The Research Process

The following process is a general guide for you to follow as you research and write assignments.

Some assignments may require different steps in their preparation and the following process may need to be modified to suit your particular task.
Step 1 - Define the Question

What is the assignment task asking you to do?

Decide your purpose:
- Check your assignment criteria
- Brainstorm topic
- Form inquiry questions
- List keywords
Step 2 - Locating & Selecting

Where will you find the information you need?

Gather information:

- Locate and use a variety of resources
- Connect different keywords for Boolean searches
- Record relevant information under suitable headings
- Check that you have enough information to answer the question
Step 3 - Organising

How will you organise all the information you have selected?

Organise: your information into a logical and sequential presentation.

✧ Think critically as you read, view, observe
✧ Consider accuracy and relevance
✧ Identify problematic nature of counter evidence
✧ Sort and record
✧ Arrange sequence of ideas
✧ Synthesise findings and formulate conclusions
✧ Document all sources of information
Step 4 - Presenting

How will you present your work?

Present: findings in the form required by your teacher.

✦ Take time to edit your presentation as necessary - check for clarity of meaning, logical presentation and correct grammar, spelling and punctuation
✦ Practice presentations
✦ Have you fulfilled the requirements of the task?
Step 5 - Evaluating

Evaluating - What did I do well? What do I need further help with?

Reflect: on what you have learned

✦ How well did I organise my time & research?
✦ What were my main strengths?
✦ What were the problems and how did I solve them?
✦ Did I access & identify the best resources?
✦ Did I document my sources?
Manage your time!

Step 1 - note the date the assignment was given (or today’s date if you are late in starting) and the date DUE.

Step 2 - calculate the total number of days for the task.

Step 3 - from the total, subtract 2-3 days. These are to cover you for unforeseen problems e.g. illness, no ink in printer, not being able to retrieve your work from USB, etc.
Help is available from our Library staff on any of these skills and strategies - just ask!

Information in the presentation sourced from:
Student’s manual : Your guide to assignments and exams (3rd edition).