

# FIRST YEAR CORE COURSE LEADERS' COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE TOOLKIT

## FIRST YEAR COURSE LEADERS TOOLKIT ITEM

### *Referencing*

#### THE USQ CoPs PROJECT

Faculty of Arts CoP  
and  
Faculty of Business CoP

<http://www.usq.edu.au/cops>

### Referencing: Integrating process into assessment

**Teacher(s):** Cassandra Star

**Course(s):** POL1000 – Government, business and society

#### Rationale

Assessment is divided into a series of stages that are designed for students to develop required academic and graduate skills. The design of this assessment reduces the necessity for students to copy or plagiarise other work; it's developmental structure also makes it harder for students to do so.

#### Activity

The assessment items are designed two parts: the first part is a briefing paper that requires students to provide an overview of their chosen topic area; the second part has several stages that foreground the *process* of planning, writing and submitting an essay.

#### Sample text

Assessment guidelines from course CD [over page].

## **POL1000, Government, Business and Society**

**Students** are required to submit **two** assignments.

The due date will be the date specified for the assignment topic as indicated on the relevant assignment in the assessment section and in the course specification. Details on assignment submission requirements are below – please read them carefully.

The first assignment is a briefing paper. Students are provided with detailed instructions, associated readings, and a template on how to complete this assignment. The second assignment has a number of activities and the final element uses an **academic essay format**. Each step of the assignment has associated examples and templates available on the [course CD](#). It is very important that students be aware of, and follow, these requirements. The course team has also provided significant resources for students to lead them through the important steps in the assignments – these are available on the StudyDesk and on the course CD.

### **Assignment 1**

#### **Briefing paper**

**Due: 17 August 2007**

**Value: 20%**

**Length: 700 words (using the briefing format provided on course CD)**

**Topic: Industrial relations and government business relations**

The aim of a briefing paper is to give a clear but concise overview of an issue. Business executives, community groups and government ministers often commission briefing papers to be written on issues that are new, emerging, or which they have little knowledge of.

A [word document template](#) is provided on the course CD for students to use with this assignment. The template gives clear guidelines on how to structure the assignment and what is expected in each section.

#### **Assignment guidelines**

The following guidelines are the minimum requirements that must be addressed in order to obtain a pass mark:

- Discuss how the issue provides opportunities and challenges for each stakeholder (government, business and society) and their related interests
- Reference your contentions clearly

- You will be provided with [relevant sources](#) (on the course CD), but be sure to provide a reference list at the end of your report
- Provide a brief executive summary at the start of your report. Keep in mind that an executive summary is not the same as an introduction.

## Assignment 2

### Major research project

**Due: 8 October 2007**

**Value: 40%**

**Length: 2600 words (in total)**

### Overview

Assignment 2 is a collection of several separate parts which lead to a final major research essay for the course. Each part of the assignment is to be completed separately, in the recommended week. All parts of the assignment are to be forwarded in hard copy to the University on the due date, as well as submitted electronically. Each part of the assignment, along with the aim and brief instructions are included below. Further information, including detailed instructions and [assignment templates](#) are included on the course CD where required.

**Note: All pieces of the assignment are not due until the date listed above.**

**Topic: Industrial relations has been a contentious issue in Australia recently. Major changes, particularly to unfair dismissal laws, have had a significant political fallout in terms of government, business and society.**

Examine the challenges that changes to work conditions and regulations pose for each key player. Ensure that you identify one different key issue (only) for each player.

### **Part A – Deconstructing the question (week 4) – 200 words**

**Aim:** To focus attention on the key elements of the question, to make the marker's expectations clear, and to guide student research activity.

After reviewing the [related powerpoint presentation](#) on the course CD, consider the assignment topic, and answer the following questions briefly:

- What is the focus of the question?
- What are the limits of the question?
- What are the other directive words in the question?

## Part B – Annotated bibliography (week 8) – 500 words

**Aim:** To build critical evaluation skills and critical reading skills, to emphasise the concept of an academic conversation, and to introduce the idea of a literature review.

Students are required to find five peer-reviewed journal articles relevant to the assignment topic in their literature search. For Part B, students will write an annotated bibliography containing each of these five journal articles. An example, and [instructions](#), are included on the course CD regarding annotated bibliographies.

The focus of the task is to identify each author's argument, to consider the evidence used to support the argument, and to consider how different authors and different arguments compare to each other.

## Part C – Concept map (week 9) – 250 words

**Aim:** To encourage early essay planning and to assist students to write an argumentative essay rather than a descriptive essay.

A concept map helps to visually present ideas and integrate them into a roadmap for your essay. Material included on the course CD explains and helps to demonstrate how this exercise draws on Part A. The concept map will help with planning the essay, and can also be turned into a final essay plan.

A [template](#) for this exercise is included on the course CD and must be used in conjunction with this assessment. The questions that you will answer in this exercise include:

- What is the question to be answered?
- What is your argument?
- What are your key points to support the argument proposed?
- What references are you using to support your key point(s)?
- What examples are you using to support your key point(s)?
- What statistics or studies are you using to support your key point(s)?

The final part of the exercise requires students to write a short section (250 words) on how the key points relate to each other, or what the links between the key points are. This will provide linking sentences between essay sections for Part E.

## Part D – Assessing an essay (week 11) – 250 words

**Aim:** To enable students to think about and identify the elements of a good essay writing, to clarify expectations within the assessment item, and to familiarise students with the marking guide and marking criteria sheet.

Students are provided (via the course CD) with a model essay that has been annotated by the course leader with comments and a completed marksheet in preparation for this exercise. Another [model essay](#) is also provided, with a [blank marksheet](#), the [marking guide](#) and instructions on the grading standards at USQ.

Students are required to mark the essay using the criteria sheet and write a reflection on what the exercise highlighted about what makes a good or a bad essay.

### **Part E – The final essay (week 12) – 1400 words**

**Aim:** To provide the basis of good academic writing skills and a clear understanding of academic conventions through an in-depth research project on the prescribed topic.

Part E is the culmination of the semester's research and assessment exercises. The item will be an argumentative essay in the style of political science that meets all required academic conventions.

### **Assignment guidelines**

This essay requires you to use concepts and ideas from across the course, as well as undertaking individual academic research.

The following guidelines are the minimum requirements that must be addressed in order to obtain a pass mark. Your essay should have:

- A clear introduction which includes the context, the argument you plan to make and a roadmap for your essay.
- An argument throughout the essay, not just in the conclusion or immediately prior to the conclusion.
- A review of the literature relevant to the topic and question.
- Credible academic support for the contentions made in the essay, including references, examples, statistics (where appropriate) and other appropriate evidence.
- A conclusion in which you summarise the discussion and provide a take-home message.
- At least 10 reference sources are required, drawn from peer-reviewed journals, newspapers and data sources such as EBSCOhost. You may **NOT** cite the text or set readings and **do not quote from the study guide** or non-academic internet sources.
- See the essay marking guide for further guidance on questions regarding assignment expectations.