Approaches to Study and Research

Acknowledgement of Country

The University of the Sunshine Coast acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, work and study. We pay our respects to local Indigenous Elders past, present and emerging and recognise the strength, resilience and capacity of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people.

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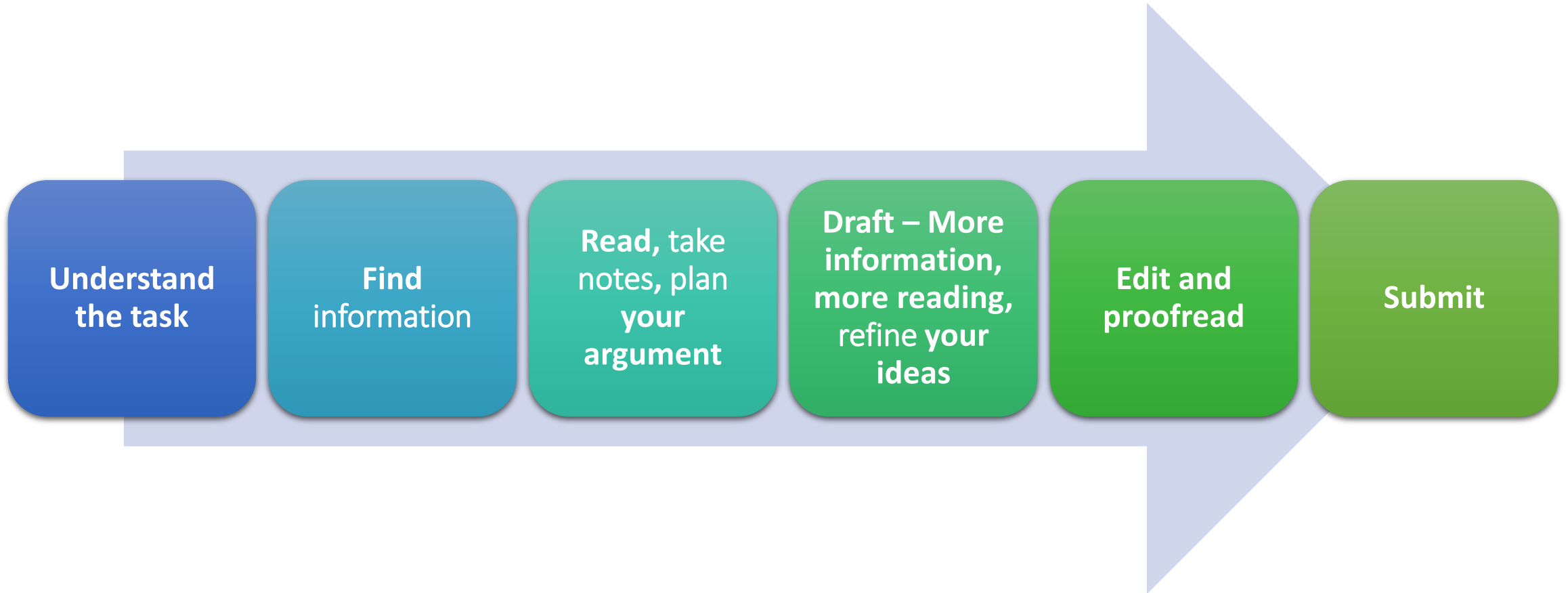# Approaches to study and research

This resource is designed to:

- Improve understanding of *why* academic information sources are important and *how* to access them.

- Build skills relating to academic expectations at UniSC.

- Enhance awareness of support services provided at UniSC.

- Apply learning by identifying your needs.

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The assignment planning, research, and writing process:

Analyse topic

Brainstorm concepts

Conduct research

Plan and prioritise

Identify key findings & conclusions

Start writing

Do you need to find more evidence?

Evaluate sections

Revise draft

Edit

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Planning assignments

Understand the task	Find information	**Read,** take notes, plan **your argument**	**Draft – More information,** more reading, refine **your ideas**	Edit and proofread	Submit

Use the Assignment Calculator to help you
https://www.usc.edu.au/assignment-calculator

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Unpack your assignment task

Thoroughly read your:

- Assignment topic.

