



# Mackay Christian College

~ Style Guide ~

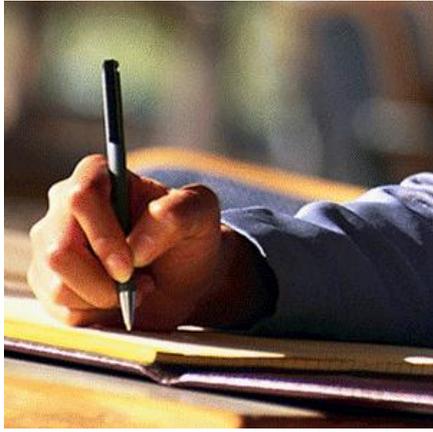
## INTRODUCTION

Students at Mackay Christian College are encouraged to develop and possess skills in a variety of forms of communication and in particular the written expression through assessment tasks. “The capacity to communicate is an intrinsic part of our creation in the image of God. In the Gospel and its applications to human life and society, Christians have something particularly worthwhile to say to each other and to the world, and so excellence in communication skills should be the mark of the educated Christian.” (Christian Heritage College, 2011)

Mackay Christian College students will be encouraged to aspire to excellence in all their work. This style guide has been prepared and made available to assist students and teachers better reach this goal. It will enable you to write your assignments correctly and successfully negotiate and overcome the challenges faced in the transition through the middle and senior years of schooling into study at tertiary or further levels.

*If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.*

*1 Peter 4:11*



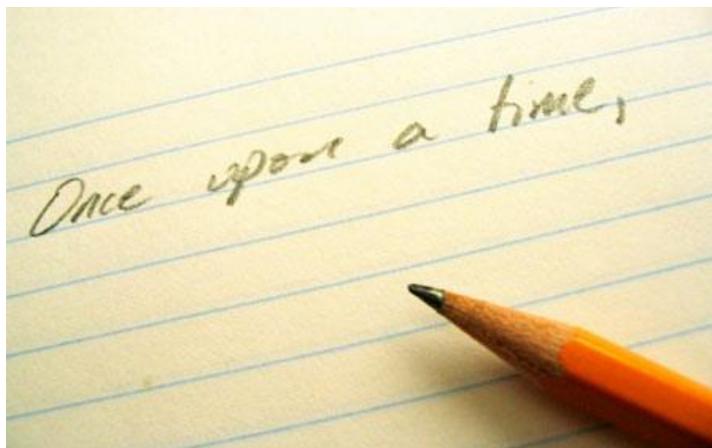
## The Writing Process

Writing is a task that no two people do the same way. However, there are some logical steps that every writer seems to follow in the creation of a piece of writing – no matter what genre. The process described here outlines those basic steps. Keep in mind that these steps are not exclusive of each other, and at times they can be rather liquid. Also, writers will notice that most of these steps are reciprocal; that is, work done in one area may necessitate returning to a step that you have already "completed."

Learning some vital skills such as drafting, editing, proof reading and reflecting will contribute to the production of outstanding pieces of writing at any level of your schooling. Almost every assignment or task you are given will have a drafting process embedded in the conditions for completion. This means that for your first effort in writing your task, you don't have to worry too much about the spelling, punctuation or getting your sentence structure and paragraphing correct. Drafting provides you with the opportunity to get your ideas down and then you, with the assistance of your teacher, can rework and refine your ideas, which will all contribute to an exceptional finished product.



By following the writing process you place yourself in a very good position to produce work of a high quality. As mentioned above no two writers construct their writing in the same way – this process will help you find your way and build skills that will stay with you for life.



## **STAGES OF THE WRITING PROCESS**

### STEP 1: PREWRITING

#### ***THINK***

- Decide on a topic to write about.
- Consider who will read or listen to your written work.
- Brainstorm ideas about the subject.
- List places where you can research information.
- Do your research.

### STEP 2: DRAFTING

#### ***WRITE***

- Put the information you researched into your own words.
- Write sentences and paragraphs even if they are not perfect.
- Read what you have written and judge if it says what you mean.
- Show it to others and ask for suggestions.

### STEP 3: REVISING

#### ***MAKE IT BETTER***

- Read what you have written again.
- Think about what others said about it.
- Rearrange words or sentences.
- Take out or add parts.
- Replace overused or unclear words.
- Read your writing aloud to be sure it flows smoothly.

