

## TIPS ON WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

### 1 CHECK AND ANALYSE THE TITLE

- a) What is the subject under discussion?
- b) What are the instructions given, e.g. discuss, compare etc.?
- c) What are the keywords/ significant phrases?
- d) Are there any ambivalent terms or very big areas i.e. do I need to define anything?

### 2 DO SOME RESEARCH

Check your reading list and ask your trainers and colleagues for suggestions on material that is relevant. Wikipedia is not an acceptable resource for academic research and should not be referenced in your assignments. Instead use The Centre library, Coventry University e- resources, and, indeed, if you have access to your local library or a University library, go and see what books and peer-reviewed journal articles may be useful. Look for original texts and not just secondary sources. Also look for current, up-to-date literature and research findings. Students are reminded to source the newest edition of each book that they reference.

### 3 CRITICALLY EVALUATE THE LITERATURE

Students are encouraged to critically evaluate the theories, literature and research findings that they are reading. For example, consider the validity of what you are reading and the generalisability of the findings. Refer to your notes from the introductory research seminar and the handout you received on how to critically evaluate.

Spend some time thinking about how the literature relates to your own personal experiences. What does this approach mean for you, both personally, and as a professional counsellor?

Consider how this theory will be applied in counselling practice. How might this approach affect the client-counsellor relationship? Have you considered how individual differences and cultural diversity will interact with the approach?

### 4 BE CREATIVE AND PERSONAL

Remember you are furthering your training as an integrative humanistic counsellor. Creativity and the use of yourself are very important. It follows then, that as well as a critical analysis of the literature you also need to do something to make the material your own. You might include poetry, pictures, paintings, music, quotations, interview excerpts, newspaper articles, case studies, etc. Original, innovative material allows you to more fully bring yourself to the assignment and so this is always preferable to reproducing someone else's work. In all cases, including copyrighted material without permission is illegal and therefore unacceptable.

Creative material should be used to support and enhance your work, to add meaning, and not simply as an attractive but superfluous embellishment.

## 5 SUPPORT YOUR ARGUMENT

It is important that you support your argument. How did you get to believe what you are stating? How do you know that these perspectives are valid? Support each point you make with research, opinions of other authors, examples, case studies and/or your own personal experiences. Are there any opposing views/ findings in the field? What sense do you make of this apparent contradiction?

## 6 WRITE THE WHOLE ASSIGNMENT

Write the assignment as well as you can but regard it as a first draft and be prepared to change it later. Write it simply. When you have finished the first draft put it away for a few days before looking at it again. Read it out loud to see if the sentences 'flow' in a satisfactory way.

Perhaps get a colleague or friend to read it.

See if you have answered the question sufficiently.

- Check the essay title and guidelines
- Check the outline of what the markers are looking for
- Check the marking scheme

## 7 FINAL DRAFT AND PRESENTATION

Re-write the essay and run a spell check and a grammar check on it. Perhaps consider asking someone to check it for typos. Then present your essay professionally. Typing should be double spaced, and pages should be printed on one side only. Number the pages. Remember that your assignment needs a title page, contents page, the main assignment, a reference section and a signed anti-plagiarism declaration.

### *Title Page*

- a) Your CU Student Number
- b) Course of study: "Presented in part fulfilment of the requirements of the B.Sc. (Hons) Counselling & Psychotherapy, Cork Counselling Services Training Institute"
- c) Module:  
Title of assignment:
- d) Date of submission:
- e) Word count.

Please note that your assignment may not be accepted for marking if you do not adhere to the word count (+/-10%) outlined for the assignment.

### *Contents Page*

This page contains the contents of your work and the page number for each section.

### *References*

This section needs to contain full and correct references for all books, journals, articles, websites etc., to which you refer in the main body of your assignment. References should be listed in alphabetical order. Please see the student resources portal for more guidance on the APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition referencing style.

### *Anti-Plagiarism Declaration*

All written assignments submitted to Cork Counselling Services Training Institute must include a signed anti-plagiarism declaration.

Upload your assignment, via the student portal and await confirmation of successful upload, on or before the marking deadline. If you experience any issues, please email administration or the marking co-ordinator.