

BASIC STEPS FOR THE ASSIGNMENT PROCESS

STEP 1: SELECT A QUESTION

- If you can choose your question, consider what interests you and if there are enough materials and resources on the topic to fully answer the question.

STEP 2: QUESTION THE QUESTION

- Highlight any instructional words in the question e.g. analyse, discuss, compare and contrast (a study sheet listing instructional words and their meanings is available in the library).
- Highlight any key words that tell you what you have to write about.

Here is an example of a nursing essay question and its **instructional words** and **key words**:

Discuss the characteristics of a successful **therapeutic relationship** including the **communication skills** necessary in the development of the relationship.

STEP 3: CREATE A SEARCH TERM LIST FROM YOUR KEY WORDS

- Create a list of search terms from the key words you identified in the question. Search terms are words that are another way of saying the key words. For example, search terms for the key words therapeutic relationship and communication skills are:
 - Therapeutic alliance
 - Professional-patient relations
 - Partnership
 - Interaction
 - Interpersonal skills
- By having a variety of search terms it increases your chances of finding information relevant to your question.
- You will use these search terms to search the library's collection of books, journals, articles and databases.

STEP 4: THE SEARCH

- Use your search terms to search on the library's catalogue of books, journals and magazines for relevant information.
- Use your search terms to search the databases and the e-book library available on the library's website.
- As you locate useful information, make notes or photocopy the relevant page but always remember to record on these where the information came from. It is important to do this because otherwise you may find yourself at the end of your assignment attempting to recreate your searches to locate a resource to get the correct reference and citation.

STEP 5: MAKE A PLAN

- Make an essay plan deciding what your main points are going to be and their order within your essay.
- Once you have decided on your main points sort through the information you have collected and select the most relevant and useful evidence and examples.

STEP 6: WRITE THE FIRST DRAFT

- Do not worry about style or presentation, instead focus on getting all your information down in the best possible order.
- Remember each paragraph should focus on one main idea. Make sure you explain and expand this idea and include supporting evidence and examples.
- On the library's website there is an information sheet on essay structure.

STEP 7: EDIT AND PROOFREAD

- Check you have answered the question fully.
- Locate any errors and make any necessary changes.
- On the library's website there is a checklist of questions to help you determine if your essay is meeting general essay requirements.
- Check that you have acknowledged all work that is not your own.
- Check that your APA referencing is correct.
- At this stage get someone to read your essay to check for any errors and give you feedback on if it makes sense and flows well. Ask for honest feedback.
- Edit and redraft as many times as necessary.

STEP 8: FINAL DRAFT

- Pay attention to spelling and presentation.
- Make sure your essay meets S.I.T. assignment requirements that all pages are numbered, the assignment is typed, it is grammatically correct and spell checked, has a wide margin, uses double or one and a half spacing and uses a size 12 font that is easy to read, such as Times New Roman, Arial or Palatino.
- Make sure you include the appropriate cover page, your reference list and bibliography.

STEP 9: SUBMIT YOUR ESSAY ON TIME

- Allow plenty of time to print your assignment in case there is a problem with the printer.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

This guide is general in content. You should check with your tutor for specific instructions and guidelines for any assignments.