

**TE MĀTĀPUNA**

ki Waihorotiu | ki Akoranga | ki Manukau

LIBRARY & LEARNING SERVICES

**AUT**

# Academic Writing

Learning Advisors

# Sample assignment task

## Task outline

### Assignment Task 2: Essay (2000 words)

This assignment assesses if you have met **Learning Outcomes 2, 3, 4 and 5** of this course (refer to the Course Booklet for more information).

## Task instructions

Examine the use of Facebook in learning and teaching for tertiary level students and teachers. Discuss the impact of Facebook on tertiary education by outlining both positive and negative effects. Write a short reflection on how you have used social media for learning.

# Analyse the task: Key words

**What/Who**  
are you writing about?

**When/Where**  
is it happening?

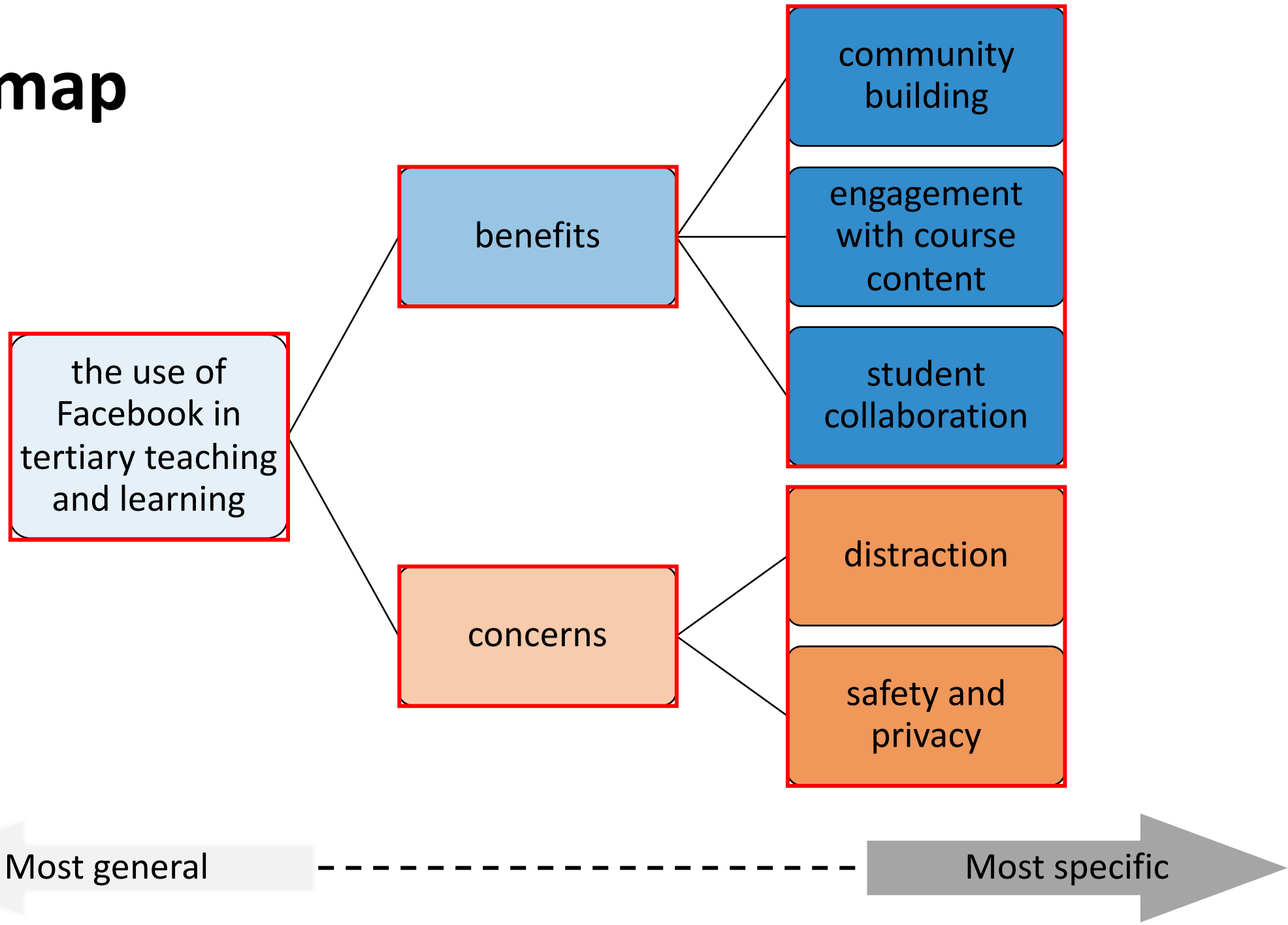
**How**  
should you write  
about it?

Examine the use of Facebook in learning and teaching for tertiary level students and teachers. Discuss the impact of Facebook on tertiary education by outlining both positive and negative effects. Reflect on how you have used social media for learning.

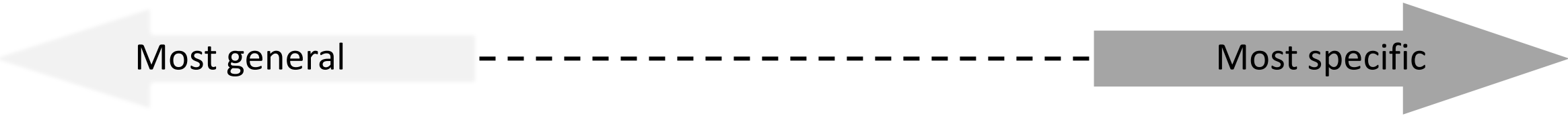
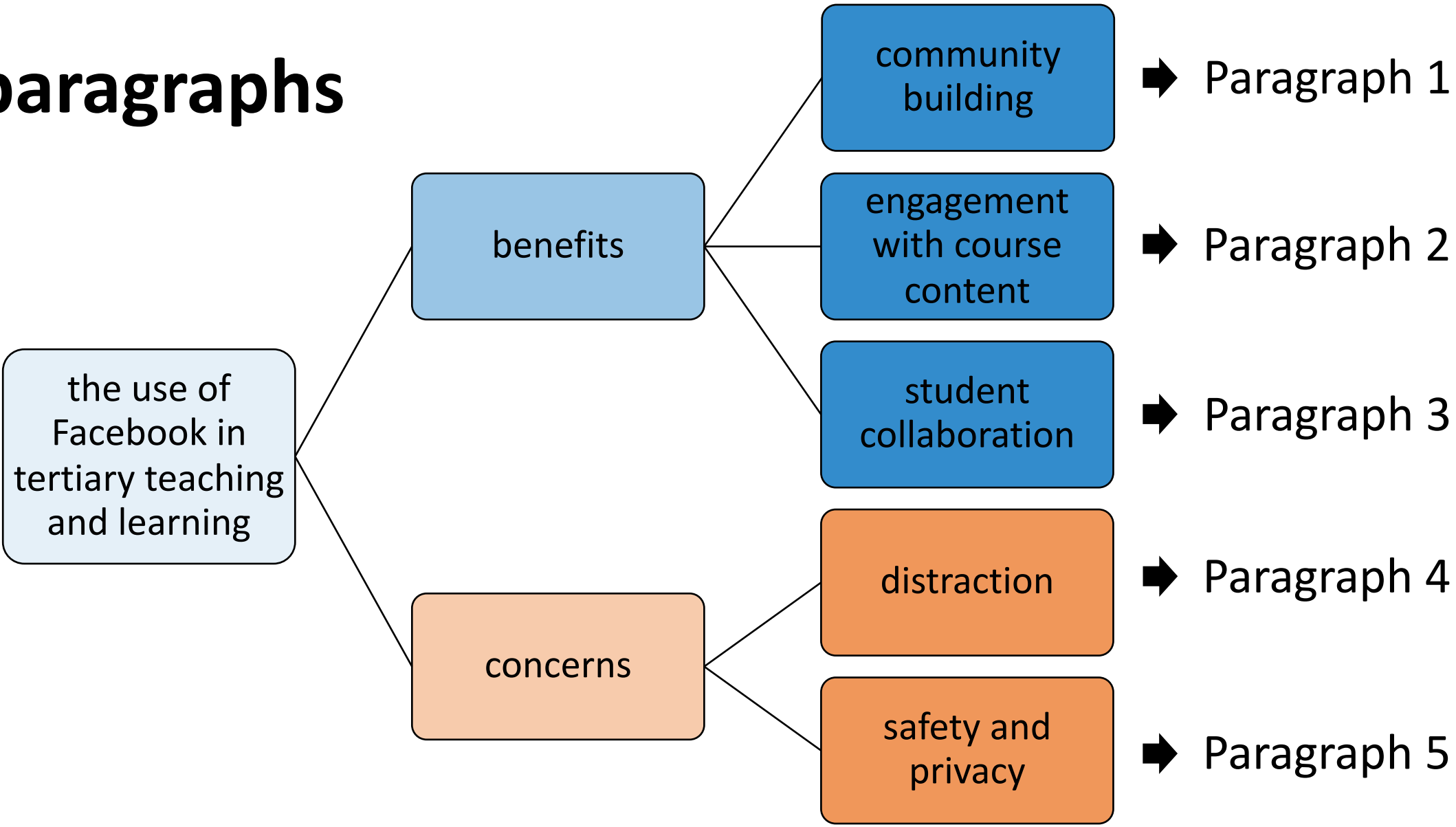
Instruction word	Explanation
outline	
describe	
illustrate	
examine	
explain	
reflect	
summarise	
analyse	
discuss	
argue	
evaluate	
critique	

