



NURS20170 Patient Deterioration in the Clinical Setting

Term 1 - 2021

Profile information current as at 14/12/2025 03:37 pm

All details in this unit profile for NURS20170 have been officially approved by CQU University and represent a learning partnership between the University and you (our student). The information will not be changed unless absolutely necessary and any change will be clearly indicated by an approved correction included in the profile.

General Information

Overview

This unit examines clinical assessment and diagnostic reasoning to recognise and respond to a patient's deteriorating condition with appropriate and timely actions. This unit will enhance your knowledge of serious adverse events such as unexpected death and cardiac arrest which often follow observable deterioration in the patient's condition. You will develop knowledge and skills in the early identification of deterioration, the initiation of prompt and effective action to minimise serious consequences, improve outcomes and lessen the level of intervention required to stabilise patients. The unit will focus on the underlying pathology of the patient's deteriorating condition and the interpretation of clinical manifestations to implement safe and effective nursing care.

Details

Career Level: *Postgraduate*

Unit Level: *Level 8*

Credit Points: 6

Student Contribution Band: 7

Fraction of Full-Time Student Load: 0.125

Pre-requisites or Co-requisites

Students must be enrolled in CL22 Master of Clinical Nursing or CL16 Graduate Certificate in Clinical Nursing to undertake this unit.

Important note: Students enrolled in a subsequent unit who failed their pre-requisite unit, should drop the subsequent unit before the census date or within 10 working days of Fail grade notification. Students who do not drop the unit in this timeframe cannot later drop the unit without academic and financial liability. See details in the [Assessment Policy and Procedure \(Higher Education Coursework\)](#).

Offerings For Term 1 - 2021

- Online

Attendance Requirements

All on-campus students are expected to attend scheduled classes – in some units, these classes are identified as a mandatory (pass/fail) component and attendance is compulsory. International students, on a student visa, must maintain a full time study load and meet both attendance and academic progress requirements in each study period (satisfactory attendance for International students is defined as maintaining at least an 80% attendance record).

Website

[This unit has a website, within the Moodle system, which is available two weeks before the start of term. It is important that you visit your Moodle site throughout the term. Please visit Moodle for more information.](#)

Class and Assessment Overview

Recommended Student Time Commitment

Each 6-credit Postgraduate unit at CQUniversity requires an overall time commitment of an average of 12.5 hours of study per week, making a total of 150 hours for the unit.

Class Timetable

[Regional Campuses](#)

Bundaberg, Cairns, Emerald, Gladstone, Mackay, Rockhampton, Townsville

[Metropolitan Campuses](#)

Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney

Assessment Overview

1. **Practical Assessment**

Weighting: Pass/Fail

2. **Presentation**

Weighting: Pass/Fail

Assessment Grading

This is a pass/fail (non-graded) unit. To pass the unit, you must pass all of the individual assessment tasks shown in the table above.

CQUniversity Policies

All University policies are available on the [CQUniversity Policy site](#).

You may wish to view these policies:

- Grades and Results Policy
- Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)
- Review of Grade Procedure
- Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – Domestic Students
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – International Students
- Student Refund and Credit Balance Policy and Procedure
- Student Feedback – Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Information and Communications Technology Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure

This list is not an exhaustive list of all University policies. The full list of University policies are available on the [CQUniversity Policy site](#).

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Explain clinical parameters that indicate a patient is deteriorating
2. Monitor and interpret physiological and psychosocial data to assess a patient's clinical deterioration
3. Communicate effectively with health team and family members to ensure the accurate transfer and escalation of critical information
4. Initiate interventions based on diagnostic results of clinical assessment tools and evaluate your nursing actions
5. Critically examine everyday nursing practices and the ready use of tools related to the deteriorating patient.

NA


Alignment of Learning Outcomes, Assessment and Graduate Attributes

 N/A Level	 Introductory Level	 Intermediate Level	 Graduate Level	 Professional Level	 Advanced Level
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Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Learning Outcomes

Assessment Tasks	Learning Outcomes				
	1	2	3	4	5
1 - Knowledge					
2 - Communication					
3 - Cognitive, technical and creative skills					
4 - Research					
5 - Self-management					
6 - Ethical and Professional Responsibility					
7 - Leadership					
8 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures					

Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Graduate Attributes

Assessment Tasks	Graduate Attributes							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 - Practical Assessment - 0%								
2 - Presentation - 0%								

Textbooks and Resources

Textbooks

There are no required textbooks.

