



STUDY ZONE

# International Student Orientation

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# Session Plan

- Reflecting on academic experience so far
- Highlighting differences between this and UK higher education
- Highlighting important academic skills
- Academic skills advice and resources at Exeter



# Task 1:

## Your previous academic experience

Introduce yourself to the people around you if you haven't already met them.

Then in pairs or groups of three discuss the questions on the first page of the handout.



# Feedback on Question 1 and 2

## Studying in the UK

1. You may study fewer modules but in more depth.
2. Amount of time spent in self-study will be higher and different modes of study and delivery may be used, e.g. Exeter Learning Environment (ELE), peer study groups, or reflective journals.
  - In-depth knowledge is expected. Read widely.
  - Class time is only 10% - 20% of the full study time expected for a module.
  - Independent learning is encouraged. This includes knowing when and where to ask for help.

## Feedback on Question 3

### 3. Active participation is required in class

- Preparation for class very important.
- Pre-reading, checking on ELE for lecture notes, preparing presentations, reports, doing group work, preparing questions.

## Feedback on Question 4

### 4. A **critical approach** is valued.

This means developing a questioning approach - where you compare ideas and theories, and analyse the evidence used to support arguments.



# How to develop a critical approach

## When writing (e.g. an essay)

When a tutor sets an essay, they are asking you to make an informed response to a question. This means that you have to make a decision about what your answer is going to be and then argue that answer clearly using support from your sources.

For example, if you are given the question:

**‘Can we change organisational culture?’**

you are going to be expected to consider the information from your lectures and your reading and make a decision based on an evaluation of this information.

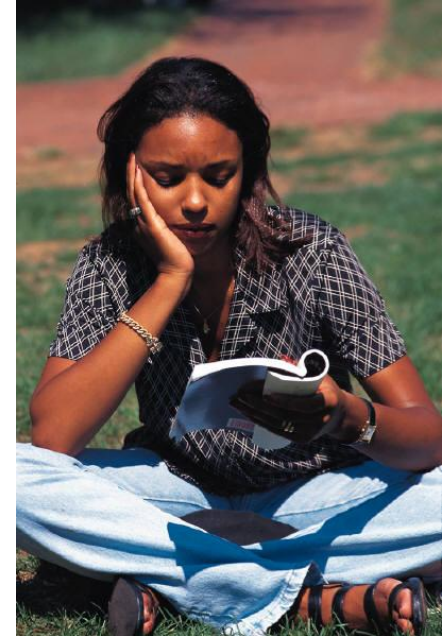
# How to develop a critical approach

## When Reading

Reading critically means asking questions as you read a text so that you can identify (among other things):

- the central argument of the author
- the evidence that is used to support that argument
- the strengths and weaknesses of the argument
- where the text fits in with other texts on the same subject

Reading critically does NOT mean criticising what you read or being negative about it. It means keeping an objective, logical frame of mind that questions and evaluates.





## Task 2: Critical reading practice



Read the text **“Intelligence”** on the second page of your handout: and answer the questions on the following page.

Discuss your answer with the person next to you.

## Let's return to question 5 on page 1 of the handout

5. Assessment style can vary, but coursework essays are common.

- Familiarise yourself with essay style in your department
- Always stick to the question
- Read widely
- Organise main points and supporting points
- Familiarise yourself with grading system and assessment criteria

# Undergraduate Grading

Grade	Meaning
70%+	Distinction (1 <sup>st</sup> )
60-69%	Very good (2.1)
50-59%	Good (2.2)
40-49%	Pass (3 <sup>rd</sup> )
Below 40%	Fail

