



How to write an assignment - step one

Time Management

Work out how much time you have. This may seem obvious, but you don't want to be panicking on submission day because you haven't finished.

A little bit of writing every day always helps! See if you can give yourself one hour a day for writing/editing/redrafting your assignment.

Analyse the Question

Break your question down into three parts:

1. The instruction: *what are you being asked to do? 'Reflect'? 'Discuss?' 'Explore?'*
2. The topic: *what is the overall topic of the assignment?*
3. The focus: *what specifically about this topic are you writing about?*

Question the Question

Write mini-questions that arise from the assignment brief. For example:

'In what ways has the European Convention on Human Rights affected public discourse?'

What kind of discourse - newspapers, blogs, social media? What public conversation existed before the ECHR? You can use these questions as places to begin researching.

Research

You will likely be reading throughout your writing process, but a good place to begin is to check the recommended reading list in your handbook and also review any lecture slides or notes you have.

Organise your research into themes. This will make it easier for you to use it when you begin planning and writing.

Plan your assignment

Planning is one of the best ways to ensure you answer the question correctly and that your work flows.

Academic Writing usually follows a General To Specific structure, which means that you begin with the general information (such as background) before moving onto more detailed, complex, or nuanced arguments.

Plan using themes

Writing thematically makes your text much clearer and offers greater chance for criticality.

Themes are simply related topics. For example, you might have a theme on 'The advantages of the gig economy'. Different authors will have different ideas, but all these ideas can still be grouped together under this theme.