- Assessment rubric.

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Example Rubric

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA RUBRIC – TASK 1 Case Analysis

CRITERIA	HIGH DISTINCTION	DISTINCTION	CREDIT	PASS	FAIL
Knowledge and understanding of the topic; Analysis and problem solving 5	Demonstrates a detailed knowledge and understanding of the provided case. Provides a comprehensive analysis in response to the prescribed questions.	Demonstrates a very good knowledge and understanding of the provided case. Provides a very good analysis in response to the prescribed questions.	Demonstrates a good knowledge and understanding of the provided case. Provides a good analysis in response to the prescribed questions.	Demonstrates a basic knowledge and understanding of the provided case. Provides a basic analysis in response to the prescribed questions.	Shows a limited knowledge or understanding of the law or legal issues. Answers to the questions provided show limited analysis.
Structure and writing; Presentation and referencing 5	Excellent structure and writing. The writing style is succinct, easy to read and understand. No spelling or grammatical errors were noticed. Within the word limit. All ideas acknowledged where appropriate. Strictly adheres to the AGLC3. Provides pinpoint references from the case.	Very good structure and writing. The meaning of the text is generally clear. Few spelling or grammatical errors were noticed. Within the word limit. Generally demonstrates consistent and complete referencing techniques. Mostly compliant with the AGLC3. Provides some pinpoint references from the case.	Good structure and writing. The meaning of the text is generally clear. Few spelling or grammatical errors were noticed. Just over the word limit. Attempts to demonstrate consistent and complete referencing techniques. Some compliance with the AGLC3. Provides some pinpoint references from the case.	Sound structure and writing. The meaning of the text is sometimes clear. Frequent spelling or grammatical errors were noticed. Substantially over or under the word limit. Inconsistencies in referencing technique. Attempts to comply with the AGLC3. Occasionally provides pinpoint references from the case.	Poor structure and writing. The meaning of the text is commonly unclear. Shows difficulty adhering the spelling and grammatical conventions. Substantially over or under the word limit. Does not comply with the AGLC3. Does not provide pinpoint references from the case.

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Researching your topic … where do you start?

What are the instructions for your assignment? **Task words.**

What are the keywords that describe your research topic, methodology, and/or expected outcomes? **Topic words.**

What are the alternatives to these keywords? **Synonyms.**

What are the specific details or context to target your research? **Limiting words.**

Critically discuss the effect of social media in the bullying of Australian adolescents

Task words: How to structure your assignment.

Topic words: The main focus.

Limiting words: Specific details or context.

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Putting it all together – search tips

Synonyms/alternatives to find a wider range of resources.

"Phrase searching" to find the exact phrase e.g., "Australian adolescents".

Truncation* to find all the words using the origin of the word e.g., teen*.

Wildcard for alternative spellings e.g., behavio?r to include behaviour (UK) or behavior (US).

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Alternatives/Synonyms

Keywords	Alternatives	Truncation	Phrase searching
"social media"			
adolescents			
bullying			

Alternatives/Synonyms

Keywords	Alternatives	Truncation	Phrase searching
"social media"	Facebook TikTok social networking		"social networking"
adolescents	Teen, Teens youth young adult	teen* adolescen*	"young adult*"
bullying	intimidation cyber bullying		"cyber bull*"

Putting it all together - search strategy

AND: To find all your key words (narrows your search)

"social media" AND bullying AND adolescen*

OR: To find any of your key words (expands your search)

"social media" OR "Twitter" OR "Facebook"

