



IMI Knowledge Centre Assignment Guide

The Five Step Method



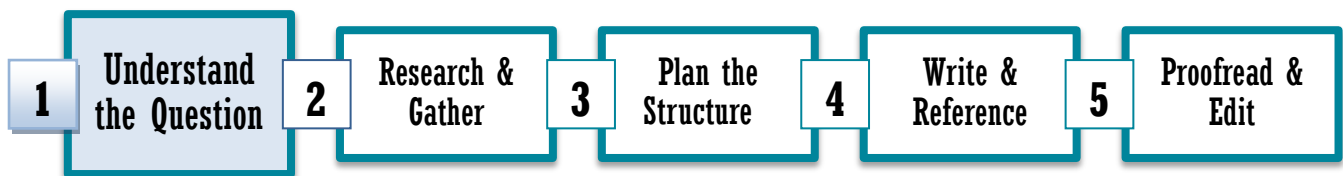
The IMI Knowledge Centre Assignment Guide aims to guide you through the writing process whilst considering style, structure and content.

Writing an assignment is a *process*, one that contains several steps. The steps compiled here intend to lead you through your assignment and give you a sense of direction.

In your assignment, you should weigh up the evidence and arguments of others, and contribute your own. You are expected to investigate the state of an issue and present your position based on the evidence of your research. In order to do this, you need a plan to direct you. Use 'The Five Step Method' to get you there.

**Full responsibility of submitted assignment lies with the individual participant. This guide is a suggested methodology.*





Definition:

Understand the question by identifying the key demands of the assignment.

What's expected?

- Read the question carefully.
- Recognize the action words.
- Identify and interpret key words.
- Clarify the scope.

Advice:

Recognize Action Words

Box action words. These are generally verbs describing the action that needs to take place. In other words, what am I being asked to do?

EXAMPLE

Explain how the relationship between an organization's structure and culture can impact on the performance of a business.

Identify Key Words

Underline key words to identify the key topics and inform the content of your assignment.

EXAMPLE

Explain how the relationship between an organization's structure and culture can impact on the performance of a business.

Clarify the Scope

Circle for phrases that provide boundaries for your writing and narrow the scope of the assignment.

EXAMPLE

Explain how the relationship between an organization's structure and culture can impact on the performance of a business.

Service/Knowledge Centre:

- ✓ Follow the Instructions: Verb Breakdown Handout
- ✓ Understanding the Question Examples

For More Information:

See Monash University: [Analysing the Task Requirements](#)

See University of Leeds: [Interpreting your Assignment Tutorial](#)



- 1 Understand the Question
- 2 Research & Gather
- 3 Plan the Structure
- 4 Write & Reference
- 5 Proofread & Edit

Definition:

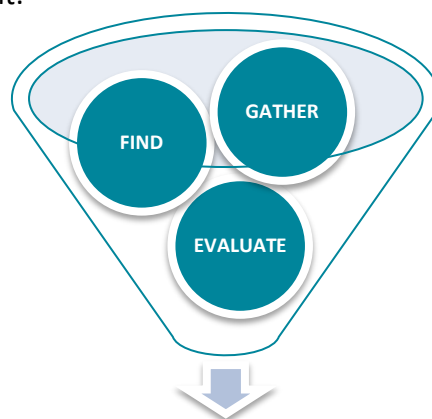
Research and gather information that can support the writing of your assignment.

What's expected?

- Searching the Knowledge Centre resources and using peer-reviewed articles.
- Use various search strategies.
- Engage critically with your research and sources.
- Make effective notes.

Advice:

You are expected to consult multiple sources of information and to show evidence of wide research. In doing so, you need to exercise critical judgement. This means identifying relevant sources and theories and judging the value of their research in relation to your own. The Knowledge Centre offers multiple sources including over 8,000 books as well as our databases; with over 18,000 journals. We have the building blocks that you need to complete your assignment.



STEP 2: Research & Gather

Service/Knowledge Centre:

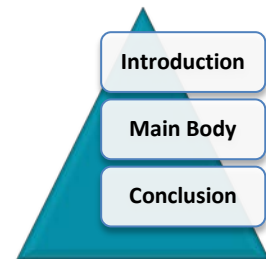
- ✓ Use our [Search Strategy Form](#).
- ✓ Our [Evaluating Articles Checklist](#) will help you to think critically about your sources and what you are reading.
- ✓ Schedule a resource training session with the Knowledge Centre.