Instruction word	Explanation
<b>outline</b>	State the main points/topics with a brief explanation
<b>describe</b>	Provide and reproduce information
<b>illustrate</b>	Give examples for what you are describing
<b>examine</b>	Provide detailed information and identify the significance/implications
<b>explain</b>	Clarify, give reasons or possible causes
<b>reflect</b>	Relate personal experiences to concepts
<b>summarise</b>	Bring together the main points in a few sentences
<b>analyse</b>	Re-organise and relate broad concepts to more specific types/parts
<b>discuss</b>	Examine different positions on a topic/area of research
<b>argue</b>	Take a position and support that position with evidence
<b>evaluate</b>	Assess something with justification/reasoning
<b>critique</b>	Extend and/or challenge other positions

# Ideas map



# Body paragraphs



# Introduction

## Body

### paragraph 1

*One key benefit of using Facebook in teaching and learning is its capacity for online community building...*

### paragraph 2

*Another advantage of Facebook in the tertiary setting is that it can increase student engagement with course content...*

### paragraph 3

*A further benefit of Facebook is student collaboration..*

### paragraph 4

*One negative impact of Facebook is its capacity to distract students from their studies...*

### paragraph 5

*A second issue with Facebook concerns safety and privacy..*

# Conclusion



# Paragraphs

- have different parts for introduction, body or conclusion
- are made of clear sentences that connect to one another
- are separated with a line break

# Example body paragraph

Identify  
topic/focus

One key benefit of using Facebook in teaching and learning is its capacity for online community building.

# Example body paragraph

Identify  
topic/focus

One key benefit of using Facebook in teaching and learning is its capacity for online community building. As Duffy (2011) argues, Facebook can connect students with peers and teachers, involving them in communities: a vital component of student success. For example, in Australia and Singapore, first year undergraduate students participated in virtual discussions, which helped them to connect with their peers and reduced feelings of loneliness and isolation (McCarthy, 2013). In addition, the students appreciated having time to create and reflect on their responses before they posted them.

Bring in  
research

Explanations/definitions

and/or

Research findings

# Example body paragraph

Identify  
topic/focus

One key benefit of using Facebook in teaching and learning is its capacity for online community building. As Duffy (2011) argues, Facebook can connect students with peers

and teachers, involving them in communities: a vital component of student success. For

Bring in  
research

example, in Australia and Singapore, first year undergraduate students participated in

virtual discussions, which helped them to connect with their peers and reduced feelings

of loneliness and isolation (McCarthy, 2013). In addition, the students appreciated

Explain and  
apply

having time to create and reflect on their responses before they posted them.

# Example body paragraph

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topic/focus

One key benefit of using Facebook in teaching and learning is its capacity for online community building. As Duffy (2011) argues, Facebook can connect students with peers

Bring in  
research

and teachers, involving them in communities: a vital component of student success. For example, in Australia and Singapore, first year undergraduate students participated in virtual discussions, which helped them to connect with their peers and reduced feelings of loneliness and isolation (McCarthy, 2013). In addition, the students appreciated

Explain and  
apply

having time to create and reflect on their responses before they posted them. Time for reflection and flexible ways to participate may suit students with different temperaments, and could be considered when teachers are designing papers and evaluating student engagement.

Real life applications

and/or

Relevance

# Example body paragraph

Identify  
topic/focus

One key benefit of using Facebook in teaching and learning is its capacity for online community building. As Duffy (2011) argues, Facebook can connect students with peers

Bring in  
research

and teachers, involving them in communities: a vital component of student success. For example, in Australia and Singapore, first year undergraduate students participated in virtual discussions, which helped them to connect with their peers and reduced feelings of loneliness and isolation (McCarthy, 2013). In addition, the students appreciated

Explain and  
apply

having time to create and reflect on their responses before they posted them. Time for reflection and flexible ways to participate may suit students with different temperaments, and could be considered when teachers are designing papers and evaluating student engagement.

Reconnect to  
topic/focus

# Example body paragraph

Identify  
topic/focus

One key benefit of using Facebook in teaching and learning is its capacity for online

**community building.** As Duffy (2011) argues, Facebook can connect students with peers

and teachers, involving them in communities: a vital component of student success. For

Bring in  
research

example, in Australia and Singapore, first year undergraduate students participated in

virtual discussions, which helped them to connect with their peers and reduced feelings

of loneliness and isolation (McCarthy, 2013). In addition, the students appreciated

having time to create and reflect on their responses before they posted them. Time

Explain and  
apply

for reflection and flexible ways to participate may suit students with different

temperaments, and could be considered when teachers are designing papers and

evaluating student engagement. As research has shown, socialising and connecting to

Reconnect to  
topic/focus

others is a crucial component of a satisfying tertiary experience (Elliott & Shin, 2002).

Thus, Facebook can provide **a valuable mode of social interaction** for students.

Overall significance

# Example body paragraph

Identify  
topic/focus

Bring in  
research

Explain and  
apply

Reconnect to  
topic/focus

Another advantage of Facebook in the tertiary setting is that it can increase student engagement with course content. Research shows that students who participate actively in their learning, and in their overall tertiary experience, are more likely to succeed (Pascarella & Terenzini (2005)). For example, in one study, many students were permanently signed into Facebook, so they could frequently engage with posts related to their course content, assignments and activities (Irwin et al. 2012). An additional dimension of their participation is that students may use Facebook comments to critique their experience. For instance, Rambe (2012) found that students felt empowered to voice concerns about teaching methods, course materials and institutional processes. They were also relieved to find that their classmates shared their difficulties. As a result of students' critique, lecturers were made aware of issues that affected learning and were able to address these problems. This type of online interaction demonstrates how Facebook can be used to access, engage with and critique course content.



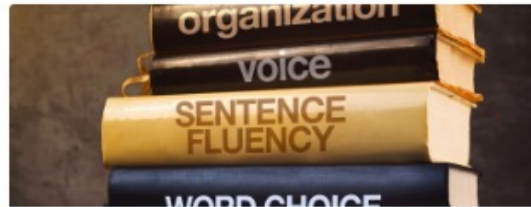
# Introduction and conclusion paragraphs

Write and Present

See examples of how you can write and present in your assessments.



