

# Assessment Planning process



University of  
Southern  
Queensland

## Steps to success



## Step 1: Break down the question

Start by rewriting your question in your own words beginning with: 'This task asks me to...'

Some assessment pieces can be quite complex and you may have to perform more than one task in the one question. Make the question easier to understand by breaking the tasks down into chunks first.

Glance at your rewritten version regularly while researching and writing your assignment to ensure you are staying on task.

Use our academic words PDF to guide you on how to identify the task words in your assignment. The example on the next page shows you how to identify task, content and limiting words in an assignment.

Here's a sample assignment topic: 'Describe Maslow's hierarchy of needs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century context.'

- Begin your analysis by rewriting the question – 'This task asks me to describe Maslow's hierarchy of needs'. Use our task words sheet to understand what the task word is asking you to do.
- Next, focus on the key parts of the question – the task words, content words and limiting words.

**Task words** tell you how to answer the question. In this case, the task is 'describe'. This means you will need to describe the most important points related to the topic.

**Content words** tell you what topic area/s to focus on. In the example this would be 'Maslow's hierarchy of needs'. You now know to focus your research on this topic.

**Limiting words** allow you to define what parts of the topic area you should focus on. In this example 'in the 21<sup>st</sup> century context' is the limiting phrase. You need to make sure that your writing only focuses on the theory in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Step 2: Write a plan

It is a good idea to prepare a plan for writing your essay. Check out our [essay plan template](#) to get you started. A good way to begin planning is to begin by considering your word limit. Then break down your word limit into the chunks or paragraphs required to address your task.

## Step 3: Conduct research

For help with conducting research, check out [this section of the library website](#).

## Step 4: Write draft

Now it's time to write! Use your plan to begin writing your draft. Take it in chunks and remember; there is no right or wrong way to write your assignment and you don't have to do it from the beginning until the end. If there's a section you really want to work on first- then start there! Or perhaps you like to do the easier sections first before managing the more difficult ones.

If you find that you are getting stuck finding the words, you can try:

1. Reading more about the topic. Looking at the way the journals and books about your topic are written may inspire you to start.
2. Don't worry about making it sound perfect the first time- that's why we call it a draft! Put it in your own words first and try adding references and an academic tone later.
3. Meet with a learning advisor to discuss your brain fog and develop strategies to start writing.

*As long as you are writing- you are making progress!*

## Step 5: Revise

Now is the time to start fine-tuning your writing. Here are some strategies that may help:

Strategies for revising
Have a friend or study buddy read your work. (Be sure they don't write the assignment for you- but instead offer helpful suggestions about your writing.)
Take a break. Once you have finished the draft- try to give yourself some time between writing it and revising. This will help you look at your work with fresh eyes.
Use <a href="#">Studiosity</a> for fast feedback.
<a href="#">Chat to a Learning Advisor</a> about questions you have about your draft.
Use our <a href="#">Proofreading and editing checklist</a> .
Print it out and/or read it aloud to yourself.

## Step 6: Submit

You are now ready to submit your assignment. Congratulations! Be sure to check the requirements of our submission on the StudyDesk. For example, do you submit 1 or multiple files? What are the formatting requirements?

## Step 7: Reflect

Getting your grades back can be both an exciting and daunting experience. Try to remember that feedback is designed to help you improve. If you would like to know more about understanding feedback, check out our [Understanding Feedback](#) page.

### Final tips

- Assignment writing doesn't need to be a linear process, however our 7-step guide can help you understand what is expected.
- Each assignment you write will be different. Take the time to unpack the assignment question first before diving into writing.
- Make time for drafting and revising. This will ensure you are making the most of your



## Further support

For further help and support, contact your student learning advisors via the support for learning team here:

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