# The ACE Assignment Planning Checklist

Before you begin to write your assignment, you should plan your approach carefully – **ensuring that your argument progresses logically from introduction to conclusion** and **fulfils the requirements of the brief**.

You can use the following checklist to expedite this process:

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| --- | --- |
| I have… |  ✓ or ✗ |
| Read the task description, highlighting the directive, subject matter, and limiting words. For additional support, see the [ACE Quick Guide to Understanding an Assignment Brief](https://www.qa.com/media/peanfdpo/understanding-the-assignment-brief-quick-guide.pdf). |  |
| Clearly and concisely summarised the task description in my own words.  |  |
| Annotated the brief with my initial ideas, including questions for further research and / or to ask my tutor during office hours.  |  |
| Broken down the task description into small, manageable headings and subheadings.  |  |
| Examined the brief for additional information, such as the marking criteria, word-count, and submission deadline.  |  |
| Attended my assessment support workshops and / or sessions on deconstructing the assignment brief. |  |
| Generated a list of key search terms, including any synonyms for the subject matter and limiting words.  |  |
| Used my list to conduct some preliminary research, searching for resources in an academic database such as Google Scholar. |  |
| Assessed the relevance and credibility of my chosen resources with the CRAAP Test. For further guidance, see the [ACE Quick Guide to Evaluating Sources and Reading Critically](https://www.qa.com/media/beclnst2/evaluating-sources-and-reading-critically-quick-guide.pdf). |  |
| Evaluated the strengths and limitations of my selected resources, keeping detailed, accurate notes.  |  |
| Reviewed my notes, identifying significant trends in the literature as well as relevant disparities, contradictions, or alternatives proposed by the wider academic community.  |  |
| Decided how and where I will incorporate this research – fulfilling the requirements of the brief.  |  |
| Chosen a planning technique, e.g. tabular planning or mind-mapping.  |  |
| Adopted this technique to outline the general structure of my argument, from introduction to conclusion.  |  |
| Checked that my proposed headings and / or subheadings are organised logically and sequentially. |  |
| Populated each heading and / or subheading with bullet points, including what I intend to discuss, relevant scholarly theory, workplace examples, and areas for potential development.  |  |
| Reviewed my plan, identifying potential gaps in my argument, topics for further research, and questions for my tutor.  |  |
| Conducted supplementary research to address these gaps and / or attended an office hour to clarify my questions.  |  |
| Updated my plan, incorporating my supplementary research and / or the guidance provided by my tutor.  |  |
| Checked my updated plan against the brief, ensuring all assessment criteria have been fulfilled.  |  |
| Generated a provisional timeline for completion, establishing SMART goals for each stage of the drafting and editing process.  |  |

## Action Plan

Having reviewed your plan, identify potential **areas for improvement**.

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| Before producing a first draft of my assignment, I will… |  ✓ or ✗ |
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**Additional Resources**

The [ACE Quick Guide to Understanding an Assignment Brief](https://www.qa.com/media/peanfdpo/understanding-the-assignment-brief-quick-guide.pdf) offers additional guidance on breaking down the task description and identifying the directive, subject matter, and limiting words.

The [ACE Quick Guide to Google Scholar](https://www.qa.com/media/ld4baohe/google-scholar-quick-guide.pdf) provides further information on conducting a literature search.

The [ACE Quick Guide to Evaluating Sources and Reading Critically](https://www.qa.com/media/beclnst2/evaluating-sources-and-reading-critically-quick-guide.pdf) offers additional support with assessing the relevance and credibility of scholarly resources using the CRAAP Test.

The [ACE Quick Guide to Assignment Planning](https://www.qa.com/media/5fdgwbej/assignment-planning-quick-guide.pdf) provides further advice on planning an assignment, outlining four common techniques.

The [ACE Quick Guide to SMART Goals](https://www.qa.com/media/1jngnjqm/smart-goals-quick-guide.pdf) includes suggestions for formulating Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound goals.