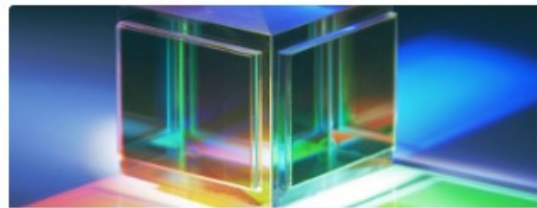
Case studies



Essays



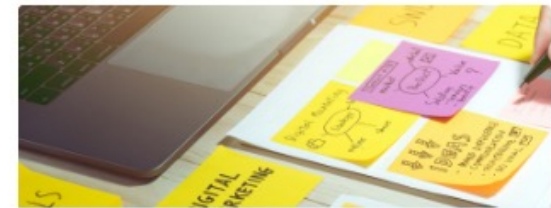
Presentations



Reflective writing



Reports



Analyse information



# Example introduction paragraph

Overall topic	
Sub-topic	
Key terms	
Relevance	
Main aim	
Outline	

# Example introduction paragraph

Overall topic

The social networking website Facebook has become increasingly popular, with over 1.8 billion people using Facebook on a monthly basis (Facebook, 2017). As a result, there is

Sub-topic

discussion within the tertiary education sector about the ways in which websites like Facebook can be used in learning and teaching. Social networking websites can be

Key terms

defined as online spaces where individuals “present themselves, articulate their social networks, and establish or maintain connections with others” (McCarthy, 2012, p. 758).

Relevance

The use of social networking sites within universities is of interest because of their potential for both positive and negative impact. Therefore, learners and teachers need

Main aim

to critically evaluate the educational value of such sites. This essay discusses both the positive and negative effects of using Facebook at tertiary level. It identifies benefits

Outline

related to online community building, engagement and collaboration. It also identifies concerns about its potential to distract students, and problems of safety and privacy.

# Example conclusion paragraph

Restate  
main aim

Summarise  
key points

State overall  
position

The diagram illustrates the structure of a conclusion paragraph using 12 horizontal bars of different colors, corresponding to the instructions on the left:

- Restate main aim:** The first bar is light red. The second bar is split, with the first half being light red and the second half being light purple.
- Summarise key points:** The next four bars (third, fourth, fifth, and sixth) are all light purple.
- State overall position:** The seventh bar is split, with the first half being light purple and the second half being red. The final three bars (eighth, ninth, and tenth) are all red.

# Example conclusion paragraph

Restate  
main aim

Summarise  
key points

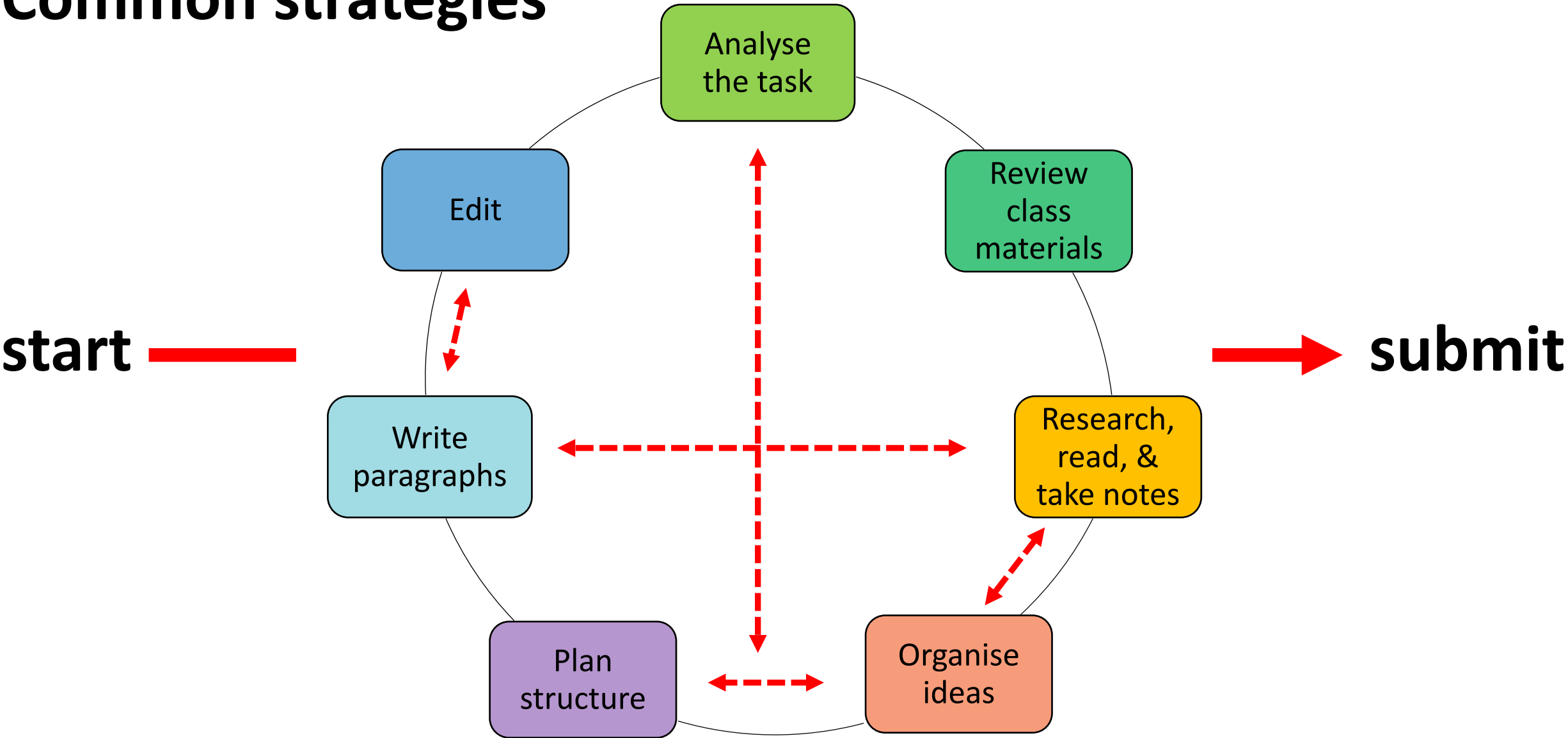
State overall  
position

In summary, this essay has considered the positive and negative aspects of using Facebook at a tertiary level. Research has identified how Facebook can facilitate social interaction and rich collaboration between peers. Therefore, it has the potential to complement face-to-face modes of delivery. However, if Facebook is going to be effectively and safely used in tertiary teaching and learning, then students and teachers need careful guidance. Concerns about use centre on the tendency of Facebook to distract students, as well as the need to support students to better control privacy settings. In conclusion, although the use of any online tool comes with inherent challenges that need careful consideration, the benefits exemplify how the integration of technology offers new approaches to teaching and learning.

