
HELP! WHAT DOES MY ASSIGNMENT QUESTION MEAN?

SLS WEBINAR PROGRAM

Student Learning Support

ACAP Australian
College of
Applied
Professions

WEBINARGOALS

During this webinar you will learn:

01 how to unpack an assignment question.

02 how to answer different question types.

03 to use the marking criteria to guide your assignment writing.

WHERE AM I AT RIGHT NOW?

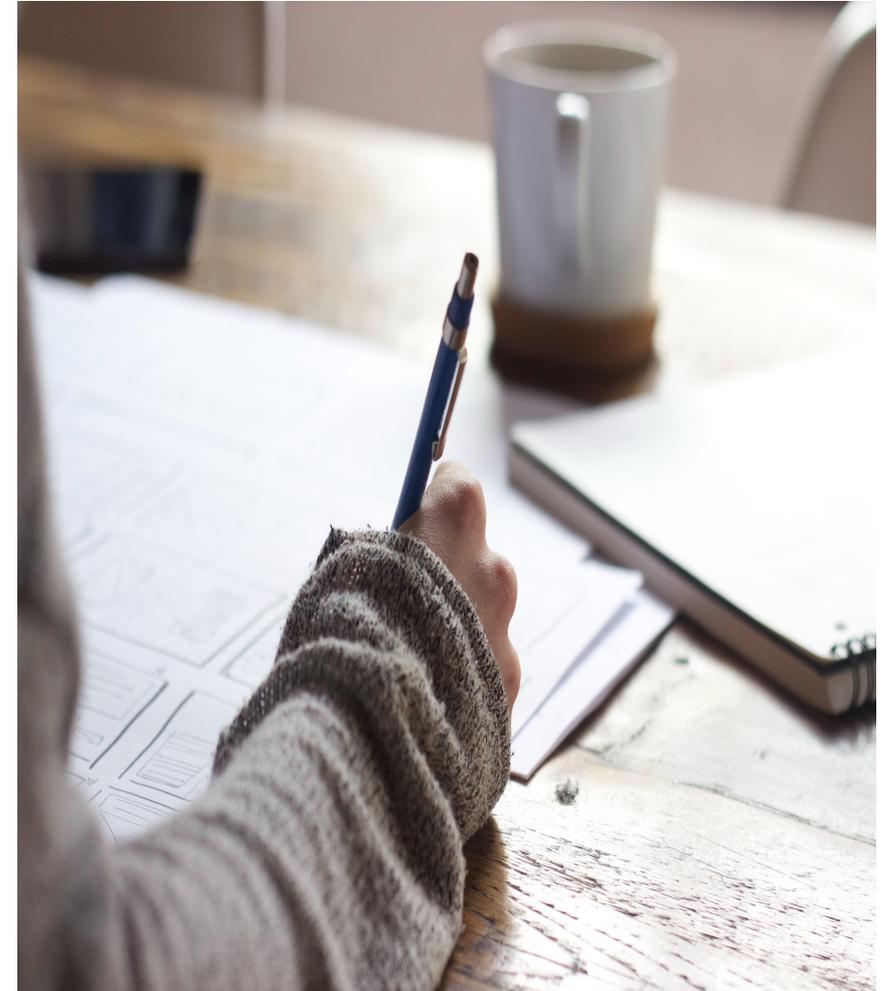
MY EXPERIENCE ANSWERING QUESTIONS IN WRITING

- a) I have **lots of experience** answering complex questions in writing.
- b) I have **some experience** writing answers complex questions.
- c) I have **very little experience** writing answers to complex questions, or not for a long time.
- d) I have **no experience** answering complex questions in written form.

UNDERSTANDING THE QUESTION

CAREFUL TASK ANALYSIS WILL HELP YOU:

- Research and read texts on the right assignment topic
- Answer the question properly
- Achieve a good mark on the assignment



UNPACKING A QUESTION

THREE PARTS TO AN ASSIGNMENT QUESTION

Instruction/task word

Topic



Discuss the effects of the internet on tertiary education



Limiting words

THE QUESTION PARTS

A DETAILED VIEW

1. The **instruction words (sometimes called task words or task descriptors)** tell you the approach you need to take in your answer to the assignment question
2. The **topic words** tell you what the general topic is
3. The **limiting words** narrow down the topic so you know what part of the general topic to focus on

EXAMPLES

SPOTTING THE THREE PARTS OF THE QUESTION

Discuss the influence of popular music personalities on gender role modelling (counselling).