IT Resources

You will need access to the following IT resources:

- CQUniversity Student Email
- Internet
- Unit Website (Moodle)
- CQUniversity library literature search tools
- CQUniversity Library website
- CQUniversity Library Nursing Resources

Referencing Style

All submissions for this unit must use the referencing style: [American Psychological Association 7th Edition \(APA 7th edition\)](#)

For further information, see the Assessment Tasks.

Teaching Contacts

Julie Shaw Unit Coordinator

j.m.shaw@cqu.edu.au

Schedule

Week 1 - Module 1 - Introduction to the unit and the deteriorating patient - 08 Mar 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Welcome to the Unit Self-directed Learning Moodle site Student Support Something about the Unit. <ul style="list-style-type: none">clinical judgementthe deteriorating patient	Check out the Moodle site and click on all the links. Assessment? How do I find the Library? What is the Academic Learning Centre?	Zoom - Monday 5pm Activity - Access the General Discussion page and introduce yourself to your colleagues by providing your name: 1. Name 2. What you are looking forward to as a Registered Nurse

Week 2 - Module 1 - Considering the deteriorating patient - 15 Mar 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Research related to the deteriorating patient. <ul style="list-style-type: none">exploration of literatureevidence and practice Observations as data.	Readings and activities in Moodle	Zoom - Monday 5pm Activity - Access the General Discussion. Identify the most difficult aspect that you have experienced when caring for a deteriorating patient.

Week 3 - Module 2 - Monitoring and interpretation of physiological data - 22 Mar 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Physiological observations pertinent to the deteriorating patient. Detailed examination of various observations.	Readings and activities in Moodle	Zoom - Monday 5pm Activity - Access the General Discussion. Detail what you have learnt about assessing physiological observations correctly.

Week 4 - Module 2 - Monitoring and interpretation of physiological data - 29 Mar 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Physiological observations pertinent to the deteriorating patient. <ul style="list-style-type: none">temperatureblood pressure Detailed examination of various observations.	Readings and activities in Moodle	Zoom - Monday 5pm Activity - Access the General Discussion Explain the importance of temperature assessment of the older person.

Week 5 - Module 3 - Monitoring and interpretation of psycho-social data - 05 Apr 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Family centred care (FCC) and the deteriorating patient. <ul style="list-style-type: none">principles of FCCFamilies as legitimate partners Application of principles of FCC in critical situations.	Readings and activities in Moodle	Zoom - Monday 5pm Activity - Access the General Discussion Describe what you consider to be your family. Would all of these people be recognised as family.

Vacation Week - 12 Apr 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
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Week 6 - Module 3 - Monitoring and interpretation of psycho-social data - 19 Apr 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Interruption and distraction in the clinical setting. Situational awareness. Contribution of these concerns to the deteriorating patient.	Readings and activities in Moodle	Zoom - Monday 5pm Activity - Access the General Discussion Provide an example of being distracted in the clinical setting.

Week 7 - Module 4 - Communicating effectively in situations related to the deteriorating patient - 26 Apr 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Effective clinical communication for prevention of deterioration. • practice principles and their application in the clinical setting. • strategies, issues and concerns.	Readings and activities in Moodle	Zoom - Monday 5pm Activity - Access the General Discussion What is effective communication?

Week 8 - Module 4 - Communicating effectively in situations related to the deteriorating patient - 03 May 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Clinical communication in critical situations • principles Application of principles in practice • examples	Readings and activities in Moodle	Zoom - Monday 5pm

Week 9 - Module 5 - Initiating and evaluating nursing actions based on clinical assessment findings - 10 May 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Advanced clinical decision making. Nursing care analysis. The initiation of nursing actions based on advanced clinical decisions.	Readings and activities in Moodle	Zoom - Monday 5pm Activity - Access the General Discussion What do you use to guide your clinical decision making?

Week 10 - Module 5 - Initiating and evaluating nursing actions based on clinical assessment findings - 17 May 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Advanced clinical decisions in review. • Complexity, time-pressures and evaluation. The evaluation of nursing actions based on advanced clinical decisions. • Evaluation and new learning.	Readings and activities in Moodle	Zoom - Monday 5pm Activity - Access the General Discussion

Week 11 - Module 6 - Critical examination of everyday nursing practices relating to the deteriorating patient - 24 May 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Critical analysis on the run. • Speed and safety in the clinical environment. Systems and strategies for critical analysis. • Critiquing complexity.	Readings and activities in Moodle	Zoom - Monday 5pm Activity - Access the General Discussion Any questions?