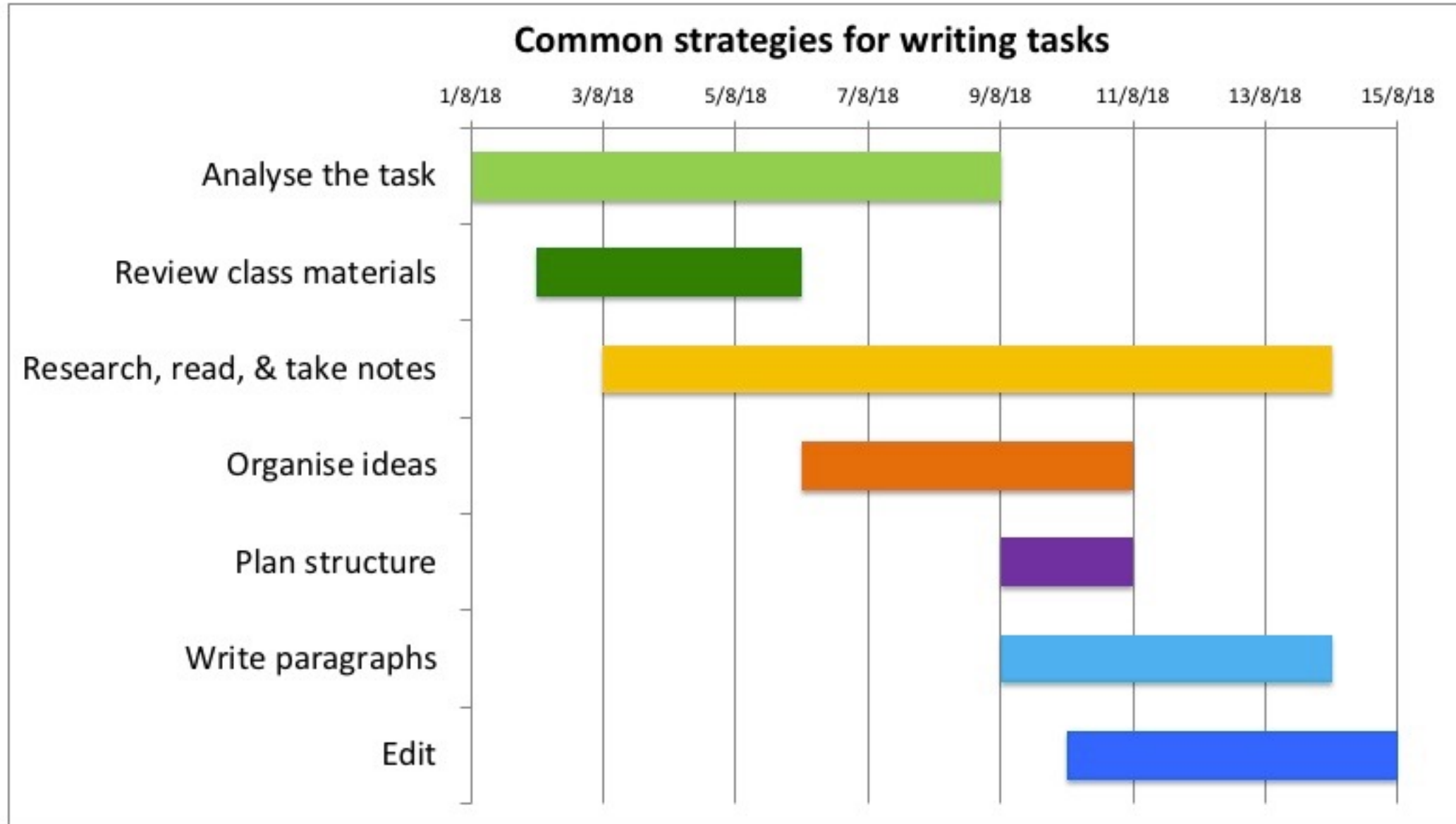
A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide, consisting of a dense, overlapping pattern of teal-colored triangles of various shades and sizes. The pattern is more solid on the left and tapers off towards the right, where individual triangles are more visible.