NOT: To exclude a key word - NOT adults
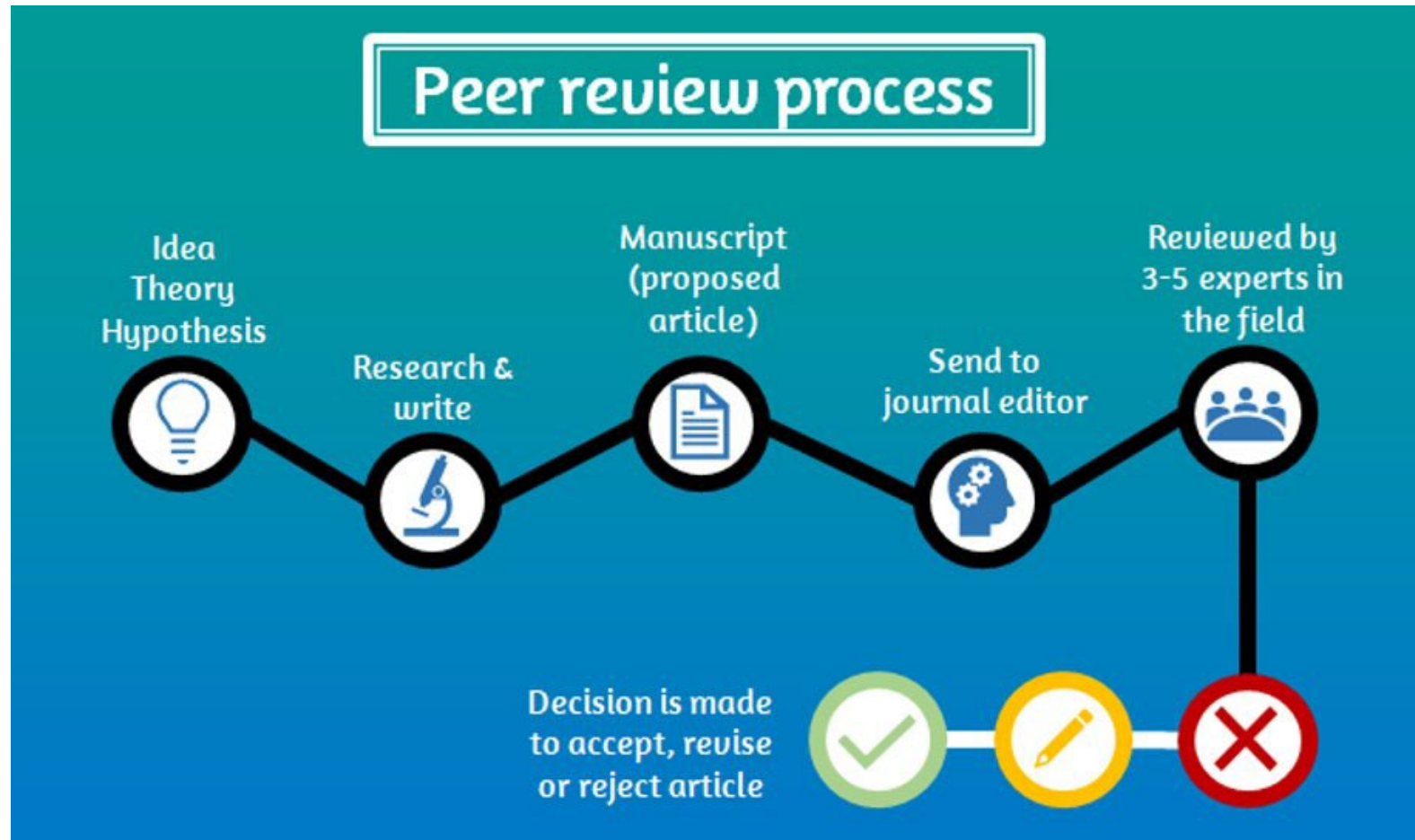
Let's try a Library [search](#)

What are academic resources?

- Textbooks.
- Websites – government, professional organisations and associations.
- Journals and databases.
- Conference papers.
- Legislation and Caselaw.
- Government and company reports.