### STEP 4: PROOFREADING

#### ***MAKE IT CORRECT***

- Be sure all sentences are complete.
- Correct spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.
- Change words that are not used correctly.
- Have someone check your work.
- Recopy it correctly and neatly.

### STEP 5: PUBLISHING

#### ***SHARE THE FINISHED PRODUCT***

- Read your writing aloud to a group.
- Create a book of your work.
- Send a copy to a friend or relative.
- Put your writing on display.
- Illustrate, perform, or set your creation to music.
- Congratulate yourself on a job well done!

## DEVELOPING WRITING SKILLS

### **Note taking (Paraphrasing)**

It is important to develop your skills in taking notes – whether from reading or from watching/listening. There are five tips listed below:-

1. Note key points and then minor points
2. Record source material, relevant bibliographical details of a text—author, title, publisher, date of publication, page number/s
3. Establish highlighting techniques, graphics, colours, underlining to pick out main points.
4. Use abbreviations and symbols to show connections between key points and minor points AND save time when making notes
5. Include Line spaces so that you can add to your notes later on to aid the transfer of information to your long term memory AND for revision.

Below are some symbols that can be used in note taking to make it easier to write quickly.

= equals/is equal to/is the same as	≠ is not equal to/is not the same as
≡ is equivalent to	∴ therefore, thus, so
+ and, more, plus	— less, minus
> more than, greater than	< less than
→ gives, causes, leads to, results in,	∵ because
∝ proportional to	∯ not proportional to
 is given by, is produced by, results from rises, increases by	 falls, decreases by

## ***Linear OR Nuclear Note taking***

We all think differently so our note taking methods will differ as well. Some of us think in a linear, structured manner, while others think in random nuclear way. Below is an example of both forms of note taking on the topic of note taking!

### **Linear:**

Main Heading = Note taking...

Heading #1 = Notes YOU make will be most use to YOU!

- Don't use friends notes
- Don't buy notes or copy from a website
- Choose a note taking form (nuclear or linear)
- Use pictures or diagrams

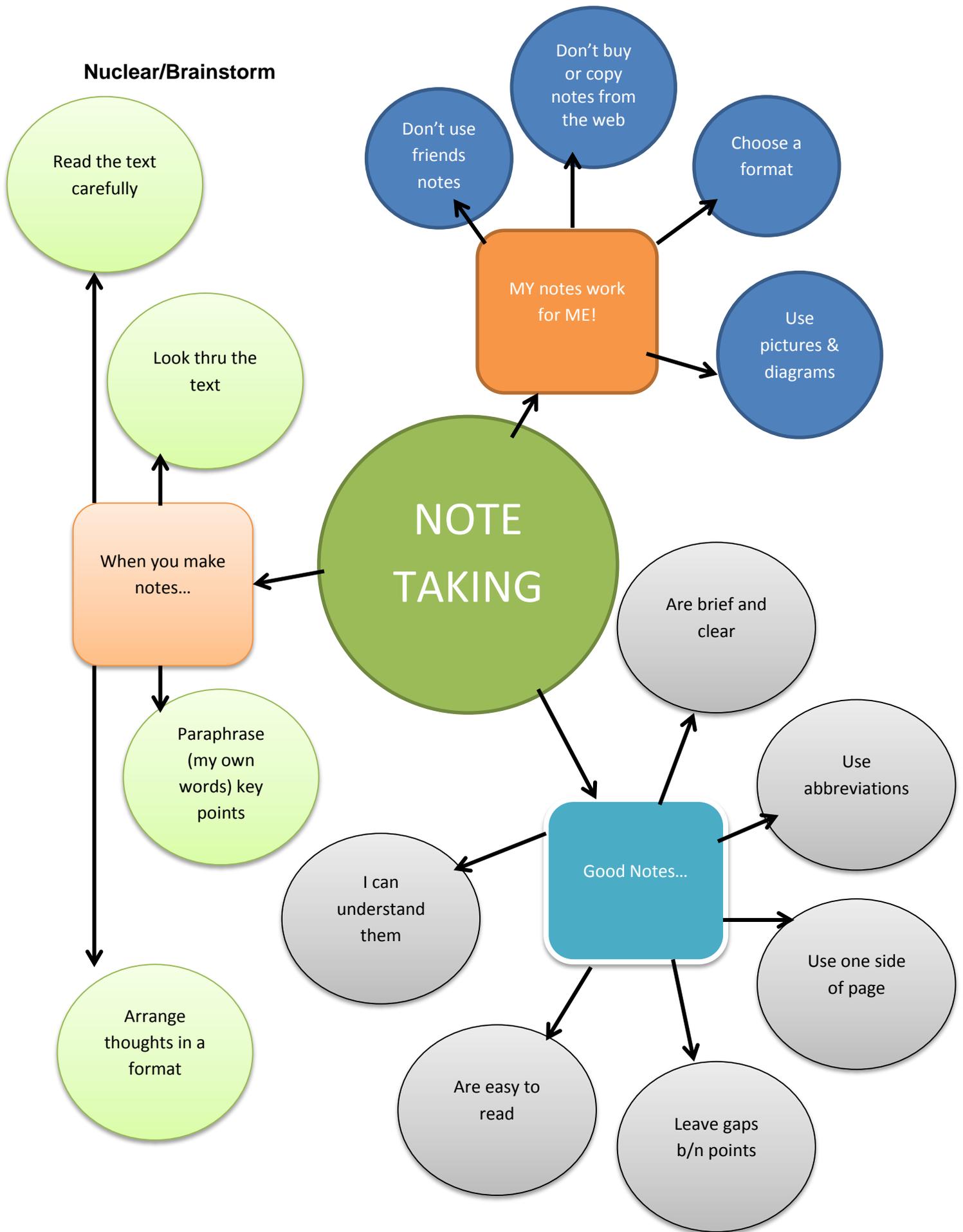
Heading #2 = Good Notes...