**Getting started with  
planning & writing  
assignments**

# Common strategies

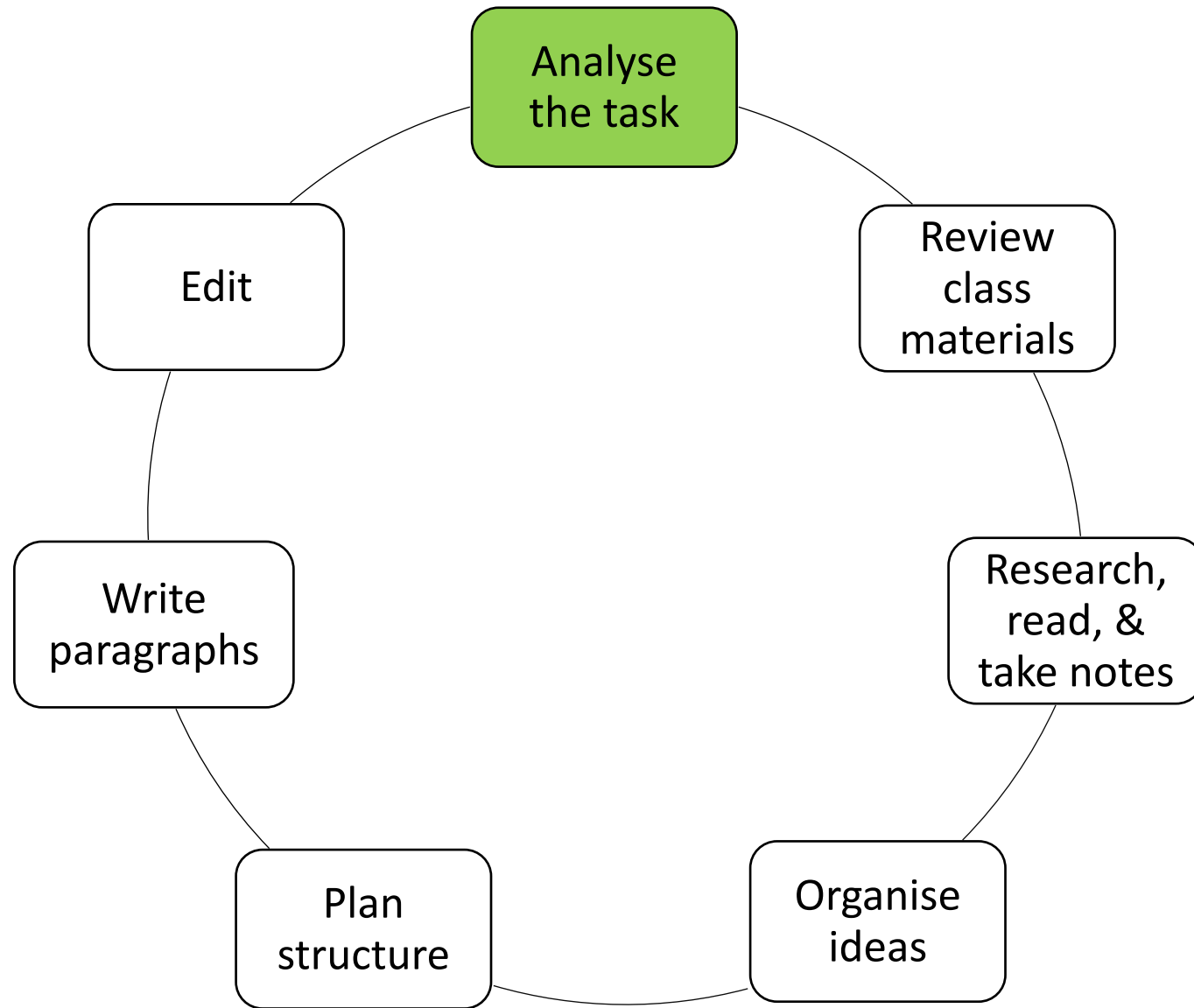


# More like...





**start** —



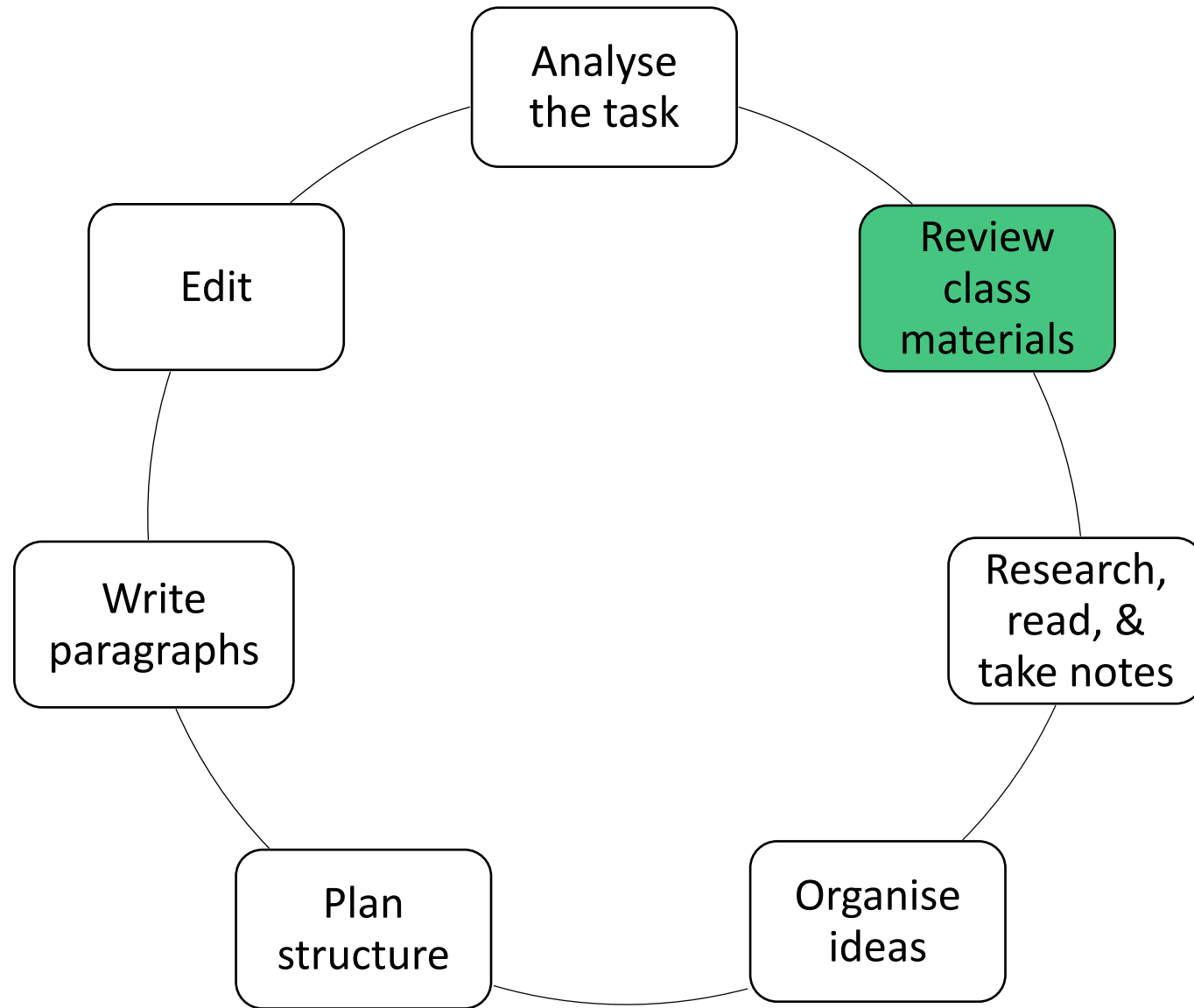
→ **submit**

# Analyse learning outcomes & marking criteria

- Include discussion of at least one advantage and one disadvantage for students. (**LO3**).
- Refer to a **minimum of 10** sources of literature. **At least 5** of the sources must be academic journals. (**LO5**)

Criteria	Excellent	Adequate	Needs development
Research Integrating evidence Paraphrasing/ synthesising Referencing citing	Paraphrases and synthesises from a range of relevant sources in own words; Quotes used sparingly Correct APA referencing, with only one or two minor errors/omissions.	Good attempt to paraphrase and synthesis from a few relevant sources in own words. APA referencing used consistently but with several minor errors/omissions.	Inappropriate copying of groups of words from source texts and/or insufficient APA referencing. Insufficient use of relevant sources.


**start** —





→ **submit**


# Canvas: to review class materials


AUT


Account

Dashboard

Courses

Calendar

Inbox



Home

Announcements


Modules

Assignments


Discussions

Grades


Get study help now (Studiosity)



Course Overview



Teaching Team



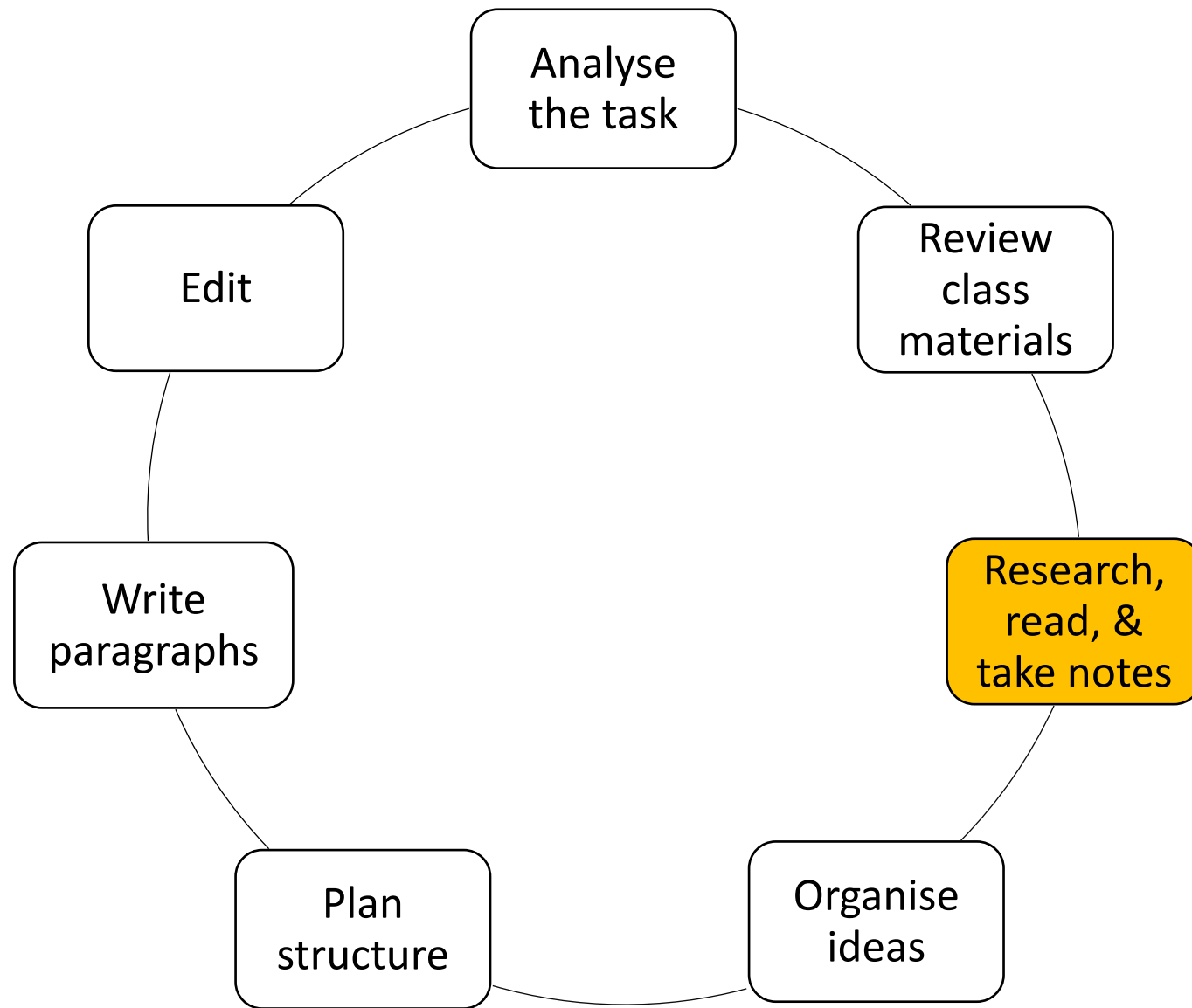
Assessments

> Course Schedule

> Q and A Forum

> Announcements 0

**start** —



→ **submit**

Welcome, **Test Student** to:

# Your Library Te Mātāpuna

## Nau mai haere mai

Welcome. Here you can get help with your researching, reading, writing, presenting, editing, publishing and referencing.



