

Case study assignments

A case study requires you to analyse and write about a person, a scenario or an organisation. You might be given information about the case in the assessment description, or you may be required to invent or find your own case. The purpose of a case study is to apply the concepts and theories you have learnt about in class to the particular case.

Content

Some case study assignments may require you to provide a short summary of the case in your own words, especially if you have provided your own case study. This will help provide context for the rest of your analysis.

The main part of the assignment will involve you applying the concepts and theories you have learnt about to the case study. This means that you will be referencing research and theory to support your ideas.

A case study might also require you to provide examples of what you would say to a client or another person in the case, and what they might say. These are called verbatim examples.

Structure

Most case studies need to be structured in the same way as an essay, with an introduction, a series of body paragraphs and a conclusion.

However, unlike essays, case studies usually have headings based information in the task description or marking criteria. For example, a client case study assessment that asks students to identify the main issues and prepare a plan of action may have headings such as *Summary of the case*, *Identification of main issues*, *Recommended action plan*.



Style

Case studies require you to write in the third person (people's names, he/she/they, the counsellor, the client etc) when discussing theories or research, or the client, the professional or the organisation in the case.

A case study might require you to use first person ('I', 'my' etc) to provide your own reflections about the case, its personal impact on you, or how you would apply theories and skills to the case. Check with your educator about whether you should use first person.

Tip

Make sure you have a good balance between describing your case study and analysing it. Many students fall into the trap of being too descriptive when writing about their case. Some ways to include analysis are:

- Explaining and giving reasons
- Comparing and contrasting
- Making suggestions and recommendations
- Supporting your ideas with information from sources