

ASSIGNMENT PLANNING

Make sure that your assignment answers the question you have been set. If you do not answer the question you will not achieve a good grade. Assessors can only give marks for what you have said not what you have inferred. You have to make the point – you should not leave it to the assessor to work out what you meant to say.

You could use the BUG technique to decode the title

<u>BUG the assignment title</u>	
BOX	the action/instruction word
<u>Underline</u> the key words in the question	
Glance back to check – have you missed any words?	

For example, suppose you have been given this assignment title;

‘Mentally disordered offenders should be the responsibility of health rather than the criminal justice system. Discuss.’

BUG the essay title;

‘Mentally disordered offenders should be the responsibility of health rather than the criminal justice system. Discuss’

What is/are the action/instruction word(s)? **Discuss**

This means there will be arguments **for and against**.

What have you got to discuss?

Who has responsibility for mentally disordered offenders? Health system or criminal justice system?

When you **glance back**, what words has been missed?

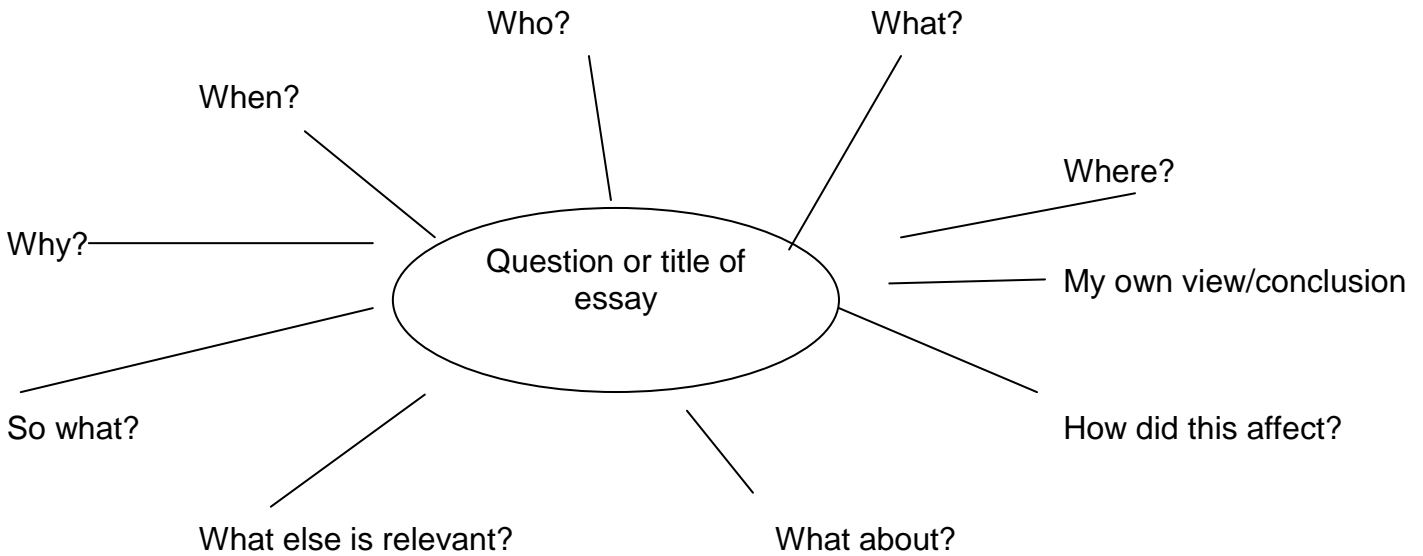
Should rather than therefore you have to make an informed decision

Turn these key words from the title into lists of essay building questions by asking:

1. Who?
2. What?
3. How?
4. Where?
5. When?
6. Why?
7. So what?

Then think about 'who else?' 'what else?' etc.

Now you can start planning how you will structure your essay using these questions. You could use an **EGG diagram** to plan the structure.