**Rangahau me Pānui**



**Research and Read**



**Tuhi me Whakaari**



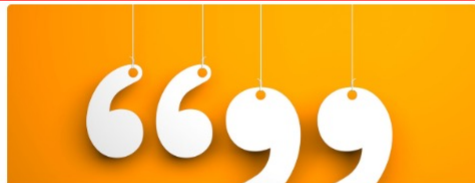
**Write and Present**



**Mahi Whakatika**



**Edit and Publish**



**Tohutoro**



**Referencing**



**Akoranga**



**Workshops**

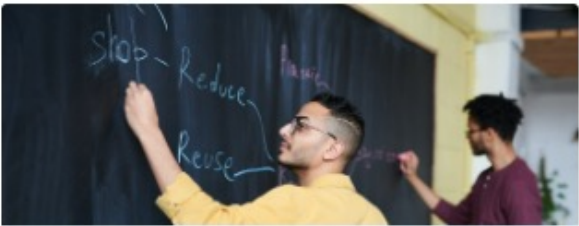


**Te Mātāpuna**



**Welcome to your Library**

Gain skills in finding, evaluating and using information for your assignments in any subject.



**Plan your search for information**



Identify and define your information need



**Search for information**



Use relevant search techniques for each website or database



**Choose good quality information**



Good information is credible and relevant



**Read academic sources**



Strategies for reading at university



**Referencing**



Use information ethically



**Te Mātāpuna Library & Learning Services**



Go to the website to begin your search



Home > Library workshops

## Workshops

AUT Library workshops offer information about searching and writing skills, with opportunities for you to practise.

Library search skills



Academic writing and doing assignments



Referencing, EndNote and reference management



Subject specific searching and referencing



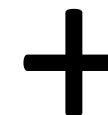
Research support for postgraduates and staff



Thesis writing



on campus



online



# Key questions about sources

- What is the **source**?  
(e.g. university, government department, professional body)
- How **current** is it?  
last 5–10 years?
- Who is the **author**?  
expert, uni professor, controversial?
- What **sort of writing** is it?  
Peer-reviewed journal article, website, newspaper, academic or popular book?
- What is the **purpose** of the text?  
inform, argue, promote change...?

# Online sources: Domain

commercial

<https://www.microsoft.com>

<https://www.airnewzealand.co.nz>



non-profit

<https://www.greenpeace.org>



government

<https://www.health.govt.nz>

<https://www.hhs.gov>



academic /educational

<https://www.aut.ac.nz>

<https://www.harvard.edu>



# Take notes with referencing details

- Collect **APA referencing** details

(eg. author's name, date, title, URL or doi number)

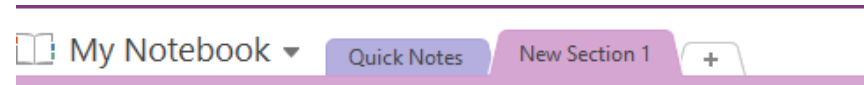
- Use “quotation marks” (p. 6) for any words you copy



Record page number

# OneNote: setting up research database

Create folders  
& pages



FB Essay

Friday, 8 December 2017 10:50 AM

Attach files &  
type notes



McCarthy, 2013

McCarthy  
(2013)...

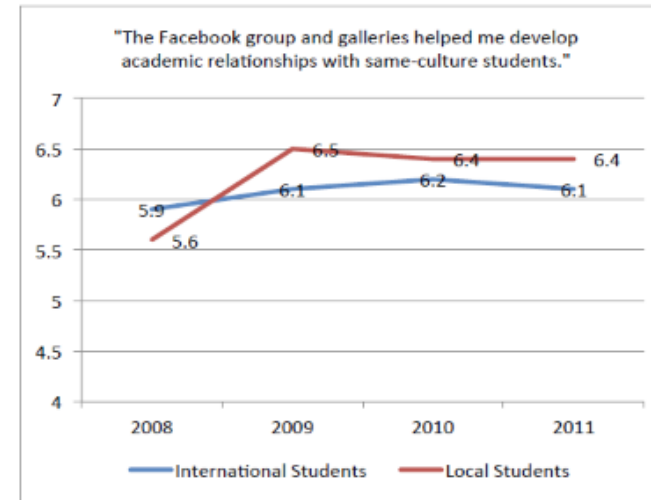
Focus of research

- evaluating FB use with 1st year uni students
- Web tech changing learning enviro.
- >> interacting with peers