Week 12 - Module - 6 - Critical examination of everyday nursing practices relating to the deteriorating patient - 31 May 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
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The invisibility of everyday nursing practices.
Unmasking and legitimating the invisible.
An examination of cultural influences on nursing practice.
Say little, do much.

Readings and activities in Moodle

Zoom - Monday 5pm
Activity - Access the General Discussion
Say goodbye.

Review/Exam Week - 07 Jun 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
		<p>Assessment 1 & 2 are coordinated by the Graduate Coordinator at the health setting and are to be completed by Friday 11th June, 2021.</p> <p>Practical assessment of the simulated deteriorating patient Due: Review/Exam Week Friday (11 June 2021) 5:00 pm AEST Presentation Due: Review/Exam Week Friday (11 June 2021) 5:00 pm AEST</p>

Exam Week - 14 Jun 2021

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
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Assessment Tasks

1 Practical assessment of the simulated deteriorating patient

Assessment Type

Practical Assessment

Task Description

Students undertaking this assessment will be either in:

- i. **i) A Partnered Graduate Program**
- i. **ii) NOT in a Partnered Graduate Program**

Type: Practical assessment

Due date:

- i. i) The Graduate Coordinator will advise students in a partnered Graduate Program of the due date.
- i. ii) Obtain a signed agreement from one of your unit nursing leaders (NUM, CNC, Nurse Educator) indicating that they will assess you in this task on an agreed due date. Provide the Unit Coordinator with a copy by the end of Week 2.

Weighting: PASS/FAIL

Unit Coordinator: Dr Julie Shaw

Learning Outcome Assessed

- Explain clinical parameters that indicate a patient is deteriorating.
- Monitor and interpret physiological and psychosocial data to assess a patient's clinical deterioration.
- Communicate effectively with health team and family members to ensure the accurate transfer and escalation of critical information.

Aim

This clinical assessment evaluates your knowledge and skills in the early identification of a patient's deteriorating condition and the initiation of prompt and effective action to minimise serious consequences, improve outcomes and lessen the level of intervention required to stabilise patients. The assessment will also assess your knowledge of the pathology of the patient's deteriorating condition, your ability to interpret clinical manifestations and effectively

communicate these changes in health to team members including the patient.

Task Description

You are required to demonstrate the safe care of a deteriorating patient in a clinical simulation setting. This assessment is undertaken at three skill stations (this structure may vary across different partnered Health Services).

You will be required to rotate between three skill stations. At each station a scenario relating to a deteriorating patient will be presented. During the first stage you will have the opportunity to practice skills to recognise and respond to a deteriorating patient. During the next stage, you will be assessed on your ability to safely perform these skills: These skills include:

- initial nursing management
 - verbalising a targeted systematic assessment approach (look, listen and feel ABCDEFG) [this worksheet is available on the Moodle site]
 - recording vital signs
 - verbalising escalation concerns using ISBAR
 - managing basic airway manoeuvres, adjuncts and oxygen therapy delivery devices
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- identifying further clinical risk factors and additional investigations that may be required
 - selecting and inserting naso/oropharyngeal airway
 - demonstrating chin lift, head tilt and manual ventilation techniques
 - demonstrating and instructing on the use of nasal prongs, Hudson mask, non-rebreather masks and the HFNP Air Viva

Task Instructions

Step 1. Familiarise yourself with the relevant policies, procedures and legislation available on the unit Moodle site

Step 2. Familiarise yourself with Standard 8, Recognising and responding to acute deterioration standard (The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, [ACSQH] 2017).

Step 3. Stage 1- practice your skills in recognising and responding to deteriorating patients rotating through three skill stations.

Step 4. Stage 2 – demonstrate your ability to recognise and respond to the deteriorating patient including:

- initial nursing management
- verbalising a targeted systematic assessment approach (look, listen and feel ABCDEFG) [this worksheet is available on the Moodle site]
- recording vital signs
- verbalising escalation concerns using ISBAR
- managing basic airway manoeuvres, adjuncts and oxygen therapy delivery device
- identifying further clinical risk factors and additional investigations that may be required
- selecting and inserting naso/oropharyngeal airway
- demonstrating chin lift, head tilt and manual ventilation techniques
- demonstrating and instructing on the use of nasal prongs, Hudson mask, non-rebreather masks and the HFNP Air Viva

Step 5. The assessors will forward the results of the assessment to the Unit coordinator.

Marking Criteria

Refer to the marking rubric below for more detail on how marks will be assigned.