- Are brief & clear
- Use abbreviations
- Use one side of the page only
- Leave gaps b/t (between) points
- Are easy to read
- Are easily understood by YOU!

Heading #3 = When you make notes...

- Look through the article/ chapter/website
- Read the text carefully
- Use your own words to restate the key points
- Arrange them in a suitable format

# Nuclear/Brainstorm



## **PREPARING AN ESSAY**

Glossary of important terms....

### **account for**

Give the reason for. Not to be confused with 'Give an account of' which is only asking for a description

### **analyse**

Describe the main ideas in depth, showing why they are important and how they are connected.

*(analytical, analysis)*

### **assess**

Discuss the strong and weak points of the subject. Make your own conclusion.

*(assessment)*

### **comment**

State your views on the subject clearly. Back up your points with sufficient evidence and examples

*(commentary)*

### **compare and contrast**

Write about the similarities and differences in the subject matter.

*(comparative, comparison, contrasting)*

### **criticise**

Express your own balanced judgement of the subject. Give views for and against, backed up with examples and references.

*(critical)*

### **define**

Give clear concise meanings. State limitations of the definition. (How it is to be used in your essay).

*(definition, definitive)*

### **describe**

Give the main features or characteristics of something or write about the main events or stages in a process.

*(descriptive, description)*

### **discuss**

Write about the subject in detail, giving points for and against, advantages and disadvantages. Give a balanced conclusion.

*(discussion, discursive)*

**evaluate**

Give your opinion of the importance, usefulness, accuracy, etc of the information. Include good and bad points, backed up with theories and references.  
*(evaluation, evaluative)*

**examine**

Look at the subject in detail.  
*(examination)*

**explain**

State clearly how and why you think something happens or why it is the way it is.  
*(explanatory, explicable)*

**how far/to what extent**

Give your own opinion as to whether something is completely true or accurate, partly true or perhaps not true at all. Back up your points with references.

**illustrate**

Use specific examples to make clear points.  
*(illustration, illustrative)*

**interpret**

express what something means in simple terms  
*(interpretation)*

**justify**

use evidence and reasons to support your judgement. Make your points clearly and forcefully.  
*(justification)*

**outline**

Give the main ideas, but do not go into too much detail.

**review**

Give an overall view of the subject in a critical way. Pick out and analyse important parts of the subject.