Add graphs,  
photos, etc



Key research finding p.344



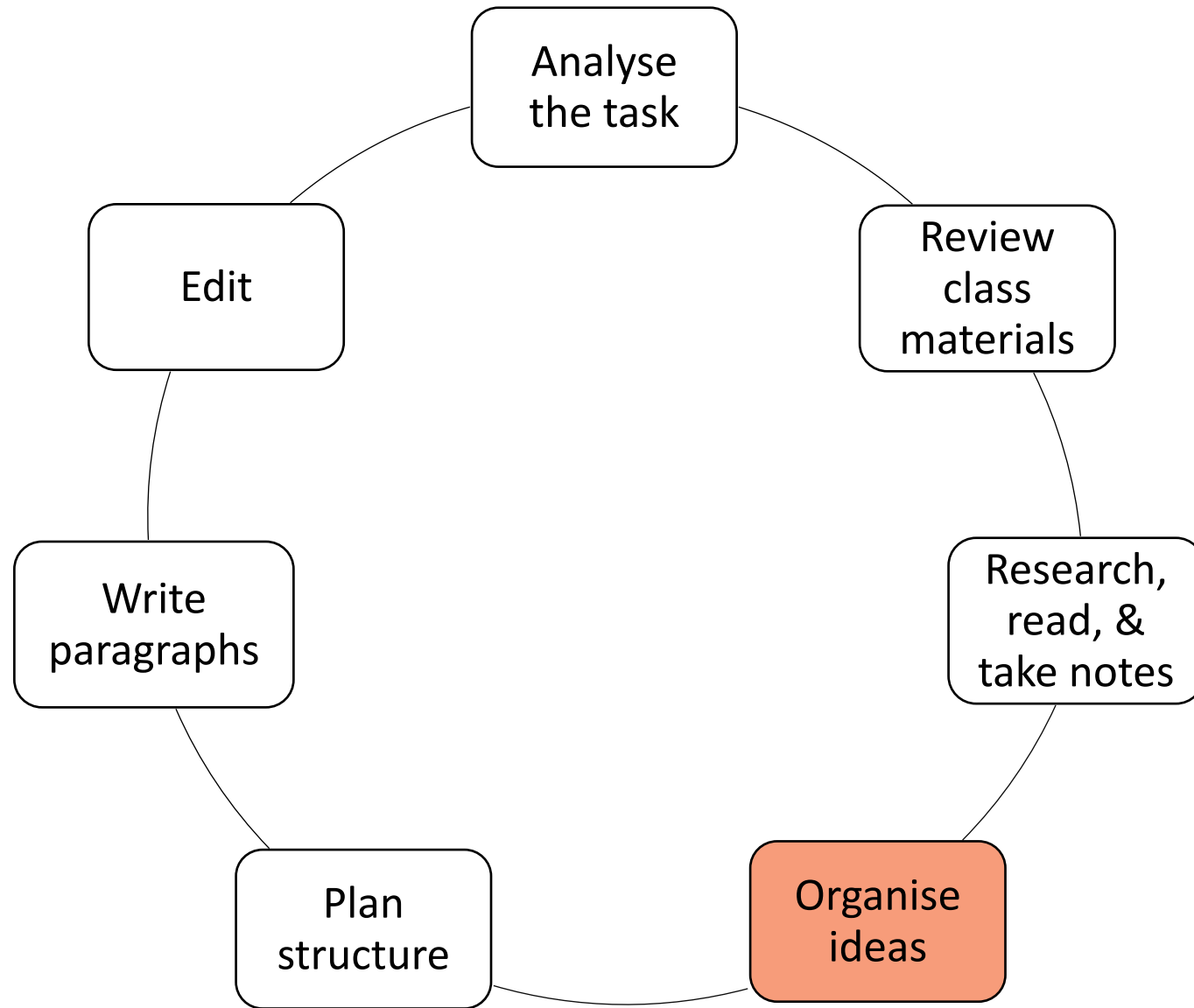
# Reading grid

Source information	Rambe (2012)	McCarthy (2013)	Kirschner and Karpinski (2010)	Rouis, Limayen, and Salehi-Sangari (2011)	Irwin, Ball, Desbrow, and Leveritt (2012)
Notes	+ Stds empowered to critique teaching, course & institution (p. 308)	+ Time to “reflect on content” before posting (p. 353)	- Relationship between high Facebook use & lower GPA average (pp. 1242–1244)	- 5–10 hrs facebook use each week >> neg impact on “engagement with assignments” (p. 985)	+ Stds frequently connected to posts about course content (pp. 1228–1229)

# Three column method

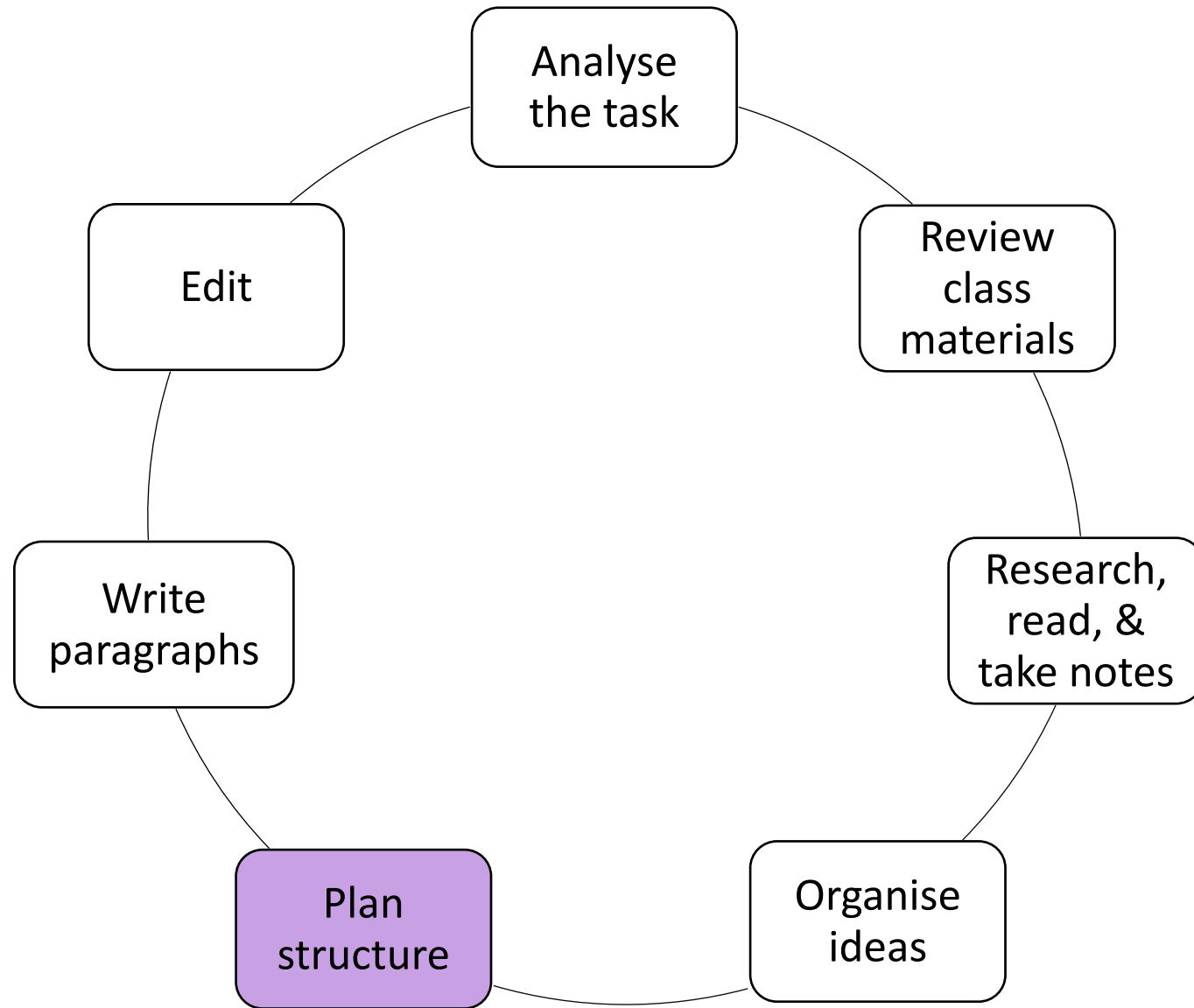
Key points	Examples	Comments
Social media can improve tertiary students' engagement with course content	See Irwin et al. (2012) re stds permanently being signed in & posting about course content. (pp. 1228–1229)	Q: Does this lead to better results?  Q Other similar research findings?

