WORKSHOPS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS SERIES

Researching Your Assignment

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RESEARCHING YOUR ASSIGNMENT

In this workshop you will be able to:

- **Understand** your assignment question
- **Analyse** your question to find keywords
- **Search** using ECU WorldSearch
- Find the **ECU Subject Library Guides** for more information and help
- Do a basic search on our most popular **databases**
STEP BY STEP

There are a number of steps to research your assignment:

1. Plan your assignment
2. Unpack your question
3. Analyse your question
4. Develop your research
5. Evaluate your sources
6. Cite while you write!
Step 1: Plan Your Assignment

Be aware of due dates
Check the due dates for all your assignments - write it down in your calendar!

Allow time to search
Do this as early as possible!
Databases regularly do maintenance on weekends.

Choose reliable information
Find credible sources that are research-based scholarly resources.
## Step 2: Unpack Your Question

Consider the following questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What exactly are you being asked to do?</td>
<td>What questions do you need to answer?</td>
<td>Where will you look for information?</td>
<td>What is the assignment criteria?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marking key / Rubric

Always refer to the marking key / rubric when starting an assignment

The marking rubric gives details about the assessment criteria which will include:

• What you will be marked on
• How the marks will be given
• What the criteria or expectations are

Not all rubrics and marking guides are the same

You need to read each one carefully and pay attention to what is needed.
# BUSINESS RUBRIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MARKING CRITERIA</th>
<th>FAIL</th>
<th>PASS</th>
<th>CREDIT</th>
<th>DISTINCTION</th>
<th>HIGH DISTINCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Content:** 
  Critical analysis:  
  - Criteria addressed  
  - Logical argument  
  - Depth of analysis  
  - Supporting evidence  
| **Writing Conventions & Language Use:**  
  - Grammar  
  - Spelling  
  - Punctuation  
  - Style and tone | Repeated errors and weaknesses in language mechanics that interfere with meaning. Inappropriate style and tone | Superficial use of language. Sentences show little variety. Inconsistencies in tone, tense and person. | Some mechanical and usage errors that do not interfere with meaning. Appropriate style and tone. | Evidence of superior control of language. Tone is consistent and appropriate. Occasional error may be apparent. | Essentially error free. Varied and complex sentences; precise, appropriate language, advanced vocabulary. Tone is suitable for topic and audience. |
| **Presentation:**  
  - Structure of report  
  - Format  
  - Referencing  
UNDERSTANDING THE QUESTION

Instruction words
These words tell you how to approach the question. They include verbs like, 'discuss', 'analyse' & 'explain'.
- Each type requires a different type of answer.

Content words
These words describe your topic. They include key noun phrases, adjectives & verbs.

Focus words
These words set the parameters for your answer. They include place, time & type.
Identify key words, terms or phrases and their synonyms

Let's say your research question is:

"Are people who play video games at an increased risk of being violent?"
Are people who play video games at an increased risk of being violent?
Brainstorm similar words, terms or phrases...

broader concepts

media
video games
first person shooters
FPS games

behaviour
violent
school fights
physical assaults

narrower concepts
Step 4: Develop Your Research

Choose the right type of resource for your assignment

**Books**
Books provide a useful **starting point** for an introduction to the subject, background information and theory.

**Journal Articles**
Journal articles generally provide the **most recent research** or information on a very specific topic. ECU Library subscribes to a range of online journals.

**Reports**
Reports provide useful information from government, professional or research organisations and companies.
WHERE TO SEARCH...

If at first you don't succeed: LOOK SOMEWHERE ELSE!

ECU WorldSearch
ecu.edu.au/library

Subject Guides
ecu.au.libguides.com

Databases
ecu.au.libguides.com/az.php
Step 5: Evaluate Your Sources

Ask yourself: Is it CRAAP?

**CURRENCY**
- When was the information published/posted?
- Has the information been updated?
- Are the links working?

**RELEVANCE**
- Does the information relate to your topic?
- Have you looked at other places to find the best one?

**AUTHORITY & ACCURACY**
- Who is the author? Are they an expert?
- Is there a reference list provided?
- Is the information supported by evidence?

**PURPOSE**
- Is the author's purpose clear?
- Is the information fact, opinion or propaganda?
- Is there a political, cultural, religious bias?
Peer Review

WHAT IS IT?

It is a process where researchers evaluate the quality of other researchers' work. This means that the research work is accurate and clear.

WHY USE IT IN YOUR ASSIGNMENT?

Your teachers expect you to use true, reliable, and authoritative information in your university-level assignments. Peer review articles are the gold standard of information in higher education.
STEP 6: CITE WHILE YOU WRITE!

The referencing style in ECU is generally APA Style, 7th ed.

REFERENCING

Referencing is a formal way of acknowledging the sources you have used in your assignments.

WHY REFERENCE?

It is important to reference all sources in your assignment for a number of reasons:

- to provide evidence of your research,
- to provide support for your argument,
- to avoid plagiarism, and
- to allow the reader to follow on from your research.
THANK YOU

Please fill in our feedback form!

https://eaecu.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_becg6op5UPbaWmF

Enquiry Hours

Joondalup and Mount Lawley
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10:00am-5:00pm, Saturday to Sunday

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