**summarise**

Write briefly about the main points or facts, omitting details. Use references to back up your conclusion.  
*(summary)*

### **Things to remember...**

- a. **Personal pronouns** (I, me, we) are not to be used unless specifically asked for. Your opinion can be stated without using personal pronouns. Eg: "The cat is white." Instead of "I believe the cat is white."
- b. **Contractions** should not be used in an essay. Do not use words such as:  
don't            *rather use*            do not  
couldn't        *rather use*            could not  
he'd             *rather use*             he would
- c. **Capital Letters** – words at the beginning of a sentence need capital letters, as do places, and personal pronouns. Eg: Matthew, Mackay, Church of England.
- d. **Apostrophes** – there are two uses for the apostrophe:-
  - i. To indicate the omission of a letter (or letters) in contractions such as would not = wouldn't ; she will = she'll
  - ii. To indicate possession or ownership. For example:-  
The jogger's gear. (One jogger owns the gear)  
The joggers' club. (A lot of joggers have a club)  
The children's race. (Children have the race)

### **Making a Plan**

1. Write a plan in note form
2. **Sketch** out the following:-
  - i. **Introduction** – state the purpose of your essay, a brief outline of your hypothesis or the general direction of your discussion.
  - ii. **Essay body** – use a structure for each paragraph – topic sentence, discussion including references to evidence to support your discussion and a statement tying your paragraph back to the purpose of the essay.
  - iii. **Conclusion** – restate your purpose and summarise your general discussion, making sure everything ties back to the topic and/or hypothesis.
3. Establish your general ideas.
4. Work through the particular ideas or points which specify, develop and support your ideas.
5. Find evidence from other sources to support your discussion/argument.
6. Draft

## ***The First Draft***

In writing the first draft of your essay, try to get as many ideas down on paper as quickly as you can. Don't worry about spelling or punctuation at all at this stage, just ideas. If you change your mind about how to say something, don't stop to cross it out, just write an improved version. You may have a lot of repetition in your first draft. That's fine. One of the reasons why many of us have trouble writing a first draft is that we try to write the essay beginning with the introduction. This is a difficult, and sometimes an impossible, task. How can you introduce an essay you haven't written yet? Until you see what the body of your essay will say, it is almost impossible to write an effective introduction. You can easily fall into the trap of writing dozens of introductions, rejecting them all, and starting over each time. It's fairly obvious that this is a non-productive waste of time. Save the introduction for your second draft. Start right out with your trial thesis statement and support it. Start writing with the second or third paragraph of the essay and go on from there. You will make much more progress writing the body of your essay than trying to guess at what will make a good introduction.

When you are writing your first draft you will probably find that you don't have all of the material you need for a finished essay. For example, you may know that you need examples of several of your points. If you have them, fine. If you're stumped, just put a note in brackets:

"[need example of Shakespeare's concept of love]."

Then move on to the next point. Likewise with evidence that you haven't found yet. Put a note in brackets to remind yourself what you need, but don't stop to look for it as you write your draft. It is important that you make notes to yourself as to what you need to find and develop before you have a finished essay. Doing so will save you a great deal of time because you will have a "shopping list" to bring to class or to the library that will help define what you need to finish the essay. This will make your further research much easier. But it is equally important that you try to get down on paper what you want the whole essay to say. This is the only way to test and develop your trial thesis statement. The whole should determine the parts, not the parts the whole. You may find that your thesis needs major revision and that you really want to take a different approach than you had originally planned. That will help to clarify what details are important enough to pursue and what can be omitted.

If you are an experienced typist, you will probably type your first draft. But if it is easier for you to write in longhand, do that. In writing your first draft, you want to write as quickly and easily as you can, concentrating just on the words but not on the way of producing the words. So go with whatever comes easiest. You will be revising this work. Many writers find that after writing a draft on longhand the

process of entering it into the word processor gives them a chance to easily revise and correct the errors in the original. Do whatever you're most comfortable with. Do not try to make the first draft the final draft. Assume you will revise, and you can be much more loose and free in writing your first draft, and you can do it much more quickly.

### ***Revising and Editing***

Once you have written a solid first draft of your essay or paper, you can begin refining, revising, editing, and polishing your writing. At this point, you may think of a title that captures the essence of your topic and theme.

After the first review is completed, edit and revise the essay. You may find it helpful to read your draft aloud, or ask someone you trust to review your essay. **Editing** involves looking at the grammatical and mechanical content of your work. **Revising** means not only looking at grammar but also the overall effect of the essay. Editing and revising ensure that the final draft fits the assignment and audience, is grammatically and mechanically correct, and is well organized and supported.