5477687 available at https://pixabay.com/en/books-light-bulb-literature-2383396/ under CC0 1.0 Universal licence https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/

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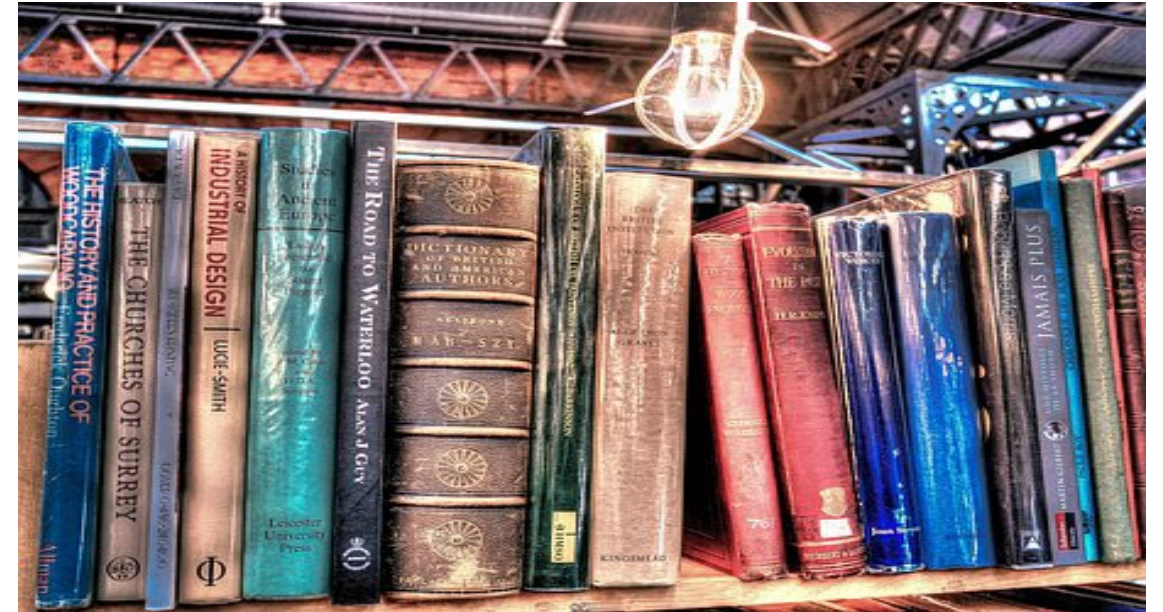
What is a peer-reviewed article?

Are my sources credible?

Authority: Credentials and affiliations of the author/s.

Currency: How old is it? Is it the latest edition? Is its age relevant?

Objectivity: Is it emotionally written, biased, or an advertorial? Can the facts be verified? Is it referenced?

Purpose: Is it opinion, satire, or too general? Is it intended for an academic audience?

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What to do when you're not sure what to use

or

how to use it **effectively?**

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Home / Library

Library

To discover library resources, search by course code, title or topic

Find journal articles, books and more | Discover

Login to Search | Advanced Search | Databases | Journal Title Search | Google Scholar | My Library Account |
Search tips

Library Guides

Subject area | Show all Guides | Search: Search by keyword | Search

Showing 15 Subject areas

Business	17	Research	17
Creative Industries	12	Research Collections	4
Education	7	Science	11
Engineering	8	Social Science	13
Environmental Science	6	Technology	3
Health	11	Tertiary Preparation Pathway - TPP	2
How to...	10	USC Staff	15
Law	17		

Getting started

Visit Library Guides to:

- learn how to borrow, request and renew
- find course readings, books and articles
- develop your searching skills
- find sources for your discipline
- explore the referencing guides

Specialist resources

These resources are not in Discover:

- Company information
- Law resources
- Standards and codes
- Statistics
- USC Research Collections and Archives

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Reference – every time you paraphrase or quote