For More Information: See our website for [‘Starting your Research’](#), [EBSCO Guide](#), [ProQuest Guide](#).



Definition:

Organize the information and research you have gathered into three main parts.



What's expected?

Each assignment should consist of *three parts*.

- 1. Introduction:** Set the scene for the assignment. Gives a brief overview of what is going to be covered in the assignment. Simply, say what you are going to say.
- 2. Main Body:** The meat of the assignment. Consists of several paragraphs containing ideas, topics or arguments, etc answering the question. Simply, say it!
- 3. Conclusion:** Summarise your main points. Show how the question has been answered and present your final comments. Simply, say what you have said.

Advice:

Create a roadmap of the arguments/points/topics etc that you are going to talk about in the main body of your assignment. This will help you to create a clear, coherent and well structured assignment. Some useful ways to plan:



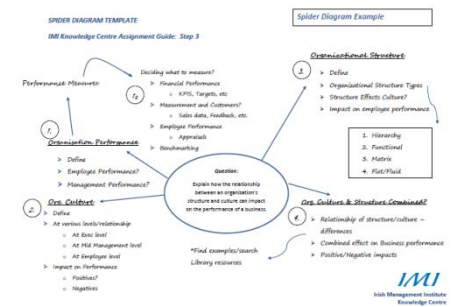
Paragraph Plan

Organise your information by outlining what each paragraph will entail and which order they will come.

ESSAY TITLE:	
IDEA/ARGUMENT/THEME	
IDEA/ARGUMENT/THEME	
IDEA/ARGUMENT/THEME	
IDEA/ARGUMENT/THEME	

Table

Group key arguments/points together using a table, this will help you to order and plan the paragraphs of your assignment.



Spider-chart

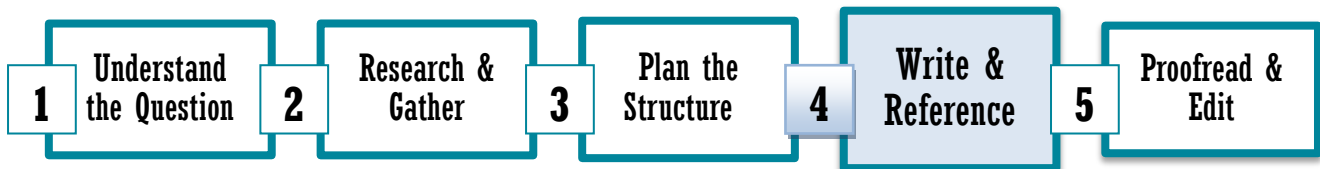
Organise key arguments/points using a spider chart. You can then expand/develop each point if you wish. This will help to create some sort of order and plan to your assignment.

Service/Knowledge Centre:

- ✓ Download our Template Plans (Paragraph Plan, Spider-chart, Table template)

For More Information: See University of Leeds: [Planning Your Assignment](#)





Definition:

Write your first draft by drawing each section (introduction, body & conclusion) together into a coherent whole.

Referencing: If you are using someone else's work, you must acknowledge that fact. Referencing is the solution to this. You need to identify any sources by citing them in the main body of your text (in-text citations) and referencing them at the end of your work in the bibliography.

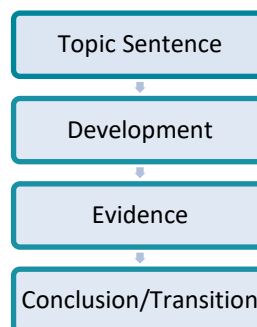
What's expected?

- Prepare a first draft including an introduction, main body and conclusion.
- Effective use of paragraphs (including a topic sentence, development of topic, evidence to support your topic/stance and transition to the next paragraph)
- Referencing is required for all graded assignments on accredited IMI course – *unless your instructor specifically instructs you otherwise for example some reflective learning logs.*

Advice:

A paragraph, generally, covers one topic at a time. You may need to use more than one paragraph to discuss a larger topic; in this case a paragraph may contain one aspect of the topic.