Choose one illicit substance and **examine** the effects that wider factors have had on use trends of this drug throughout this period (criminology).

TASK WORDS

KEEP THIS TABLE
IN YOUR STUDY
SPACE



Task Word	The approach to take in your answer	Task Word	The approach to take in your answer
analyse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Examine the parts closely to see how <i>and</i> why they are related to each other. ✗ Do not <i>just describe or summarise</i>. 	examine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Put the subject “under the microscope”, looking at it in detail. Investigate the reasons, causes and effects, and implications. ✗ Do not <i>just describe or summarise</i>.
assess/ evaluate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Decide the value of, judge or measure the importance of the topic, using evidence. Discuss both the positive and negative aspects. ✗ Do not <i>rely solely on your own opinion</i>. 	explain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify, interpret and describe. You may give reasons for differences of opinions or results and try to analyse causes. ✗ Do not <i>just describe or summarise</i>.
compare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Show how two or more concepts are similar. Indicate the relevance or consequences of these similarities. ✗ Do not <i>talk about only one item</i>. 	identify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Name, or say what the items are <i>and</i> define them. ✗ Do not <i>give a one-word dot point list</i>.
contrast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Set two or more concepts in opposition so as to draw out differences. Indicate whether the differences are significant. If appropriate, give reasons why one item or argument may be preferable. ✗ Do not <i>talk about only one item</i>. 	list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ List and briefly explain the key issues or features of the topic. ✗ Do not <i>give a one-word dot point list</i>.
critically evaluate/ critique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Weigh arguments for <i>and</i> against something, assessing the strengths of the evidence of both sides and then come to a conclusion. Clarify and interpret the material you present. Where appropriate, give reasons for differences of opinions or results, and try to analyse causes. ✗ Do not <i>just describe or summarise</i>. 	outline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Give only the main points, showing the main structure. Talk about big issues surrounding the topic. ✗ Do not <i>go into minute detail or an extended history of the topic</i>.

Download here: <https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/approaching-question-0>

YOUR TURN

MATCH THE WORDS IN RED BELOW TO THE DEFINITIONS IN THIS TABLE

Task / Instruction word	Essay Task
	Decide the value of, judge, measure the importance of.
	Set two or more concepts in opposition so as to draw out differences. Indicate whether the differences are significant.
	Thinking deeply about a topic, analyse your own beliefs and values to gain understanding of a situation/event.
	Consider and offer an interpretation or evaluation in relation to different points of view; consider all angles. Present a point of view on the topic.
	Give the exact words used – word for word

contrast | reflect | verbatim examples | discuss | assess

<https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/approaching-question-0>

ANSWERS

MATCHED DEFINITIONS

Task / Instruction word	What to do in your essay
assess	Decide the value of, judge, measure the importance of.
contrast	Set two or more concepts in opposition so as to draw out differences. Indicate whether the differences are significant.
reflect	Thinking deeply about a topic, analyse your own beliefs and values to gain understanding of a situation/event.
discuss	Consider and offer an interpretation or evaluation in relation to different points of view; consider all angles. Present a point of view on the topic.
verbatim examples	Give the exact words used – word for word

OTHER IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT WORDS TO REMEMBER

Concept:
an important idea

Criteria:
the standards

Factors:
circumstances
bringing about a
result / outcome

Significance:
meaning and
importance

Role:
what part it plays

QUICK QUIZ 1a

IDENTIFY THE INSTRUCTION WORD/S?

Write an essay discussing this statement:

Indigenous culture in Australia has been systematically broken down since white settlement.

The **instruction** word for this question is...

a) Write

b) Discussing

c) Broken down

d) In Australia

QUICK QUIZ 1b

IDENTIFY THE GENERAL TOPIC WORD/S

Write an essay discussing this statement:

Indigenous culture in Australia has been systematically broken down since white settlement.

The **general topic** word/s for this question is/are...

- a) This statement
- b) Systematically broken down
- c) White settlement
- d) Indigenous culture

QUICK QUIZ 1c

IDENTIFY THE LIMITING WORD/S?

Write an essay discussing this statement:

Indigenous culture in Australia has been systematically broken down since white settlement.

The **limiting** word/s for this question is/are...

- a) Broken down
- b) Systematically
- c) In Australia
- d) Since white settlement

QUICK QUIZ 2a

IDENTIFY THE INSTRUCTION WORD/S?

