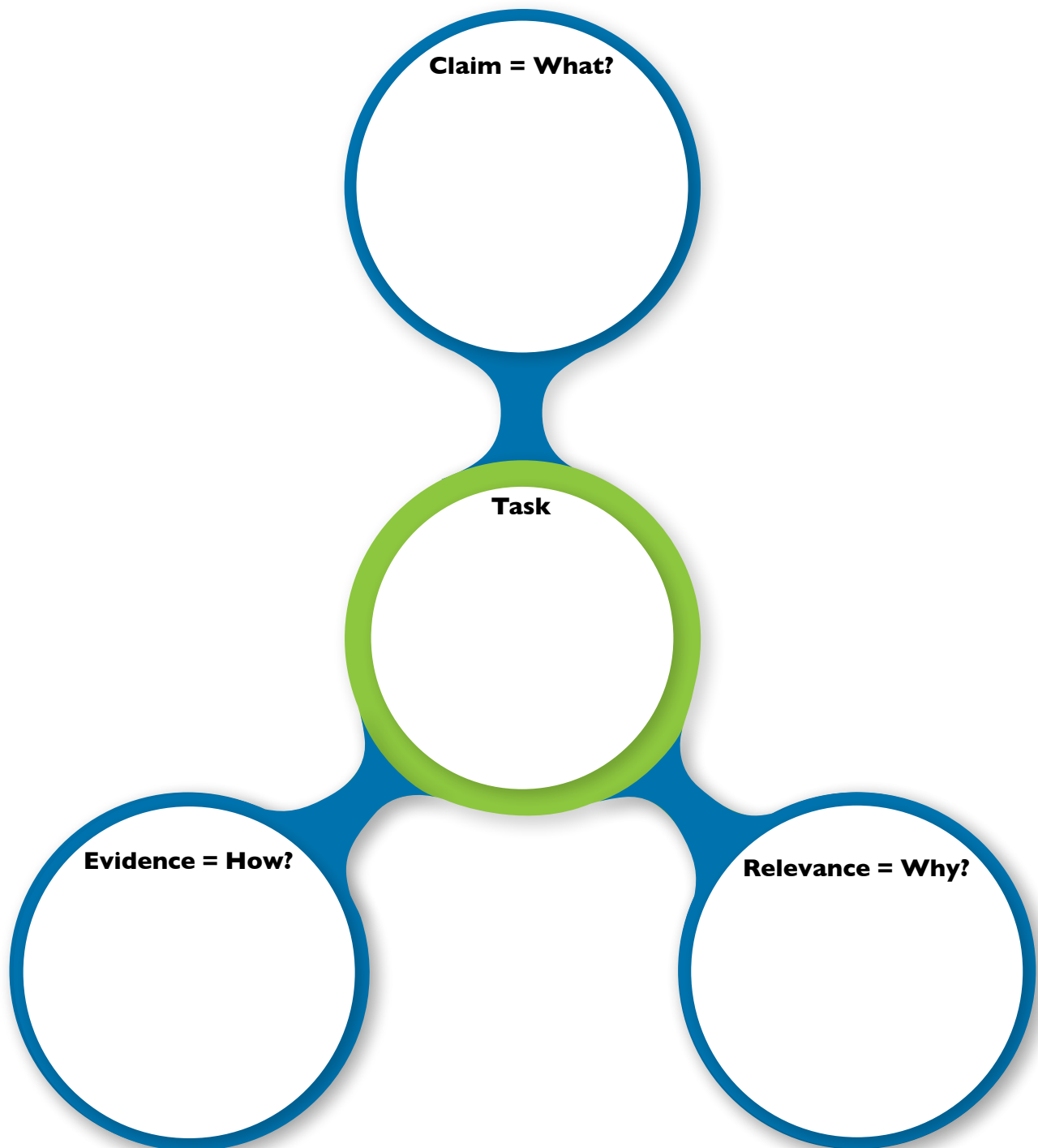
Extra notes:

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.



NOTES:

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes, filling the majority of the page.



Feedback

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.

This publication is accurate as at January 2018.

Please visit the service website for the most up-to-date information.