### ***Checklist for revising and Editing***

- Are the ideas in each paragraph arranged in a logical order?
- Are there any ideas that are irrelevant and should be left out?
- Is a new paragraph used for each new idea?
- Is the meaning of each sentence clear?
- Are some sentences too long? Too short? Could some be combined?
- Are any words repeated too often?
- Are there some words that could be replaced with more mature or appropriate words?
- Are your verbs correct, for example is/are, was/were?
- Are the words all spelt correctly?
- Are capital letters used correctly?
- Are commas, full stops, question marks and apostrophes used correctly?
- Are the structure/ layout correct for what the task sheet has instructed?
- Are the diagrams and pictures relevant to the text?
- Have you referenced correctly using APA 5<sup>th</sup> edition?
- Is the text coherent?
- Are you satisfied that this is the ***BEST*** you can do?

### ***The Final Draft***

Now it's time to put everything together. If you're rushed for time, you may go straight from your working drafts to your final copy. If you've spent sufficient time planning, revising, and proofreading the various pieces of your essay, that may be enough.

The best next step is to write the entire essay out at least once before writing the final draft. Most authors do several revisions before they feel satisfied. You may not have this option. You have to make this decision based on when your essay is due,

how much time you have allowed yourself to complete the process, and how satisfied you feel with what you've written. If you've done your composing on the computer, polishing a first draft becomes a bit easier.

Place your introductory paragraph first, then the body paragraphs, and finally the concluding paragraph. Read the entire essay over to make sure the paragraphs flow smoothly from one to the other and that the ideas connect in a logical way.

Every time you read your essay, ask yourself if you've expressed your ideas as clearly as possible based on ***your subject, audience, and purpose.***

Check that you have adhered to the formal conditions set out in your task sheet including a proper title page, inclusion of criteria sheets, length limits, resource lists etc.

### ***General Guidelines for Presentation***

- Header or Footer with student name, subject, teacher and house family
- Headings in bold as relevant for the genre
- Black ink
- 1.5 or 2 line spacing
- Printed on one side of paper only
- 2.5 cm margins
- Size 12 font
- Arial OR Times New Roman Font
- Title on top line (without quotation marks or underlining)
- Referencing using APA 5<sup>th</sup> edition

**\*NB: Remember to keep 2 (two) saved digital copies of your assignments one on your school 'H' drive and another on an external source.\***

# Research Tips

## ***Plagiarism***

Plagiarism is representing another person's work as one's own. Plagiarism is dishonesty and is a serious violation of the academic standards of Mackay Christian College. **WHETHER INTENTIONALLY OR UNINTENTIONALLY, PLAGIARISM IS COMMITTED IF ACKNOWLEDGMENT IS NOT MADE OF THE ORIGINAL SOURCE OF ALL NON-ORIGINAL MATERIAL IN THE ASSIGNMENT.**

The following is a guide of the sorts of information that **MUST** be acknowledged/referenced.

- Direct quotations from other authors.
- Ideas from other writers – an idea cannot be taken from another author and reworded without acknowledgment. The idea still belongs to another and even though the exact words have not been used does not mean the idea can be claimed as original.
- Statistical information.

EXAMPLE – The following information **MUST** be referenced.

The success of Cook's voyages has been attributed, in part, to improved means of navigation and nutrition.

There are now grounds for the belief that Australia has been inhabited for more than 20 000 years.

However, if the information is considered a matter of general knowledge it does **NOT** need to be acknowledged.

EXAMPLE – The following statements would **NOT** need to be referenced.

Cook reached Australia in 1770

Australian Aboriginals did not use metal tools before 1770.

## ***Examples of Plagiarism***

- When paragraphs, sentences, a single sentence, or significant parts of sentence, which are copied directly, are not enclosed in quotation marks and appropriately acknowledged.
- When paraphrasing is used and the original author is not acknowledged.
- Direct copying of another student's work.
- When group work is included as part of the assessment, but individuals must submit their own work, this must not be any of the other students' work.

If you experience **ANY** difficulty with an assignment – **SEEK HELP WITHOUT DELAY**. It is far better to seek help rather than submit a piece of work that is

inadequate, plagiarised or long overdue. Remember – there is nothing wrong with having many references. It is only wrong when you have NOT referenced.

## **RESEARCH USING THE LIBRARY**

It is important to learn how to use the library and make use of the wonderful resources available to you –print, digital and human. The primary task of the researcher is to answer the questions he/she has on a particular topic and one of the most important sources for you in this will be the college library. The facts and opinions you find there will help you form your own views on the given topic.