Cognitive and emotional intelligence are considered to be important individual differences in the field of organisational behaviour.

Write an essay critically evaluating these concepts, and discuss how cognitive ability and emotional intelligence can be applied in modern organisations.

The **instruction** words for this question are...

- a) Reflect and discuss
- b) Consider and evaluate
- c) Differentiate and evaluate
- d) Critically evaluate and discuss

QUICK QUIZ 2b

IDENTIFY THE GENERAL TOPIC WORD/S

Cognitive and emotional intelligence are considered to be important individual differences in the field of organisational behaviour.

Write an essay critically evaluating these concepts and discuss how cognitive ability and emotional intelligence can be applied in modern organisations.

The **general topic** word/s for this question is/are...

- a) Intelligence
- b) Organisational behaviour
- c) Individual differences
- d) Modern organisations

QUICK QUIZ 2c

IDENTIFY THE LIMITING WORD/S?

Cognitive and emotional intelligence are considered to be important individual differences in the field of organisational behaviour.

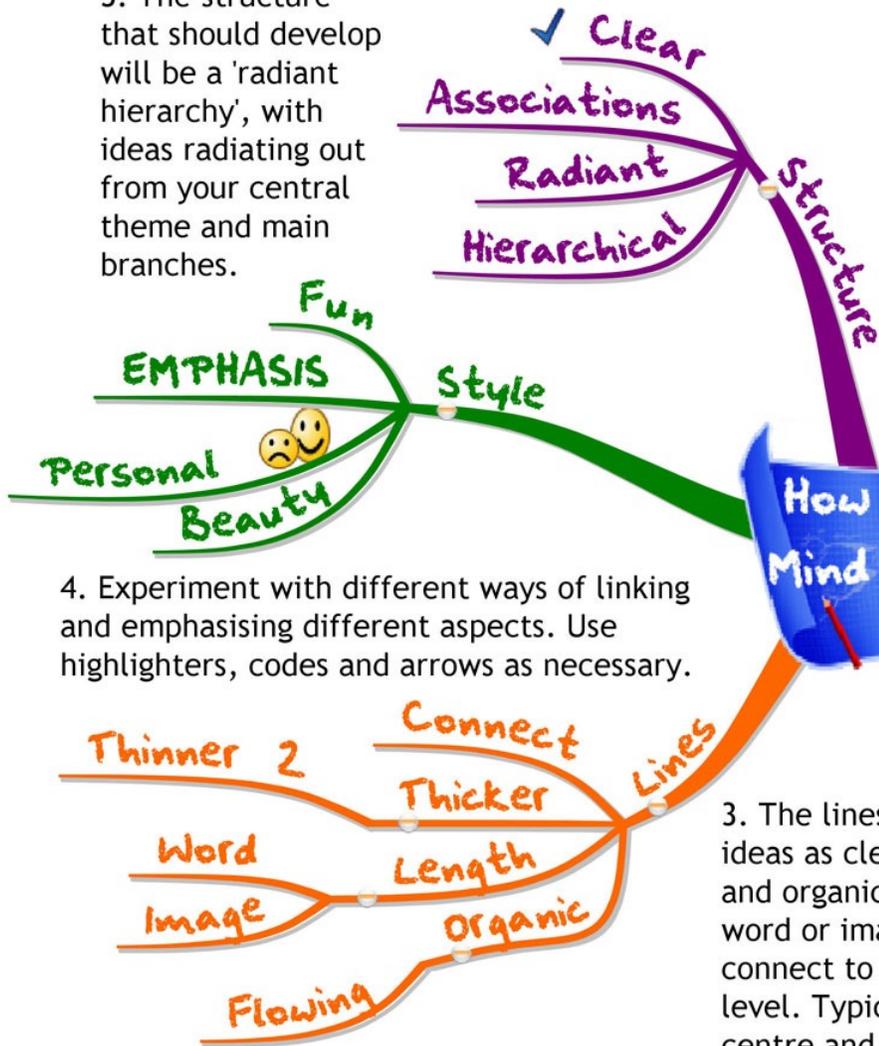
Write an essay critically evaluating these concepts and discuss how cognitive ability and emotional intelligence can be applied in modern organisations.

The **limiting** word/s for this question is/are...

- a) Modern organisations
- b) Important individual differences
- c) Cognitive and emotional intelligence
- d) The field of organisational behaviour

BRAINSTORMING

5. The structure that should develop will be a 'radiant hierarchy', with ideas radiating out from your central theme and main branches.



