## **Researching and writing your essay: some advice**

* Your essay should be mainly a discussion of what you have read: add your own experiences and thoughts by all means but these must relate to the reading you do. This means you need to allow **time** to research your essay.
* Use **anthropological texts** as your sources: these may be whole books, chapters of books, or journal articles. Minimum 8 texts. You are encouraged to read more widely, and this can include information you find on the internet as long as it is from a credible source. Evidence of wide reading will earn you extra marks for effort and will of course improve your essay. (See the ‘Additional Readings’ list on LMS for some help, and don’t forget to use bibliographies to help find more texts.)
* Your tutorial readings should **not** be the main sources for your essay as you need to show that you have done independent research. If you do refer to them, write them up in your bibliography with the publication information provided.
* Your essay should include **critical evaluation** of the sources you use – e.g. how and why are they different, what are their strengths and weaknesses. As you read, think about what theoretical and methodological approaches have been used: this will help you to evaluate the texts.
* All essays should have the conventional essay structure: an *introduction* stating what the essay will cover, a carefully structured *body* in which you discuss what you found through researching the topic, and a *conclusion* drawing your argument together. *Plan* your essay carefully.
* Given that you only have 1,500 words, you need to keep your essay tightly focused on the question. If you decide to narrow your focus, e.g. by choosing particular examples or case studies, make sure you clearly indicate this in your introduction.
* Take the time to read the information below about the criteria that will be used in marking your essay and how grades are assigned.
* All sources used in your essay should be included in a bibliography at the end of your essay – but *only* those you refer to in your essay. List all items in alphabetical order by author surname and do not have separate sections for different kinds of sources.
* References must be in the Harvard style: see the link on LMS or go to: <http://www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/referencing-tool/harvard>
* There are many resources to help with essay writing on the University website: see weblinks on LMS

## **Submitting your essay: important information**

* Essays must be submitted electronically via Turnitin by 11.55pm on October 26. Please check the report generated by Turnitin and address any problems with referencing. Generally, if the similarity index is 30% or more, it is recommended to check your work and see if you need to add quotation marks or revise and paraphrase more thoroughly.
* Be sure you understand what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid this: <http://latrobe.libguides.com/academic-integrity/ethical_use> Penalties apply to plagiarism – see the Department of Social Inquiry rules on LMS.
* Please look at: <https://www.latrobe.edu.au/students/support/it/teaching/turnitin> for information, e.g. how to understand the report generated by Turnitin for your assignments.
* If you need to request an extension you **must** apply for an extension. A link to the online application form is available on LMS. <https://www.latrobe.edu.au/students/admin/forms/request-an-extension> You will need to apply no later than three days before the essay is due, and you must have a valid reason and documentation to support your request (*too many essays to write is not a valid reason: plan ahead!*).
* See the Department of Social Inquiry Rules on LMS for penalties for late essays, as well as other vital information about essay writing
* All essays given an A or N grade will be double marked.
* Friday 16 November is the Department deadline after which essays will usually not be accepted
* **Always back up your work frequently and keep a copy of your essay**.

## **Essay assessment Criteria**

**All these criteria are important but some more than others! I have arranged them in order of importance – referencing is first because without proper referencing you will get a poor mark (or even no mark) no matter how great the essay is.**

**Referencing:** Have you adequately referenced and documented your evidence by use of citations, quotations and a bibliography? Have you used the Harvard style of referencing correctly?

**Content:** Does your essay indicate that you have analysed the question in a detailed and critical manner, and adequately supported your arguments through the use of evidence? Is the content of your essay relevant to the topic you have chosen?

**Structure:** Have you planned your essay carefully? How effectively is your material presented, organised and logically ordered? Is it relevant to the question? Does each paragraph have a main idea or theme? Have you included an introduction, body and conclusion?

**Effort:** Does your essay indicate evidence of wide reading in its planning, preparation and writing?

**Originality:** Does your essay indicate originality and independence of thought (i.e. the capacity to raise your own questions and develop your own arguments)? Does your essay rely too heavily on quotes from texts rather than showing your own thinking about what you’ve read?

**Expression:** Is the quality of your expression clear? Is your grammar, punctuation and spelling correct?

**Introduction:** How well do you identify and formulate your argument, state your aim and introduce your topic?

**Conclusion:** Have you drawn together your arguments? Are your conclusions justified?

**Presentation**: Is the physical presentation of your essay neat? Are all its pages numbered and does it have a title page? Have you used 12 font, double spaced, at least 2cm margins?