### ***Finding things in the library***

It is important to understand how things are catalogued in the library to make finding information easier for you. All items in our library are classified using the Dewey decimal classification system, named after Melvil Dewey. In brief, this means that general topic areas are given a classification number.

Below is the classification list:-

- 000 - Generalities
- 100 - Philosophy and Psychology
- 200 - Religion
- 300 - Social Science
- 400 - Language
- 500 - Natural Science and Mathematics
- 600 - Technology (Applied Sciences)
- 700 - Arts
- 800 - Literature
- 900 - Geography and History

These will give a general guide to where to find things – ask the helpful librarians if you are uncertain.

### ***Using the World Wide Web***

You can find anything, so it's said, on the Internet. That's what makes it a great research resource for budding scholars. That's also what makes it a problem for students. The Internet has been called the world's largest library. As a repository holding a great deal of information, it is. But there's one big difference. Libraries have librarians to select quality books and reliable reference materials. The Internet, as a whole, does not. As a result, anyone can publish anything on the Internet, and they do. Some of it is valid, reliable information, some of it is not. As a general rule, students are encouraged to seek a number of sources from a variety of web sites. **WIKIPEDIA IS NOT A RELIABLE SOURCE OF INFORMATION**. The college encourages the use of the [Sweet Search](#) link on the Portal front page. This will provide students with safe and accurate search results.

## RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Mackay Christian College have developed a framework to assist in the development of a researched assignment. The **WOW Framework** is a tool all students can use in any subject to gather, record and synthesise information. Through the development of a series of focus questions designed to answer a bigger key question, you will be able to make sense of the various sources you use and gather others' opinions and ideas to form your own. The template for the framework can be found on the College Portal at [MCC Document Centre/Student Forms](#)



## Inquiry Framework ~ WOW

Finding out how to find something out is a really important skill to learn. So is the skill of being able to explain your point of view and why you think it. The research process allows you to do it. It is a WOW (Way Of Working) that will help you all through your life.

There are three steps to a Research WOW:

**W**ork out what you need to know.

**O**rganise your evidence and thoughts.

**W**rite to prove your point of view

## **APA REFERENCING (5<sup>TH</sup> EDITION)**

APA style is an author-date citation style. It was developed mainly for use in psychology, but has also been adopted by other disciplines and is used commonly by universities in Australia. There are two major components to the APA author-date style – the in-text author-date citation at the appropriate place within the text of the document, e.g. (Smith, 2010), and the detailed reference list at the end of the document. All in-text citations must have a corresponding reference list entry, and the converse applies for reference list entries.

Use the following instructions as guide for your own referencing using the APA style. A more detailed explanation and examples can be found at a link on the MCC Library Virtual Classroom.

### ***Insert an in-text citation:***

- When your work has been influenced by someone else's work, for example:
  - When you directly quote someone else's work
  - When you paraphrase someone else's work

The in-text citation consists of:

- author surname(s) (in the order that they appear on the actual publication),
- Followed by the year of publication of the source that you are citing.
- Include page or paragraph numbers for direct quotes, and for paraphrasing where appropriate

The in-text citation is placed immediately after the text which refers to the source being cited

If quoting or citing a source which is cited within another, secondary reference, mention the source with the secondary reference details: e.g. Smith (as cited in Jones, 2010). Only the secondary reference should be included in the reference list.

