

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF POPULATION STUDIES
2020/2021 ACADEMIC YEAR
DEM 2110
GUIDE ON ASSIGNMENT WRITING

- A well-written assignment is one clearly thought through and responds to the question correctly.
- Writing an assignment does not happen overnight. Therefore, you need to dedicate adequate time to searching for information and writing so that you respond to the question correctly and complete within the time allocated.
- There has to be coherence in your writing.
- Avoid very short and long paragraphs; avoid very short and long sentences.
- Format your document: use the same font type and size, same line spacing, etc.
- I do not want use of headings in your assignment (except for “Bibliography” heading or during writing an essay in a test or examination). The headings in this outline are working as a guide to help you know the components of the assignment/ essay and placement of certain points /information.

Below is a guide that you to follow when writing your assignments. Take time and study it carefully.

1. READ THE QUESTION CAREFULLY

- By so doing, only then will you understand the requirements and how you should respond
- Thereafter, plan on how you are going to proceed including allocating time that will be required to write and complete the assignment

2. PREPARE AN OUTLINE

- An outline will help you in focusing on collecting only information that will help you respond to the question and ensure writing is coherent
- **Cover page:** include the following details: your name, computer number, course code, question, and due date (see cover page template on page 5).

Assignment outline

i) Introduction

- It should be one paragraph, but not too short or too long.
- Include a brief description of the “topic” at hand; the question; the layout or your approach in responding to the question, etc.

ii) Main body

- This is where you need to provide answers to the question given.
- Academic assignment writing require that you answer the question within a given number of pages, for example 5 or 10 pages. Therefore, ensure that you do not include information that is not answering the question
 - a. Recall that introduction is paragraph one, so the second and third paragraphs should cover definition of key concept(s) in the question and characteristics/features (if applicable & provide practical examples)
 - b. Depending on the question, for example the question given on page 5, your write up will focus on:
 - Explaining say four advantages and disadvantages of the census respectively; explain one advantage or disadvantage at a time – ensure that you include practical examples and remember to provide citations
 - c. Avoid very short & long paragraphs but ensure that one paragraph covers one idea or two related ideas

iii) Conclusion

- a. Under the conclusion, you should provide a succinct response to the question
- b. Do not introduce new ideas (i.e. not discussed in the main body). Focus on providing the reader with key take away message with regard to your response to the question based on your earlier arguments in the main body. There is no need for citations.
- c. It should be about half a page – not too short and not too long.

iv) Bibliography

- This is the last page of your assignment
 - It is a complete list of all data sources referenced in the main body
 - Names of authors have to be written in alphabetical order

- *See Bibliography section in this document*
- Information obtained from the internet should also show date when accessed and actual link so that anyone who wants to read further, simply follows it
 - *See Bibliography section in this document*

3. WRITING PROCESS

- Once you have prepared the outline of the assignment and gathered all the information needed, you can now start writing paying attention to the outline given under **Section 2**. Furthermore, keep in mind all the academic guidelines (such as how to quote, plagiarism, etc.)
- Prepare a draft; thereafter, read through and check it against the question to see if it responds to all points you noted down earlier. For this step, it is best to print out the assignment and read every sentence to see how the essay flows from introduction to conclusion.
- You can now revise and prepare a second draft.
- **Avoid copy and paste:** whilst you state what specific scholars have written about the subject/topic in question, you should also incorporate your analysis of these ideas and relate them to the question you are answering.

4. DIRECT AND INDIRECT QUOTES

- **Direct quote:** This is where you get the actual ideas/ arguments or definitions as stated by an author or authors. See the following example;
 - According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) (2003), a live birth is defined as “the *complete expulsion or extraction from its mother* of a product of conception, *irrespective of the duration of pregnancy*, which, after such separation, *breathes* or shows any *other evidence of life*, such as beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles, whether or not the umbilical cord has been cut or the placenta is attached; each product of such a birth is considered live-born.”

OR it can be written as

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) (2003) defines a live births as “the *complete expulsion or extraction from its mother* of a product of conception, *irrespective of the duration of pregnancy*, which, after such separation, *breathes* or shows any *other*

evidence of life, such as beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord, or definite movement of voluntary muscles, whether or not the umbilical cord has been cut or the placenta is attached; each product of such a birth is considered live-born.”

- **Indirect quote:** In assignment writing, you also make use of what other scholars have written and you relate to your responses/ arguments; for example, when you paraphrase a writer/ scholar’s ideas. In this situation, you equally need to **acknowledge** the source of information by placing the name/ names of authors and year of publication at the end of the sentence. See example below;
 - Population census data is important for planning by government and other stakeholders. For example, distribution of the population by age such as the number of those below 18 years will help government to plan for the number of schools and teachers needed and where they should be located (Weeks, 2008).

5. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- In academic writing, we do not just gather information from anywhere; select your sources of information carefully and properly.
- Do not use articles or documents based merely on people’s opinion.
- Make use of the required and recommended readings, Google Scholar and other websites that have articles and documents, which have been validated/ peer reviewed.

6. PREPARING BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ragin, C. (1994). Construction social research: The unity and diversity of method. Retrieved March 15, 2021, from <http://poli.haifa.ac.il/~levi/res/mgsr1.htm>

Trochim, W. (2006). Research methods knowledge base. Retrieved March 10, 2021, from <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/>

Weeks, J.R. (2008). Population: An Introduction to Concepts and Issues. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

7. PROOFREADING

- This is a very important step in writing of assignments, reports, etc., which needs to be done before submission;
- It will help you to check that the assignment adheres to all academic guidelines, identify and correct all typos and incorrect spellings, grammar, etc.
 - Make use of spelling check in MS-Word.

8. PREPARING ASSIGNMENT FOR SUBMISSION

Cover page - template

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF POPULATION STUDIES
2020/2021 ACADEMIC YEAR

NAME: MWEWA KASONDE

COMPUTER #: 2000000000

COURSE CODE: DEM 2110

LECTURER: MS. M KASONDE

TASK: ASSIGNMENT ONE

TUTORIAL DAY & TIME: THURSDAY 8:00 AM

DUE DATE: 19TH MARCH, 2021

QUESTION: Discuss the census as a source of demographic and socio-economic data.

– **Numbering and formatting of document**

- The assignment should be properly numbered; place page numbers at the bottom of each page (cover page should not be numbered). Use the page numbering style in this document
- Also, ensure that you format the document properly, i.e. use of recommended page margins (Normal), justify text (e.g. use “ctrl + j”) from introduction to conclusion; font type - Times New Roman; font size - 12; line spacing of 1.5, etc.

– **Final proof reading**

- Do this once you have put together all the required pieces of the assignment

9. SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENT

- This should be done not later than the due date and time

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**All sources of information acknowledged*