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UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL

Five Steps to Unpack Your Assessment Task

1. Identify the Task Type (genre)

This will tell you how the task needs to be structured. Is it an **essay**, a **case study**, a **report**? Task type is usually identified in the description.

2. Identify the Topic

This will tell you which areas of your subject that you need to focus on to complete the task. The topic is usually found in the task description.

3. Identify the Task Words

Task words will be verbs like: Discuss, compare, explain, analyse. Task words are directions that tell you how to answer the topic.

4. Identify the Content Words

Content words tell you which ideas and/or concepts related to the topic that you need to focus on.

5. Identify the Limiting Words

Limiting words help you narrow the focus of the topic so that you only discuss what is necessary to complete the task.

See an example of an unpacked assessment task on the back of this page.

1. Task Type

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TASK 1 DESCRIPTION: *Research proposal*

Individual or group: Individual
Weighting: 60%
Word count: 3,000 words

2. Topic

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Task Description:
This subject focuses on the *development of a proposal for a small scale research project.* The project may be a *research study involving gathering data, or a synthesis and critical review of literature* relating to an approved education topic.

5. Limiting words

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The purpose of the proposal is to help you to focus and define your research plans. These plans are not binding, in that they may well change substantially as you progress through your research. However, they are an indication to your supervisor and The School of your direction and discipline as a researcher.

The proposal should be approximately 3000 words (excluding references and appendices).

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It should:

3. Task words*

1. Clearly *define* the topic;
2. Describe the rationale for the project;
3. Locate the proposed project in the context of the literature;
4. Identify the research question(s);
5. Outline *methods for generating, gathering and/or analysing research data*;
6. Discuss issues associated with the method(s).

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4. Content words*

*Note: These are not the only **Task** and **Content** words in this task description. Can you identify the other ones?

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