Assessment Due Date

Review/Exam Week Friday (11 June 2021) 5:00 pm AEST

Assessment due date will be negotiated and undertaken in the clinical setting where you work

Return Date to Students

Exam Week Friday (18 June 2021)

Return of assessment will be negotiated and undertaken in the clinical setting where you work

Weighting

Pass/Fail

Assessment Criteria

Student name: _____

Students must pass each criterion in each skill/topic to be successful in this assessment

Students may have a second attempt if unsuccessful at the first attempt.

Skill / Topic

Pass

FAIL

Skill station: Patient deterioration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate ability to use look, listen and feel ABCDEFG • Demonstrates ability to escalate care of the deteriorating patient in a timely manner • Appropriately records vital signs provided on the deterioration observation document used in your facility • Verbalise initial management and outline concerns • ISBAR is used in escalation of treatment • Effectively communicates with patient and/or family members to explain change in patient's condition
Oxygen Therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate application, advantages and disadvantages of NP, HM, Non-rebreather • Explains the oxygen flow rates and precautions required • Demonstrate HFNP set up, uses and how to record setting.
Basic Airway Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate airway maneuvers, insertion/removal of devices and ventilating with BVM • Effectively demonstrate skills relevant to relevant clinical skills and tasks
Knowledge of policies and guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified points of deterioration are justified and aligned with the Registered Nurse Standards for Practice (2016) and the Australian National Quality Safety Standards (2014) and/or other relevant legislation and policies.

Referencing Style

- [American Psychological Association 7th Edition \(APA 7th edition\)](#)

Submission

Offline

Submission Instructions

Assessment will be negotiated and undertaken in the clinical setting where you work

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Explain clinical parameters that indicate a patient is deteriorating
- Monitor and interpret physiological and psychosocial data to assess a patient's clinical deterioration
- Communicate effectively with health team and family members to ensure the accurate transfer and escalation of critical information

Graduate Attributes

- Knowledge
- Communication
- Cognitive, technical and creative skills
- Self-management
- Ethical and Professional Responsibility

2 Presentation

Assessment Type

Presentation

Task Description

Students undertaking this assessment will be either in:

- i. **i) A Partnered Graduate Program**
- i. **ii) NOT in a Partnered Graduate Program**

Type: Presentation

Due date:

- i. i) The Graduate Coordinator will advise students in a partnered Graduate Program of the due date.
- i. ii) Students not in a partnered Graduate Program must obtain a signed agreement from one of your unit nursing leaders (NUM, CNC, Nr Educator) indicating that they will assess you in this task on an agreed due date. Provide the Unit Coordinator with a copy by the end of Week 2
- ii. .

Weighting: Pass/Fail

Length: No more than 10 minutes

Unit Coordinator: Dr Julie Shaw

Learning Outcome Assessed

- Initiate interventions based on diagnostic results of clinical assessment tools and evaluate your nursing actions.
- Critically examine everyday nursing practices and the ready use of tools related to the deteriorating patient.

Aim

The aim of this assessment is to provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of using reflection to self-assess your clinical practice.

Instructions

You are providing an oral report on your participation in your simulation assessment.

Your target audience for your presentation may include your workplace colleagues, peers or unit nursing leaders.

Please follow the steps below to complete your assessment task:

Step 1. Access the Gibbs' Reflective Model (1988) to reflect on your simulated patient deterioration activity - Assessment 1.

- Gibbs' steps to reflective practice are:
 - Description - what happened (situation/experience)?
 - Feelings - What are you thinking or feeling about this?
 - Evaluation - What was good and what was bad about the experience?
 - Analysis - What can you learn from this experience?
 - Conclusion - What could you have done differently?
 - Action - If you faced this situation again, how would you act differently (Gibbs, 1988)

Step 2. Structure your presentation in a manner that is logical, and the patient experience and your experience is presented systematically.

Step 3. Present your reflection in an objective manner to your audience that may include peers, educators and other unit nursing leaders.

Resources

- [Decision-making framework](#) (DMF) (NMBA, 2020)
- Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) [registered nurse standards for practice](#) (2016).
- National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) [Standards](#) (2017)
- [Patient Safety Competency Framework for Nursing Students](#) (PSCF) (Levett-Jones et al., 2017)
- You can use unit provided materials and other credible sources (e.g. journal articles, books) to reference your argument. The quality and credibility of your sources are important.
- For information on academic communication please go to the [Academic Learning Centre Moodle site](#). The [Academic Communication section](#) has many helpful resources including information for students with English as a second language. There are also [Oral Presentation resources](#).

Submission

No submission required as this assessment is undertaken in the workplace.

The assessor will forward the results of the assessment to the Unit coordinator.