4. Experiment with different ways of linking and emphasising different aspects. Use highlighters, codes and arrows as necessary.

1. Start at the centre of a blank, landscape page, ideally with a colourful image to represent your subject.



2. Use words and pictures throughout your map. Wherever possible use single KEY words, printed along a line. Each word or picture sits on its own line.

3. The lines make the associations between ideas as clear as possible. Make them flowing and organic, each line the same length as the word or image. Always ensure that lines connect to the end of the line at the previous level. Typically lines will be thicker at the centre and thinner further out.

ORGANISE YOUR IDEAS

PREPARE AN ASSIGNMENT SCAFFOLD

Section	Information for each section (in dot points)	Word allocation
Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Background to topic• Main points• Thesis statement		≈ 5%–10% of your word count
Main point 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topic sentence• Support/elaborate• Evidence/example		≈ 28%–30% of your word count
Main point 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topic sentence• Support/elaborate• Evidence/example		≈ 28%–30% of your word count
Main point 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topic sentence• Support/elaborate• Evidence/example		≈ 28%–30% of your word count
Conclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summary of main points• Restate thesis statement• Final comment		≈ 5%–10% of your word count

UNIT OUTLINE

A ROADMAP TO ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION



[ACAP Home](#) [ACAP Student Portal](#) [ACAP Library](#) [ACAP Learning Support](#) [ACAP IT Support](#) [ACAP Handbooks and Guides](#)

[My Classes](#)

ACAP 2021T3 MULT1015

[Participants](#)

[Grades](#)

[Dashboard](#)

[Calendar](#)

[My courses](#)

[ACAP_SLP](#)

[ACAP_TL](#)

[Writing Support M SW](#)

[Writing Support M Psych](#)

Welcome to MULT1015 Applications in Context



This unit will introduce students the issues of living and working in a culturally diverse professional and social environment. We will examine interactions between our own and others' personal cultural identities, and how these shape our experience of relationships personally and professionally. The unit provides students with an opportunity to explore, analyse and reflect on the cultural context in which you will study and practice your chosen profession, and to develop the foundational critical thinking and reflective skills required for this.

ACAP acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise those whose ongoing effort to protect and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures will leave a lasting legacy for future Elders and leaders.



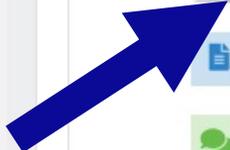
[MULT1015 Unit Outline](#)



[MULT1015 Readings List](#)



[Unit Announcements](#)



ASSIGNMENT EXAMPLE

Week Due	Week 7, Sunday at 11.55pm (AEST/AEDT)*
Assessment Type	Academic Essay
Weighting	50%
Learning Outcomes	a) Execute foundational interpretation of mental health literacy inclusive of programs, strategies, interventions and information for individuals of diverse backgrounds d) Demonstrate a developing mental health literacy using different modalities
Length	1500 words (+/- 10%)

Learning Outcomes are NOT the task

Purpose:

Define mental health literacy in relation to mental health knowledge and attitudes and its recognition in contemporary times. Discuss the ways student counsellors can foster a foundational understanding of mental health literacy. Review and evaluate TWO mental health literacy initiatives that target TWO different individual/community groups and identify the strengths and limitations of the ways mental health literacy is fostered within the initiatives.

ASSIGNMENT EXAMPLE

This is the time by which you need to have submitted your assessment via Turnitin. Late submission will reduce your mark.

Week Due	Week 7, Sunday at 11.55pm (AEST/AEDT)*
Assessment Type	Academic Essay
Weighting	50%
Learning Outcomes	a) Execute foundational interpretation of mental health literacy inclusive of programs, strategies, interventions and information for individuals of diverse backgrounds d) Demonstrate a developing mental health literacy using different modalities
Length	1500 words (+/- 10%)

The assessment type – see <https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/> for help with all assignment types.

How much of your final grade this assessment is worth

Each assessment will address some or all of the Unit Learning Outcomes (see Unit Guide)

The word count gives a guide to how long your assessment should be to adequately address the question. Too short, and you are either missing content, or your analysis isn't strong enough. Too long, and some of your content is irrelevant. If you write too much, the marker will simply stop reading at 10% over the word count.