### ***Reference list:***

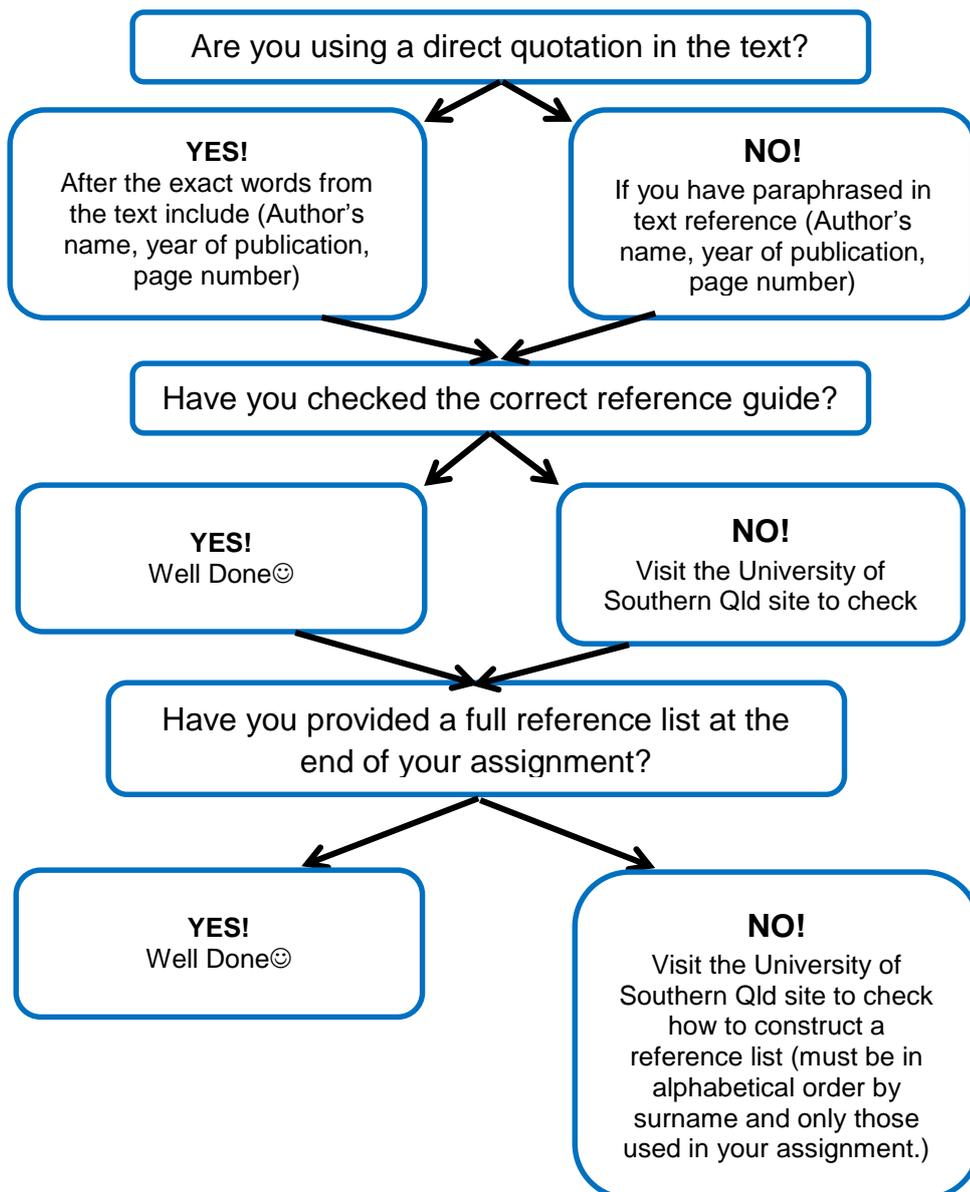
- Begin your reference list on a new page and title it 'References.' Centre the title on the page.
- Double-space your reference list and have a hanging indent a hanging indent is where the first line of each reference is fully left justified while subsequent lines are indented to the right. The width of the hanging indent should be 5-7 spaces or 1.25 cm. Hanging indents and double spacing are set by the word processors
- All of the references in the reference list must also be cited in the text.
- All references cited in text must also be included in the reference list (exceptions are unpublished items such as correspondence).
- List the references in alphabetical order by author surname/family name.
- Where there are two articles with the same authors and date, order the references alphabetically by article title and add a letter suffix to the year of publication (e.g. 2003a, 2003b...).
- Provide organisation names in full, unless they are obviously recognisable as abbreviations (e.g. APA for American Psychological Association).

- Do not add full stops to URLs (e.g. <http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/>)
- Check the reference details against the actual source – you are indicating that you have read a source when you cite it.
- Be consistent with your referencing style across the assignment.

The link below for the University of Southern Queensland gives thorough examples of in text and end of text referencing using APA.

<http://www.usq.edu.au/library/help/referencing/apa>

### QUICK GUIDE TO THE APA REFERENCING SYSTEM



## **REFERENCE LIST**

Christian Heritage College. (2011). *Style Guide* accessed from  
[http://chc.edu.au/images/uploads/documents/CHC\\_Style\\_Guide\\_2011on\\_full.pdf](http://chc.edu.au/images/uploads/documents/CHC_Style_Guide_2011on_full.pdf)

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[www.citewrite.qut.edu.au](http://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au)