**start** —



→ **submit**

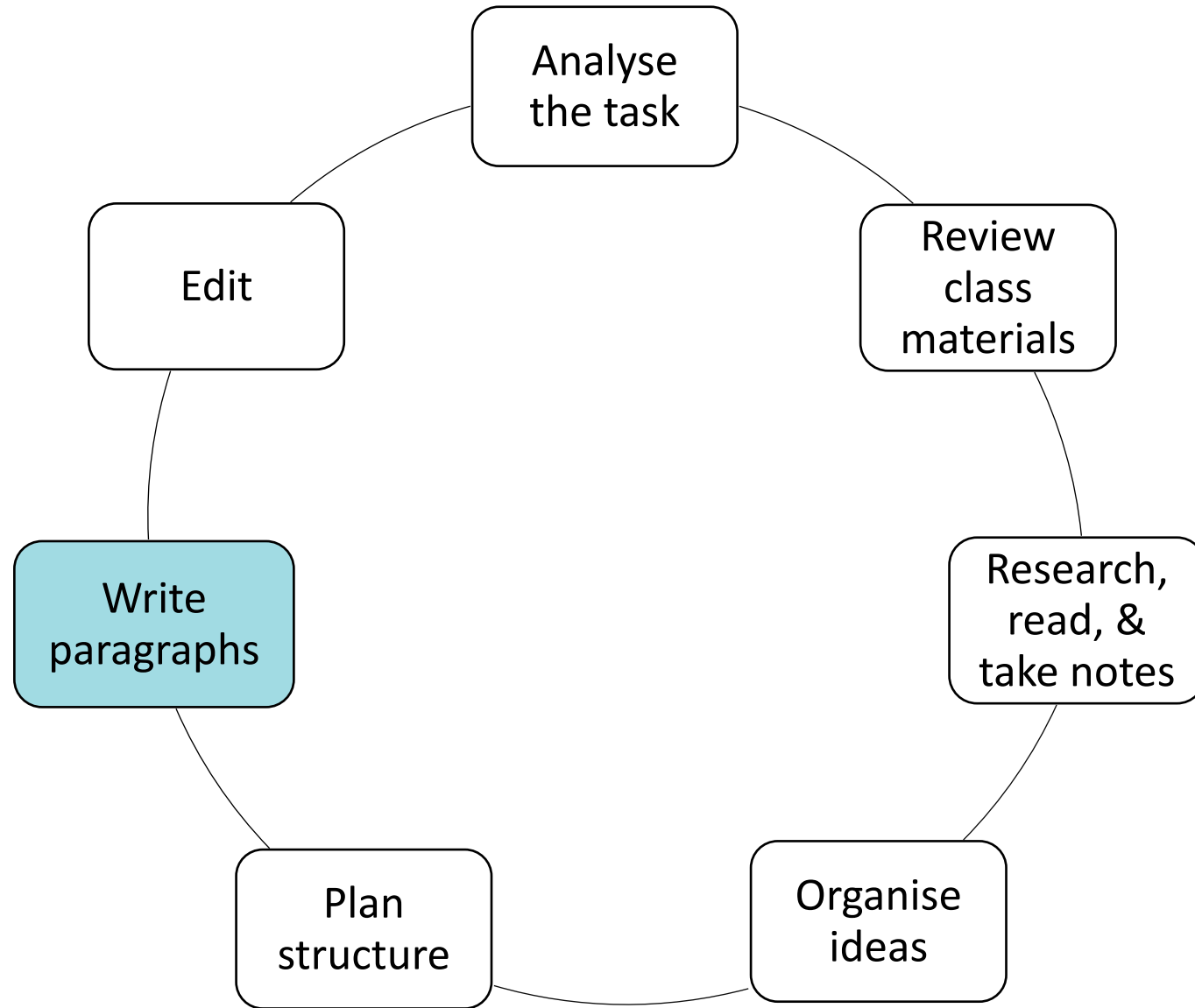
**start** —



→ **submit**

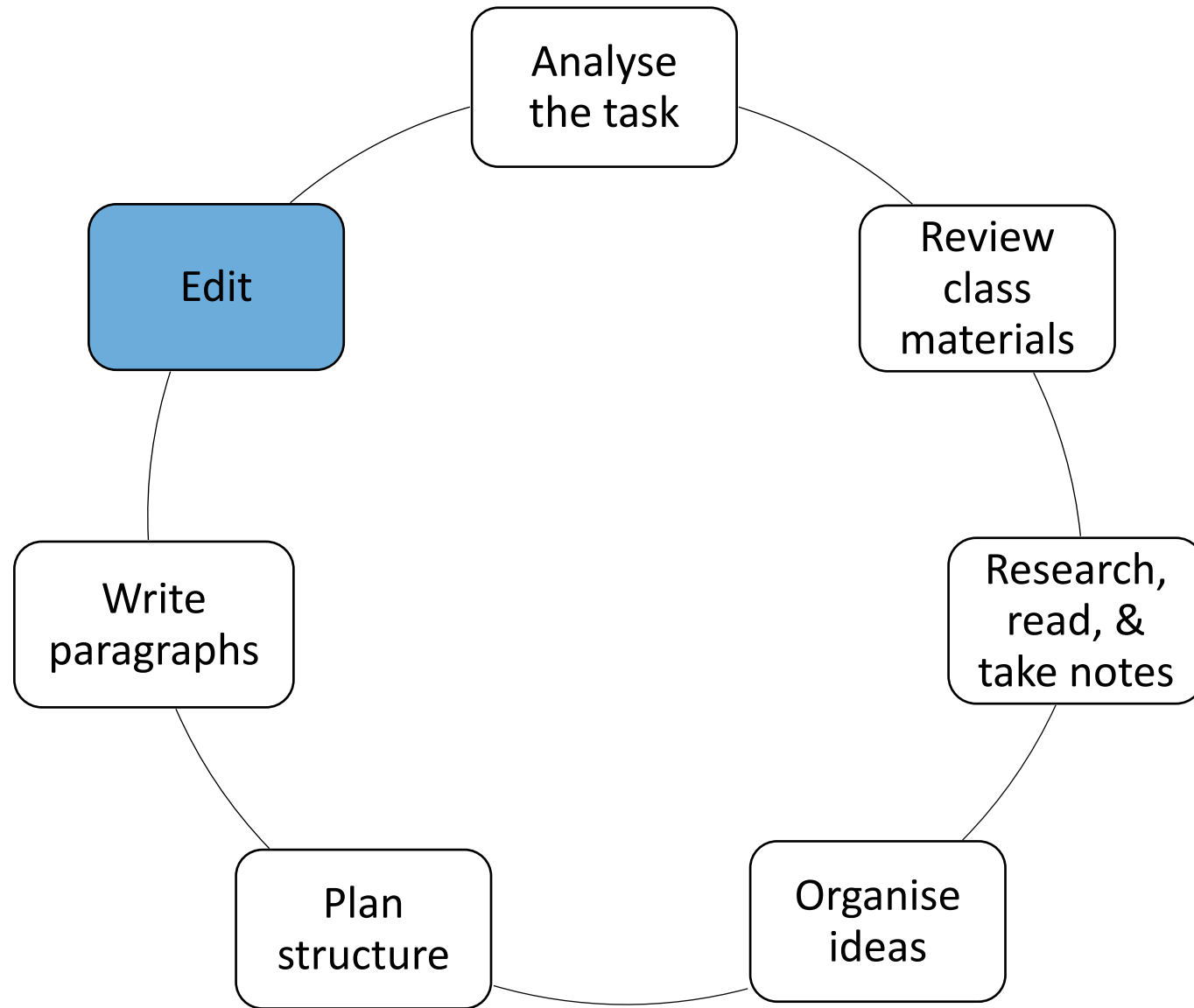


**start** —



→ **submit**

**start** —



→ **submit**

# Edit

**Read through several times, and check:**

- Content, structure, and wording
- Paraphrasing, quotations and APA referencing
- Grammar & spelling
- Word count
- Formatting (Programme handbook or paper guide)



turnitin aut youtube

## References

- Duffy, P. (2011). Facebook or faceblock: Cautionary tales exploring the rise of social networking within tertiary education. In M. Lee, & C. McLoughlin (Eds.), *Web 2.0-based e-learning: Applying social informatics for tertiary teaching* (pp. 284–300). IGI Global.
- Elliott, K. M., & Shin, D. (2002). Student satisfaction: An alternative approach to assessing this important concept. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 24(2), 197–209.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1360080022000013518>
- Irwin, C., Ball, L., Desbrow, B., & Leveritt, M. (2012). Students' perceptions of using Facebook as an interactive learning resource at university. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 28(7), 1221–1232.  
<http://ascilite.org.au/ajet/submission/index.php/AJET/article/view/798/98>
- McCarthy, J. (2013). Learning in Facebook: First year tertiary student reflections from 2008 to 2011. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 29(3), 337–356.  
<http://ascilite.org.au/ajet/submission/index.php/AJET/article/view/373/268>
- Kirschner, P.A., & Karpinski, A.C. (2010). Facebook and academic performance. *Computers in Human Behaviour*, 26(6), 1237–1245. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2010.03.024>
- Rambe, P. (2012). Critical discourse analysis of collaborative engagement in Facebook postings. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 28(2), 295–314. <https://doi.org/10.14742/1jet.875>
- Rouis, S., Limayem, M., & Salehi-Sangari, E. (2011). Impact of Facebook usage on students' academic achievement: Role of self-regulation and trust. *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology*, 9(3). [http://www.investigacion-psicopedagogica.org/revista/articulos/25/english/Art\\_25\\_620.pdf](http://www.investigacion-psicopedagogica.org/revista/articulos/25/english/Art_25_620.pdf)