Marking Criteria

Refer to the marking rubric on the Moodle site and below for more detail on how marks will be assigned.

Assessment Due Date

Review/Exam Week Friday (11 June 2021) 5:00 pm AEST

Presentation due dates will be negotiated at the local clinical setting

Return Date to Students

Review/Exam Week Friday (11 June 2021)

Provided by your Graduate Coordinator at your employing health service.

Weighting

Pass/Fail

Assessment Criteria

Student name: _____

Students must pass each criterion in each skill/topic to be successful in this assessment

Students may have a second attempt if unsuccessful at the first attempt.

Skill / Topic	Content covered	PASS	FAIL
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Patient Deterioration	Debrief after each scenario and provides constructive feedback on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical decision making Recognising deterioration using ABCDEFG Team work and communication ISBAR escalation Role clarification Communicates effectively, to patient and/or family members, the change in patient's condition 	Demonstrates cognitive and technical skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates clear thinking and technical competence Signs and symptoms identified Identifies ISBAR escalation Identifies the role of the registered nurse Communicates effectively to patient and/or family members 	Does not demonstrate cognitive and technical skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not demonstrate clear thinking and technical competence Signs and symptoms are not clearly identified Does not accurately identify ISBAR escalation Is unclear in identifying the role of the registered nurse Does not communicate effectively with patient and/or family members
Debrief	Following each scenario, the teams are asked to provide constructive feedback on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical decision making Team work, leadership, role Escalation using ISBAR Communication with patient/family member/s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents up to date and accurate knowledge Demonstrates clinical decision making Discusses teamwork and leadership adequately Escalates care using ISBAR Communicates effectively with patient and/or family member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not present up to date and accurate knowledge Does not demonstrate clear clinical decision making Does not adequately discuss teamwork and leadership Does not discuss reasons to escalate care using ISBAR Does not communicate effectively with patient and/or family member/s
Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oral style: Uses vocabulary structures and forms to appropriately address audience Incorporates appropriate headings (teamwork, leadership, reasons to escalate care). 	Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates clearly and accurately Incorporates appropriate heading 	Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not communicate clearly and accurately. Does not address appropriate heading (teamwork, leadership, reasons to escalate care)

PASS/FAIL Assessor Name _____ Signature _____

Date _____

Referencing Style

- [American Psychological Association 7th Edition \(APA 7th edition\)](#)

Submission

Offline

Submission Instructions

Presentations will be undertaken at the local clinical setting

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Initiate interventions based on diagnostic results of clinical assessment tools and evaluate your nursing actions
- Critically examine everyday nursing practices and the ready use of tools related to the deteriorating patient.

Graduate Attributes

- Knowledge
- Communication
- Cognitive, technical and creative skills
- Research
- Self-management
- Ethical and Professional Responsibility

Academic Integrity Statement

As a CQUniversity student you are expected to act honestly in all aspects of your academic work.

Any assessable work undertaken or submitted for review or assessment must be your own work. Assessable work is any type of work you do to meet the assessment requirements in the unit, including draft work submitted for review and feedback and final work to be assessed.

When you use the ideas, words or data of others in your assessment, you must thoroughly and clearly acknowledge the source of this information by using the correct referencing style for your unit. Using others' work without proper acknowledgement may be considered a form of intellectual dishonesty.

Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in your university study ensures the CQUniversity qualification you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

As a student, you are responsible for reading and following CQUniversity's policies, including the [Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure](#). This policy sets out CQUniversity's expectations of you to act with integrity, examples of academic integrity breaches to avoid, the processes used to address alleged breaches of academic integrity, and potential penalties.

What is a breach of academic integrity?

A breach of academic integrity includes but is not limited to plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, cheating, contract cheating, and academic misconduct. The Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure defines what these terms mean and gives examples.

Why is academic integrity important?

A breach of academic integrity may result in one or more penalties, including suspension or even expulsion from the University. It can also have negative implications for student visas and future enrolment at CQUniversity or elsewhere. Students who engage in contract cheating also risk being blackmailed by contract cheating services.

Where can I get assistance?

For academic advice and guidance, the [Academic Learning Centre \(ALC\)](#) can support you in becoming confident in completing assessments with integrity and of high standard.

What can you do to act with integrity?



Be Honest

If your assessment task is done by someone else, it would be dishonest of you to claim it as your own



Seek Help

If you are not sure about how to cite or reference in essays, reports etc, then seek help from your lecturer, the library or the Academic Learning Centre (ALC)



Produce Original Work

Originality comes from your ability to read widely, think critically, and apply your gained knowledge to address a question or problem