Academic Writing

Part 1
Writing Assignment

You need to acquire the knowledge and approaches to:

• Undertake a review of the literature and existing work in your area;
• Acquire a critical appreciation of that area, based on listening, seeing and reading relevant works;
• The ability to present a ‘whole’ from these differing works;
• A sub-goal is to learn how to put this work into your own words.
Writing Assignment

Your academic essay:
• will be approximately 500 words.
• must contain a list of references according to the UL standard, and be formatted as Times New Roman, 12p, single spaced.

This final essay should include:
• A critical review of research papers you have read;
• A perspective on the topic studied;
• A conclusion;
• A reference list; (not included in word count!)
Research

• Google
• Google Scholar
• ACM Digital Library
• CiteSeer - (see Wikipedia)
• DBLP
• IEEE Explorer
• Web of science
• Directory of Open Access Journals
• Academia.edu
• Research Gate
Who?

• Who has authored the content?

• **Organisations**: Libraries, Colleges, Schools, Universities, Governments, Companies, Shops, Museums

• **Informal Organisations**: Communities, special interest groups, support groups

• **Individuals**: Famous practitioners, Experts, Academics, Researchers, Students, Amateurs

• For example, here is a [discussion](#) of the controversy surrounding the major “Mediterranean Diet” study
Where? When?

• **Which** country is the information coming from?
  Where is it held?
  Does the origin affect the slant of the information?

• **When** was the information originally produced?
  Is it still useful?
  Has it been updated?
  Is it going to be updated?
  Is it being preserved in its original form?
Reading

• Reading is purposeful. The way you read something will depend on your purpose.

• When you read a novel, you start at the beginning and slowly move towards the end. In academic reading, you need to be flexible when you read - you may need to read quickly to find relevant sections, then read carefully when you have found what you want.

• General efficient reading strategies such as scanning to find the book or chapter, skimming to get the gist and careful reading of important passages are necessary as well as learning about how texts are structured in your subject.
Paraphrasing, Summarising & Quoting Texts

Paraphrasing

• does not match the source word for word
• involves putting a passage from a source into your own words
• changes the words or phrasing of a passage, but retains and fully communicates the original meaning
• must be attributed to the original source
Paraphrasing, Summarising & Quoting Texts

**Summarising**

- does not match the source word for word
- involves putting the main idea(s) into your own words, but including only the main point(s)
- presents a broad overview, so is usually much shorter than the original text
- must be attributed to the original source
Paraphrasing, Summarising & Quoting Texts

Quotations

• match the source word for word
• are usually a brief segment of the text
• appear between quotation marks
• must be attributed to the original source
Referencing

• As a student, it is of paramount importance that you identify in your assignments when you are using the words or ideas of another author. The most accepted way of acknowledging the work of another author is to use a referencing system.

• The Cite It Right guide tells you how to cite different sources and shows you how to compile the source for your bibliography (You will need to use this guide when completing your assignments for this course):

   https://libguides.ul.ie/citeitright
Referencing

• Using someone else's work without citation is plagiarism and may have serious consequences, especially for college students.

• Any time you incorporate someone else's ideas or words into your paper or presentation, you must cite them. These ideas may not only come from books and journal articles, but from conversations, images, multimedia, speeches, blogs, etc.

They need to be cited for several reasons:
• to give credit to the authors or creators of those sources or ideas
• to allow your readers to find and benefit from the exact sources you used
• to let your lecturer know how you arrived at your conclusions
Research Plan

STEP 1: DETERMINE REQUIREMENTS /DONE FOR YOU
STEP 2: IDENTIFY A TOPIC /YOUR CHOICE
STEP 3: IDENTIFY THE TYPES OF SOURCES NEEDED

• Create a list of the kinds of resources that will provide the most relevant information. There are numerous types of sources (books, articles, sound files, etc.) that may answer your research question. Understanding the differences between these sources will be useful.

• Refer to the Cite it Right guide so that you understand how to reference different sources within the main body of your text and in your reference list (which will be located at the end of your essay).
Research Plan

STEP 4: SEARCH FOR RELEVANT SOURCES

• Use the UL library catalogue for books, Google Scholar, the library databases for journal articles, Web search engines for Web sites, etc. The search process will be a lot more efficient and effective if you use a variety of search techniques.

STEP 5: LOCATE THE SOURCES

• Once you've searched for and identified the sources you want, you will need to locate those sources. For research papers, the sources will usually be found in a library or from a library web site. Be sure to note the full citation now -- it will save you time later.
Research Plan

STEP 6: EVALUATE INFORMATION RESOURCES
• Once you locate your sources, you need to critically evaluate each one of them.

STEP 7: CITE YOUR SOURCES
• Citing your sources is essential to good, ethical scholarship. Always cite where you get your information completely and accurately.
• Always avoid plagiarism as it has serious consequences for your academic record.
Your Assignment Headings

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Conclusions
- References
Marking Scheme

**Research** - 4%: Selection & Identification of relevant primary/secondary sources

**Structure** - 2%: Logical organisation of material for your articulation of argument

**Analysis** - 6%: Ability to generate a clear point of view, while using and citing sources

**Presentation** - 3%
- Use of relevant, labelled and good quality images and diagrams where relevant
- Adherence to essay writing guidelines and academic conventions
- Correct Referencing style

**Penalties**
For each spelling spelling error: – 1%
For each 50 words above or below target: – 1%
Each missing/incorrect assignment heading: – 1%
549 word report = No Penalty; 550 word report = -1%; 550 word report with 3 spelling errors = -4%.