# Taught Postgraduate Grading

Grade	Meaning
70%+	Distinction
60-69%	Merit
50-59%	Pass
Below 50%	Fail

## Finally to question 6

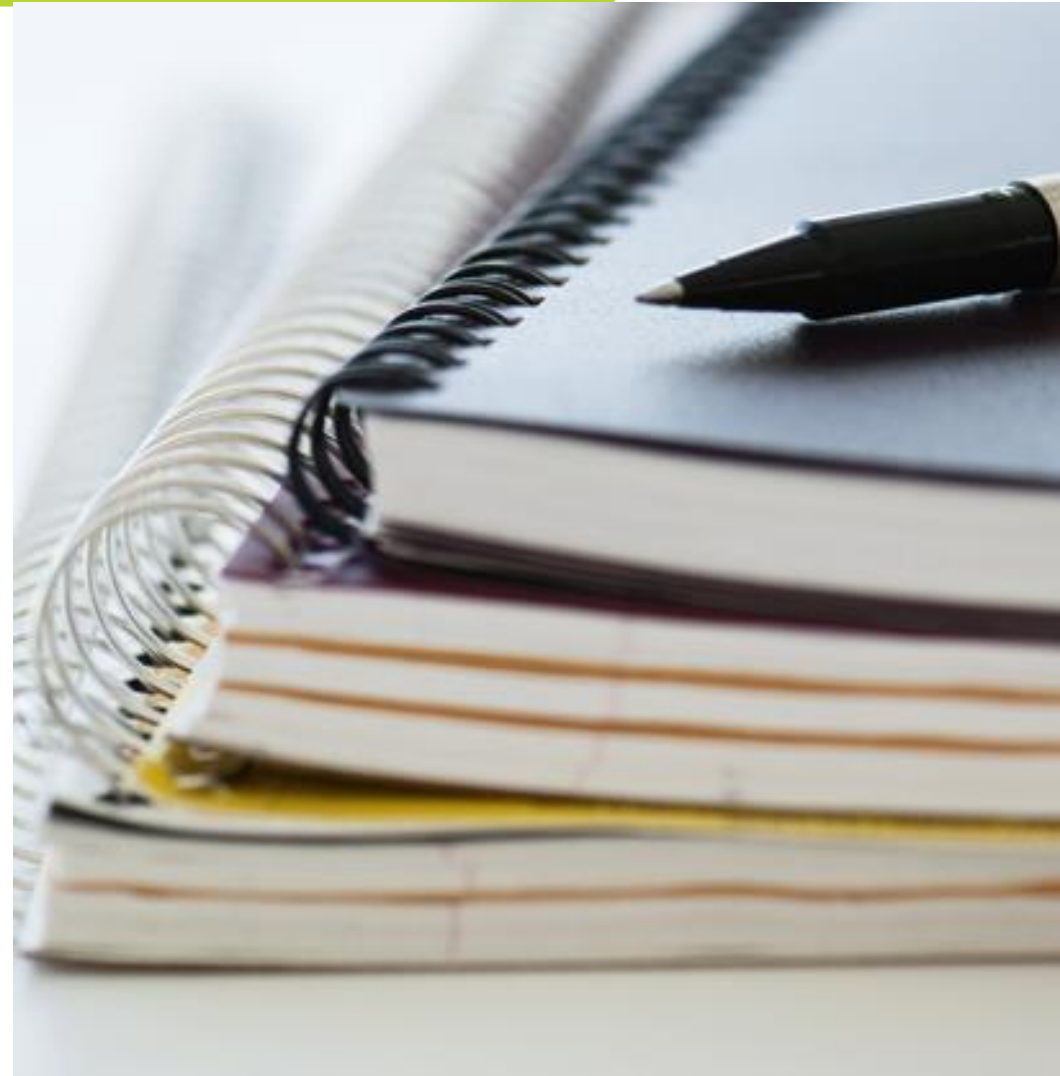
6. Attitudes to referencing and what constitutes plagiarism may be different.
  - Plagiarism is presenting other people's ideas as your own and is treated as a serious offence.
  - When you report others' ideas in your work you have to reference them, including when you summarise or paraphrase what you have read.
  - Check your course handbook for referencing system to use and learn how to use it correctly.

# Task 3: Check your knowledge of when to reference

**(this can be done in your own time)**

Look at the situations on page 4 of your handout.

Decide if it is necessary to reference or not.  
Discuss your answers with a partner.



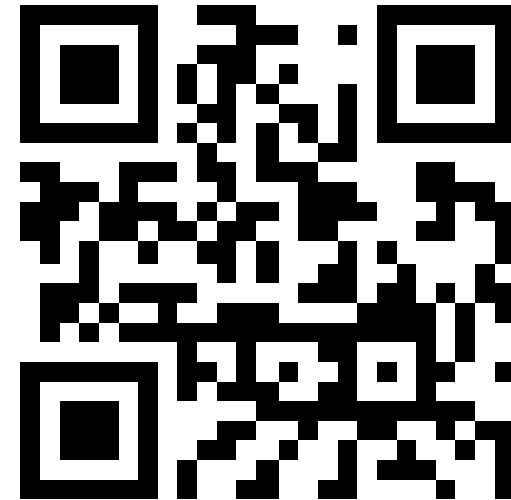
# Solution to Task 3

- You need to reference numbers 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8.
- You do not need to reference number 3.
- You usually do not need to reference number 6, but always check this with your lecturer.

# Register & reflections

Please go to the following link & complete the short form:

<http://ex.ac.uk/szfeedback>





# Further advice and resources

## Study Zone (next to Career Zone in the Forum)

[www.exeter.ac.uk/studyzone](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/studyzone)

Visit the website to book an appointment and to find out more about the writing cafés which run every Thursday afternoon.

There are also academic skills resources on a variety of topics on our Study Zone Digital pages

[www.exeter.ac.uk/studyzonedigital](http://www.exeter.ac.uk/studyzonedigital)



# Questions ??

Please ask any questions you may have now  
or come to the Study Zone in the Forum