

# Working Out How to Start Your Assignments

Getting started can be one of the most difficult parts of doing an assignment. It is difficult to know where to start and what is expected of you.

Many assignments at QUT are tasks with various different sections. This makes the task look very long and rather daunting. However, by breaking down the task and focusing on each section of what you have to do it can help it seem more manageable.

Here is a general strategy to help you get started.

## 1. Collect all your information about the assignment

Look at your unit blackboard site and print out everything that is related to your assignment. This will include:

- The task sheet for the assignment.
- The criteria sheet. This may also be called a CRA (Criterion Referenced Assessment) Report, a Criteria Matrix or an Assessment Proforma.
- Any additional tips sheets or explanation sheets which explain how your lecturer wants the assignment done.
- Any notes you took in lectures about how to do the assignment.

Look at the example at the end of this sheet. You will note that there is the task description and part of the criteria sheet of an assignment.

## 2. Analyse the task

Carefully read through all the information you have on your assignment and do the following:

- Underline or highlight all the keywords. These are the words which indicate what information you need to find or collect.
- Circle all the **task words**. These words tell you what to do with the information. A glossary of task words (sometimes called directive words) can be found in appendix 1 in QUT CITE/WRITE.

Do this analysis not only with the task sheet but also with the criteria sheet and any other sources of information on the assignment you have collected.

In the example at the end of this sheet, all the information that needs to be included in the assignment is underlined. All the ways you need to use this information are **circled**.

Focusing on each individual piece of information helps you break down the task to manageable pieces. This way you can tackle your assignment one section at a time rather than feeling overwhelmed by the whole task.



### 3. Write a checklist of everything you have to include

Write a checklist of all you have to do or include in your assignment.

Under the example, you will see a checklist of everything that is mentioned in the assignment task sheet and the criteria sheet that must be included in the assignment.

Doing a checklist helps you focus on all the details of what you have to do. You can also use the checklist when you have completed your assignment to check that you have included everything that has been asked for.

### 4. Write a list of everything you need to find out

Write a list of all that you need to research. When researching, start with your textbook and lecture notes. Also look at any readings on this topic in QUT Readings for this unit.

Doing this helps you have a general understanding of the topic and means you have a better idea of what to look for in the library.

Under the example, you will see another list taken from the first checklist of all the information that someone doing this assignment would need to go and research.

Have a look at the resources on Studywell under *Research* to learn how to find information for your assignment.

Also, look on Studywell under *Writing* to find out how to structure and write your assignment correctly.

#### PHOTO REFERENCE

<sup>1</sup>'the usual wednesday night', In:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/apeology/4075513512/>,

ed, Students studying in a coffee shop.



## SAR106 Search and Rescue Techniques – Assignment 2

SCENARIO: Three people have gone bushwalking in the Bunya Mountains. They have food and water for 2 days and they are wearing warm clothing which is not waterproof. It is the middle of winter. A tree fell on their tent during the night and one person (female, 25) has her legs pinned under the tree and she cannot move. Another person (male, 6) is having an asthma attack and does not have his medication. He is having trouble breathing. The third person (female, 8) has rung on the mobile calling for help. She cannot tell you where she is. There is a major thunderstorm coming from the South East.

YOUR TASK is to develop a coordinated search and rescue plan using the HEAP planning method. In addressing the criteria for this piece of assessment, you should consider the following:

1. An analysis of the geographical and meteorological conditions of these mountains at this time of the year.
2. A discussion of the likely physical condition of the people being rescued and the order in which they should be brought out of the mountains.
3. An outline of the step by step plan to be followed by the search and rescue team taking into consideration the conditions in the mountains and the physical condition of those to be rescued. At each step you should outline the care principles involved in the procedure explaining why they are applicable.

It is important that at least four (4) references from journals, books or other relevant sources be provided which are current and relevant to the topic. The word limit is no more than 1000 words.

Criteria	Performance Standards				
	7 – High Distinction	6 – Distinction	5 – Credit	4 – Pass	3,2 Fail / 1 Low Fail
Content	Conditions in the mountains and for the rescues thoroughly researched. Detailed plan written outlining <u>personnel and equipment required</u> . Relevant <u>care principles mentioned at each step</u> .				
Analysis	<u>Conditions in mountains and of the rescues effectively incorporated</u> into the rescue plan. Application of <u>care principles to the plan highly appropriate and clearly explained</u> .				
Structure of assignment	Assignment sections <u>clearly outlined</u> . Plan <u>logically outlined step by step in chronological order using HEAP structure</u> .				
Referencing	Excellent use of a <u>wide range of appropriate resources</u> . Citing and referencing correct according to <u>APA style requirements</u> .				
Communication	<u>Written language clear and succinct and within the task word limit</u> . Highly consistent use of <u>correct grammar, spelling and punctuation</u> .				

## Assignment Checklist

1. Use the HEAP planning method.
2. Do an analysis of geographical conditions of Bunya Mountains.
3. Do an analysis of meteorological conditions of Bunya Mountains at this time of year.
4. Discuss likely physical condition of woman, 25, pinned under a tree.
5. Discuss likely physical condition of boy, 6, with asthma, no medication.
6. Discuss likely physical condition of girl, 8.
7. Mention order in which they should be brought out.
8. Write step by step plan to be followed by search and rescue team.
9. Include personnel and equipment required in plan.
10. Outline in chronological order.
11. Outline care principles involved at each step.
12. Explain why each step is applicable.
13. Use at least 4 references.
14. Reference sources in APA style.
15. Use sources current and relevant to topic.
16. Word limit no more than 1000 words.
17. Check grammar spelling and punctuation.

## Research Needed List

1. HEAP planning method.
2. Geographical conditions of Bunya Mountains.
3. Meteorological conditions of Bunya Mountains in winter.
4. Physical condition of woman pinned under tree.
5. Physical condition of child, 6 with asthma.
6. Care principles in search and rescue.