COUNTED

- ✓ Main body of text
- ✓ Section headings
- ✓ Quotes
- ✓ Verbatim examples
- ✓ In-text citations (e.g. author, date, page number)

NOT COUNTED

- ✗ Title page
- ✗ Table of contents
- ✗ Reference list
- ✗ Appendices

ASSIGNMENT EXAMPLE

SAMPLE CONTENT MARKING CRITERIA

Criterion	High Distinction	Distinction	Credit	Pass	Did Not Achieve Learning Outcomes
Demonstrate knowledge of the ways student counsellors can foster a foundational understanding of mental health literacy 15 marks	<p>Sophisticated demonstration of knowledge of the ways student counsellors can foster a foundational understanding of mental health literacy with highly accurate and detailed discussion supported by at least five highly relevant examples.</p>	<p>Comprehensive demonstration of knowledge of the ways student counsellors can foster a foundational understanding of mental health literacy with accurate and detailed discussion supported by at least four relevant examples.</p>	<p>Effective demonstration of knowledge of the ways student counsellors can foster a foundational understanding of mental health literacy with detailed discussion supported by at least three relevant examples. The discussion of the techniques and strategies requires more refinement.</p>	<p>Adequate demonstration of knowledge of the ways student counsellors can foster a foundational understanding of mental health literacy supported by at least two relevant examples. The discussion of the ways may require more refinement. The example/s provided with at may require more refinement so they are relevant to the context of counselling.</p>	<p>Unsatisfactory demonstration of knowledge of the ways student counsellors can foster a foundational understanding of mental health literacy with unsatisfactory discussion and insufficient or irrelevant examples.</p>

ASSIGNMENT EXAMPLE

SAMPLE STRUCTURE MARKING CRITERIA

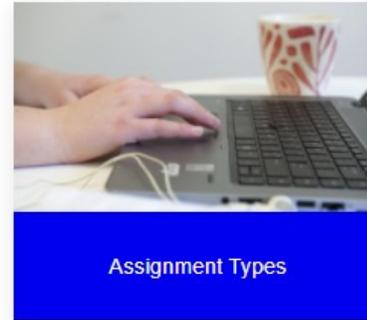
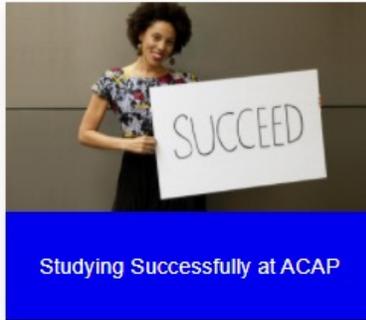
Criterion	High Distinction	Distinction	Credit	Pass	Did Not Achieve Learning Outcomes
<p>Effective communication of academic literacies</p> <p>5 marks</p>	<p>Sophisticatedly presented and easy to navigate. The essay has a consistent, clear flow and linking of ideas.</p> <p>No errors in grammar, punctuation or spelling are evident.</p> <p>No errors in APA referencing.</p>	<p>Comprehensively presented and can be navigated. The essay has a clear flow and linking of ideas.</p> <p>Minimal errors in grammar, punctuation or spelling are evident (less than two).</p> <p>Minor consistent errors in APA referencing.</p>	<p>Effectively presented and for the majority, easy to navigate and most ideas flow and are linked.</p> <p>Few errors in grammar, punctuation and/or spelling are evident (less than four) (does not impede meaning).</p> <p>Few consistent errors in APA referencing (less than four).</p>	<p>Satisfactorily presented and for the majority, can be navigated but at times this can be a challenge.</p> <p>Some errors in grammar, punctuation or spelling are evident (does not impede meaning).</p> <p>Some consistent and inconsistent errors in APA referencing.</p>	<p>Unsatisfactorily presented and cannot be navigated and ideas are not linked.</p> <p>Considerable errors in grammar or spelling are evident (does impede meaning).</p> <p>Major and consistent errors in APA referencing.</p>

YOUR FOCUS

ANSWERING THE ASSIGNMENT QUESTION

- Keep the assignment question and marking criteria next to you when you are researching.
- Check the assignment question regularly when you are writing. Don't go off track!
- In the introduction to your essay, refer directly to the assignment question and give your answer to it.
- In the conclusion to your essay, summarise and comment on what you have written in your assignment AND refer directly back to the assignment question and give your answer to it.

STUDENT LEARNING SUPPORT WEBSITE



<http://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/>

CONTACT US

Reach out to your campus Student Learning Support (SLS) Advisor

<https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/contact-us>

QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU

CONTACT:

Student Learning Support

ACAP Australian
College of
Applied
Professions