A Simple Formula for Constructing Paragraphs

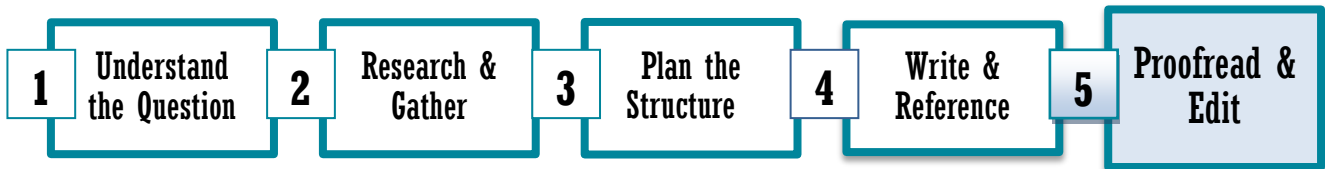


Service/Knowledge Centre:

- ✓ Schedule a referencing session with the Knowledge Centre.
- ✓ [RefWorks](#) is linked to the IMI Knowledge Centre databases and this allows you to gather references while you search and then export them to your Refworks account which will help you create your bibliography.

For More Information: See our website for '[What is Referencing?](#)', [Harvard Referencing Guide](#), [Guide to Refworks](#)





Definition:

Proofread to ensure you are communicating your ideas clearly and that you are fulfilling the goals of your assignment plan (Step #3) by rereading your work and detecting any areas for improvement.

What's expected?

1. Flow

Check your structure, paragraphs, development of ideas and in-text citations.

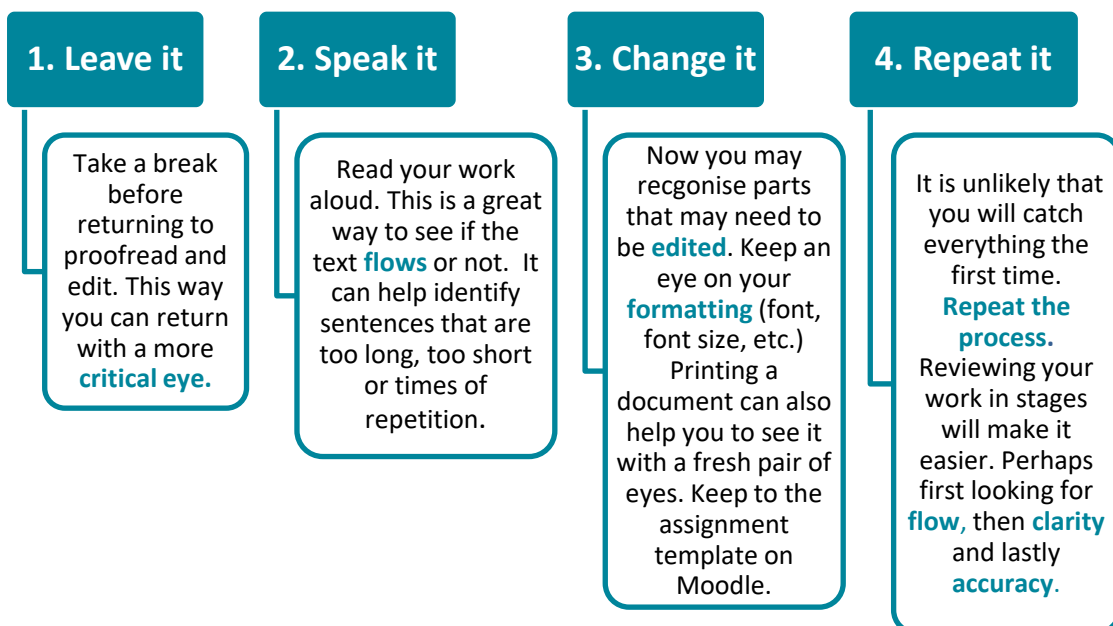
2. Clarity

Checking for fluency, how well you answered the question, removing any ambiguity.

3. Accuracy

Check your spelling, grammar, punctuation and referencing.

Advice:



Service/Knowledge Centre:

- ✓ The Knowledge Centre is unable to proofread your assignments for you, but please make use of our Proofreading guide below. If you have queries regarding any references or your bibliography, please get in touch.

For More Information: See our [Proofreading Guide](#), [Harvard Referencing Guide](#).



If you have reached a point during the process in which you have hit a roadblock and/or are finding it difficult to proceed with the process:

Schedule a session with us. We can advise how to move forward 'step by step'. This is a great way to inform your approach as well as familiarise yourself with the Knowledge Centre and staff. Book a session by phoning us at 01 207 8513/4, sending an email to knowledge@imi.ie or drop into the Knowledge Centre desk to schedule a date and time.

