Getting started at uni
Understanding assignment tasks

L3: Language, Literacies and Learning
Zorka Simic
How to identify the type of assignment

Ask yourself the following questions:

What is its structure?
*How should it look?*

What is its purpose?
e.g. *are you writing to persuade or inform?*

What type of language is expected?
e.g. *formal or personal?*
An example of different task types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Type</th>
<th>Essays</th>
<th>Reports</th>
<th>Reflections</th>
<th>Critical Review</th>
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| **Structure** | • Introduction  
                 • Body paragraphs  
                 • Conclusion  
                 • Reference list  
                 • May use headings (Clarify with lecturers and/or tutors) | • Executive Summary / Abstract  
                                                   • Intro, body, conclusion  
                                                   • Recommendations  
                                                   • Headings &/or subheadings  
                                                   • Appendices  
                                                   • Reference list | • Paragraphs  
                                                                     • May include an introduction, conclusion and/or headings (Clarify with lecturers and/or tutors) | • Introduction  
                                                                       • Summary  
                                                                       • Critique  
                                                                       • Conclusion  
                                                                       • Reference list  
                                                                       • May use headings (Clarify with lecturers and/or tutors) |
| **Purpose** | • To give an argument or opinion  
              • To provide support or evidence  
              • To persuade the reader | • To provide info  
                                         • To provide support or evidence  
                                         • To inform the reader | • To reflect on, analyse and evaluate learning experiences | • To summarise, analyse and evaluate academic article(s) |
| **Language** | • Formal  
                 • Objective | • Formal  
                 • Objective | • Is more personal  
                                                           • May include academic language if sources used as support | • Formal  
                                                                       • Objective |
Find information about your assignment

NOTE: Learnonline sites may look different across courses. Familiarise yourself with each site and if unsure where to find information on the site, speak to your tutor.
Video gaming has negative impacts on behavioural development. Discuss.

- What type of assignment is this?
- How would you approach the task?
- What would it look like?

This is an **Essay**
To look at an issue objectively, and present a persuasive argument based on evidence and expert voice as support.
Identifying task types: Example 2

Observe a group of tertiary students before and after playing video games. Present your findings with reference to specific behaviours and reactions.

- What type of assignment is this?
- How would your approach differ to an essay?
- How might the layout differ?

This is a Report
To provide information based on observations & evidence

Report layout*:
- Headings and sub-headings
- Visuals
*Check task guidelines for other features and course expectations
Staying on track with your assignment

Identify key words
- Task words
- Content words

Identify task questions
- Main question
- Questions to help develop your argument

Think about your approach
- What?
- Where?
- Who?
- How?

Read with purpose
- Is it relevant?
- What parts are most relevant?
- Why is it relevant?

Think again
- What approach?
Further resources: [www.unisa.edu.au/L3](http://www.unisa.edu.au/L3)