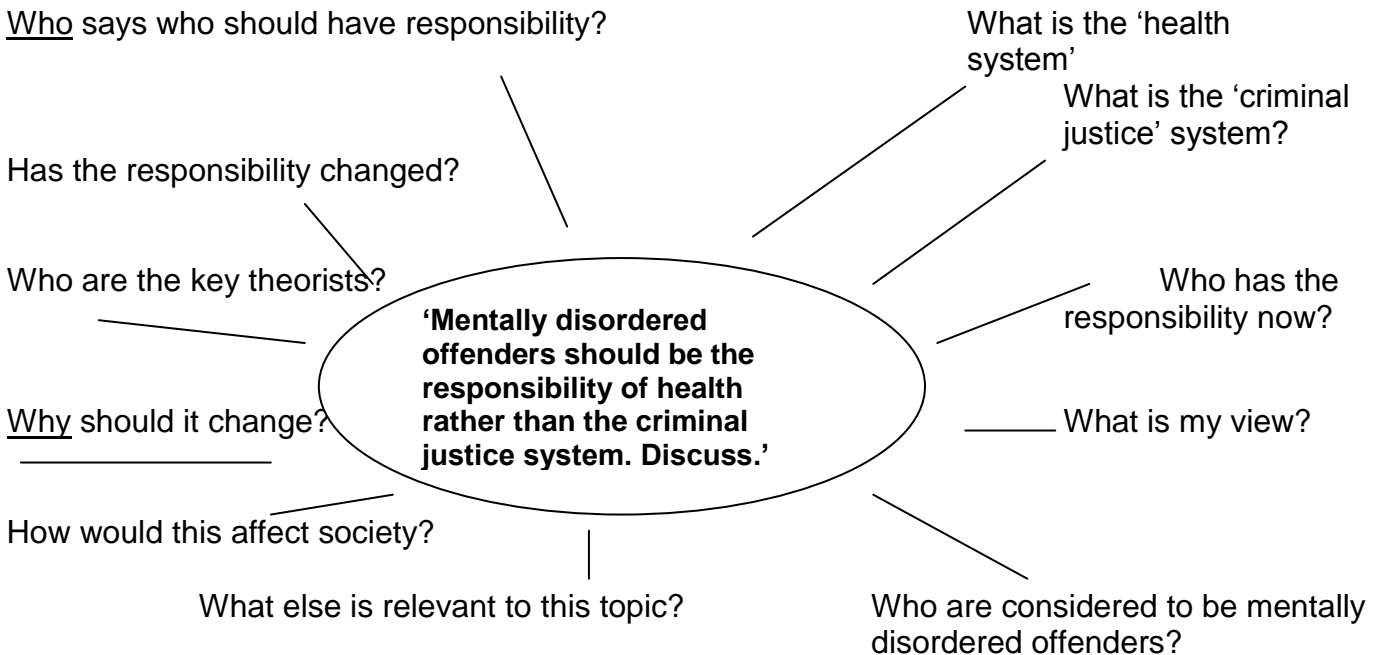
"Laying an egg to hatch some ideas to start planning an essay": Adapted from Race (2007, p.180)

For example, if the essay title is

'Mentally disordered offenders should be the responsibility of health rather than the criminal justice system. Discuss.'

Your EGG diagram might look a little like this below

Who says who should have responsibility?



Start researching the answers to your questions.

Look at Library Guideline No. 11 'How to do a literature search' for advice on researching or ask a member of the library staff for guidance.

Remember to keep a note of the source(s) so that you can cite the author in the text and reference the publication in your reference list.

If you are unsure how to reference, look at the Academic Skills Resources on Moodle (http://moodle.glyndwr.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=40%2F%22%20target%3D%22_blank%22) for:

- The Glyndŵr University Guide to Harvard Referencing
- Plagiarism and how to avoid it – a good practice guide for students
- Referencing FAQs
- Tips for avoiding plagiarism

or book a tutorial with one of the Academic Skills Tutors (Ground Floor of the Edward LLwyd Centre or telephone 01978 293981)

Once you have answers to some of your initial questions, start planning the order of your assignment. Remember, when you are writing the first draft you do not need to start with the introduction. In fact, it may be better if you draft the introduction after you have written most of the main body of your assignment.

Other resources you might find useful on the Academic Skills site on Moodle;

- Academic Writing
- Preparing for assignments
- The Academic Phrasebank
- Transition signals

References

Price, G. and Maier, P. (2007), *Effective Study Skills, Unlock Your Potential*. Harlow: Pearson Educational Limited.

Race, P. (2007), *How to Get a Good Degree: Making the Most of your Time and University*. 2nd ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn y Gymraeg.