



STUDENTS ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINE

This guide is meant to support you as you work on your assignments. It will help you to overcome some of the challenges associated with academic writing. Each assignment is usually given with instructions and please take note but otherwise here is a general format which can be adjusted accordingly. This guide will basically bring out two key issues;

1. Assignment presentation guidelines
2. Referencing

HOW TO FORMAT AND PRESENT YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Formatting and presenting your assignment correctly is important - this page explains what this means and how to do it.

Presenting assignments - General appearance or lay out of your work matters!

Good presentation really is important:

Your assignment should create a favorable first impression to the examiner, this implies that your work should be orderly, utilize uniform writing style and ensure that your points are clearly spelt out and use correct referencing style.

The front / Tittle page

Must clearly specify the module name (Advanced....) and number (BPC21112...),

- Student name
- Actual word count and the
- Date of submission
- Information should be put at the center for neatness

Note; do not include inappropriate designs on the front cover for this has no contribution to your academic work.

Writing style

- Select a clear style – use **Arial** unless instructed otherwise.

Font size

- Use 14 for the Title page and headings
- Use font size 12 for the body of your assignment

Spacing

- Use 1.5 spacing
- Leave space between paragraphs
- Each point should take a paragraph unless you have been asked to list
- Justify – work should be justified

Headings

- Use bold for headings, **not** underlining or italics.
- Essays may not require subheadings; reports usually do. In an essay explain your points in paragraphs

Numbering

- Number all pages except the title page.
- Number your questions.

Headers and footers

- Insert a header or footer on each page (except the title page).
- The header or footer should contain the following information:
 - your name
 - student number
 - the page number.

Word count

- Include a word count (the number of words in your assignment).
- The title/title page, reference list and appendices are not included in the word count.

- Your assignment should not be 10% above or below the required number of words.

Answering an essay Question

Your essay should have 3 components

- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusion

Introduction -should contain some comment on the topic of the essay - Definitions are needed, or some explanation of what you understand by the question. This section should also state which aspects of the topic you intend to deal with and why.

- ✚ Show that you understand the topic or issue in question
- ✚ Clearly indicate areas you are going to write about
- ✚ Show evidence of further reading /research (this involves correct references)
- ✚ Be concise (8-9% of the total number of words)

Body of the essay – Note each of the main points and explain them in detail with relevant examples and illustration.

- Pay attention to clarity of expression and consistency, logical organization (ideas should flow smoothly), grammatical construction, spelling and sentence construction.
- Don't use "I" statements such as "I think." Likewise, avoid the personal pronouns "you," "we," "my," "your" or "our".
- Use clearly defined paragraphs for each main point and ensure that there is a logical flow of your ideas.
- Demonstrate understanding of concepts in question as well as knowledge
- References to literature is very essential to back up or enhance your ideas/arguments
- Acknowledge all sources used and avoid plagiarism

Conclusion- emphasize the main ideas, but restated in a fresh way: don't use the same language again. If the question requires your own view it will be appropriate to give it here but they should be consistent with the arguments in the body NOT new concepts

REFERENCING

Use the Harvard referencing system

Referencing within a text

If an author's work is referred to in an assignment, the author's surname and the year of publication is mentioned, below are some of the ways of citing this information:

Nursing research can be defined as the systematic and rigorous collection and analysis of data on the organisation, delivery, uses and outcomes of nursing care for the purpose of enhancing clients' health (Parahoo, 1997).

Or

Parahoo (1997) defines nursing research as the systematic.. ..

Or

According to Parahoo (1997) nursing research is defined as the systematic. . .

Or

In defining research Parahoo (1997) refers to the systematic. . . .

Citing two authors – both names are used for example

A study undertaken by Cleve and Trevor (1998) outlines

Cleve and Trevor (1998) show that

Several controversies were highlighted (Cleve and Trevor 1998)

Citing more than two authors-

Write first name of the author followed by '*et al*'

Only the first author is named in the assignment, followed by 'et al'. An article by Morris, Kurtz and Lador (2008) would be referenced as follows:

Morris et al. (2008) state that.. ..

However, all the authors should be listed in the reference list.

Citing several sources

When using several sources to support the same statement, the author(s) of each source is listed in chronological order with the earlier publication date first separated by semi- colons:

Consequently, a number of authors have showed that home based care is an effective mode of caring for the terminally ill patients (Carpol, 1988; Froy, 1989; Kole, 1989; Hartz, 1990; Kult and Wolb, 1991)

Citing public body

In cases where there no individual named as author, but an organization or corporate body, then use the name of the organization as the author: For example recent research shows that addiction is unlikely among..... (Hospice Africa Uganda, 2015)

NOTE; for any other citations (using journals) refer to notes on academic writing
Remember to list your references in alphabetical order

What makes a 'Good' Essay?

What makes a good piece of written work may not be completely defined here but the list below defines criteria that are often relevant. There are some important issues to be considered and these include Argument, evidence, criticism, originality, organization, relevance and quality of English.

Quality of argument

- ♦ Does the essay make a strong a clear argument?
- ♦ Does it show that you understand the concepts and theories you are using
- ♦ Does it make use of literature? Or is the argument too general or unclear?
- ♦ Is theory inadequately used? Used wrongly? Have you left out anything crucial

Quality of evidence

- ♦ Is the argument well supported, for instance, with empirical evidence?
- ♦ Is the evidence well selected?
- ♦ Is it accurate and to the point? Or Cited and used inaccurately or redundantly?

Criticism

- ♦ Have you successfully mounted a critical argument about your theoretical and empirical sources?
- ♦ Have you been critical or you are just simply repeating what you have read and have failed to highlight contrasting view points

Originality

- ♦ Is your argument original?
- ♦ Have you used what you have learnt to think creatively and constructively about the topic in question
- ♦ Have you developed your own ideas or you have added nothing to what you have read

Organization

- ♦ Is the essay well organized?
- ♦ Does it have a consistent structure?
- ♦ Does it develop as it goes along?
- ♦ Is there a clear conclusion?
- ♦ Is it within the word limit?

Relevance

- ♦ Is what you have written to the point?
- ♦ Does it answer the question?
- ♦ Is it vague?
- ♦ Is it irrelevant to the topic?

Quality of English

- ♦ Is your work punctuated?
- ♦ How are the spellings?
- ♦ Is it illegible