In-text citation

Reference list

Elements that matter

WHO	WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
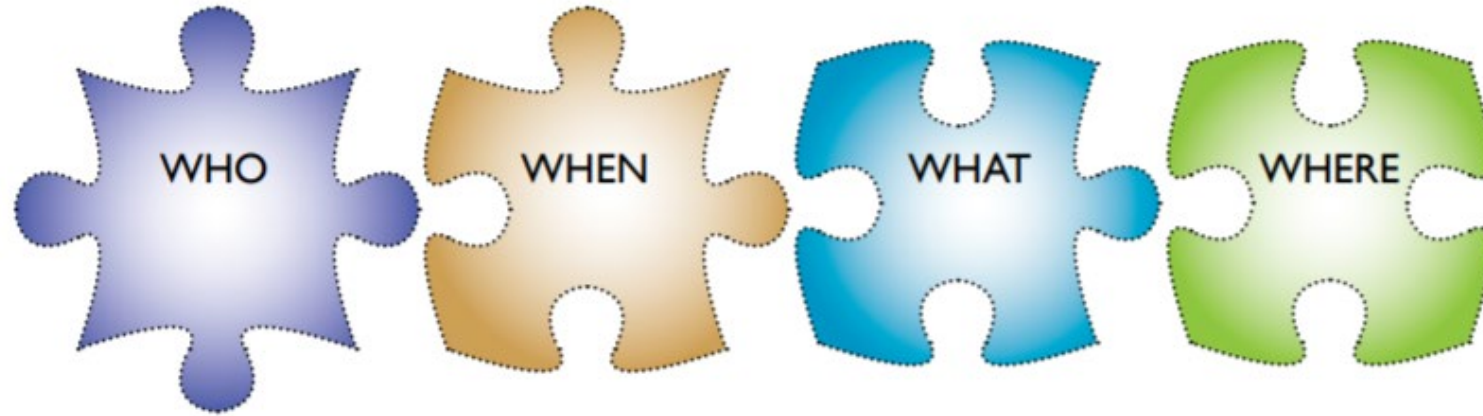
Who is responsible for creating the work?

- Author(s)
- Organisations
- Directors
- Artists

When was the work created?

- Year
- In press
- Year, month, date (if continually updated)

What is the work called?

- Title
- Journal article title
- Book or chapter title
- Webpage title

Where can you find the work?

- Where it was published
- Journal details, name, volume, issues and pages
- Where it is archived online

https://www.citewrite.qut.edu.au/qutcitewrite2017.pdf

Put it into practice

- Use Discover to find a peer-reviewed article.

- Consider what information you will need to reference it.

- Find a reference guide to help you reference it: Harvard, APA, Vancouver?

- Consider options/a system for how you could do this more quickly in the future.

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Bibliographic elements

Original Article

Patterns, Attitudes, and Dependence toward WhatsApp among College Students

Harshavardhan Sampath, Sai Kalyani, Geeta Soohinda, Sanjiba Dutta

Department of Psychiatry, Central Referral Hospital, Sikkim Manipal Institute of Medical Sciences, Gangtok, Sikkim, India

Abstract

Background: WhatsApp (WA), a free cross-platform smartphone application has revolutionized social communication over the virtual world. It enables information sharing, both personal and professional, individually and across social groups. Despite these positive changes, there have been concerns about excessive WA use, especially among college students, resulting in the neglect of important social and academic commitments. However, there is lack of quality research on WA use in this vulnerable population. **Aims:** The aim of this study is to understand the patterns and attitudes toward WA use and measure the level of dependence among college students. **Materials and Methods:** In a sample of 150 undergraduate medical college students who provided informed consent, comprehensive questionnaires were administered to assess the patterns, attitudes, and dependence toward WA use. **Results:** WA was the most common social media platform used (70%) which eclipsed the time spent on other apps (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). While half of the students spent 1–2 h/day, a significant minority (10.67%) spent almost

Formatting matters

Surname, Initial/s, Surname, Initial/s & Surname, Initial/s Year, *Title in italics and minimal capitalisation, E*dition (when not the first), Publisher Name, City of publication.

Rao, V, Chanock, K & Krishnan, L 2007, *A visual guide to essay writing: how to develop and communicate academic argument*, Association for Academic Language and Learning, Sydney.

In the chat …

Please post what may be expected of you as UniSC students.

Student expectations

Students are expected to …

- Participate in class discussions, ask questions, and seek clarification if unsure.

- Prepare by completing required readings and activities.

- Appreciate that everyone brings different strengths to groupwork.

- Respect diverse perspectives that contribute to learning.

- Read critically and widely.

- Acknowledge the work of others through accurate referencing and citation.

- Understand academic integrity.

Being a pro-active and engaged student

- Develop a social network with other students on campus.

- Engage with the content and activities on Canvas.

- Manage your time and yourself.

- Be proactive and seek advice when required.

- Regularly check your UniSC email and contact your tutors if anything is affecting your ability to attend tutorials and study.

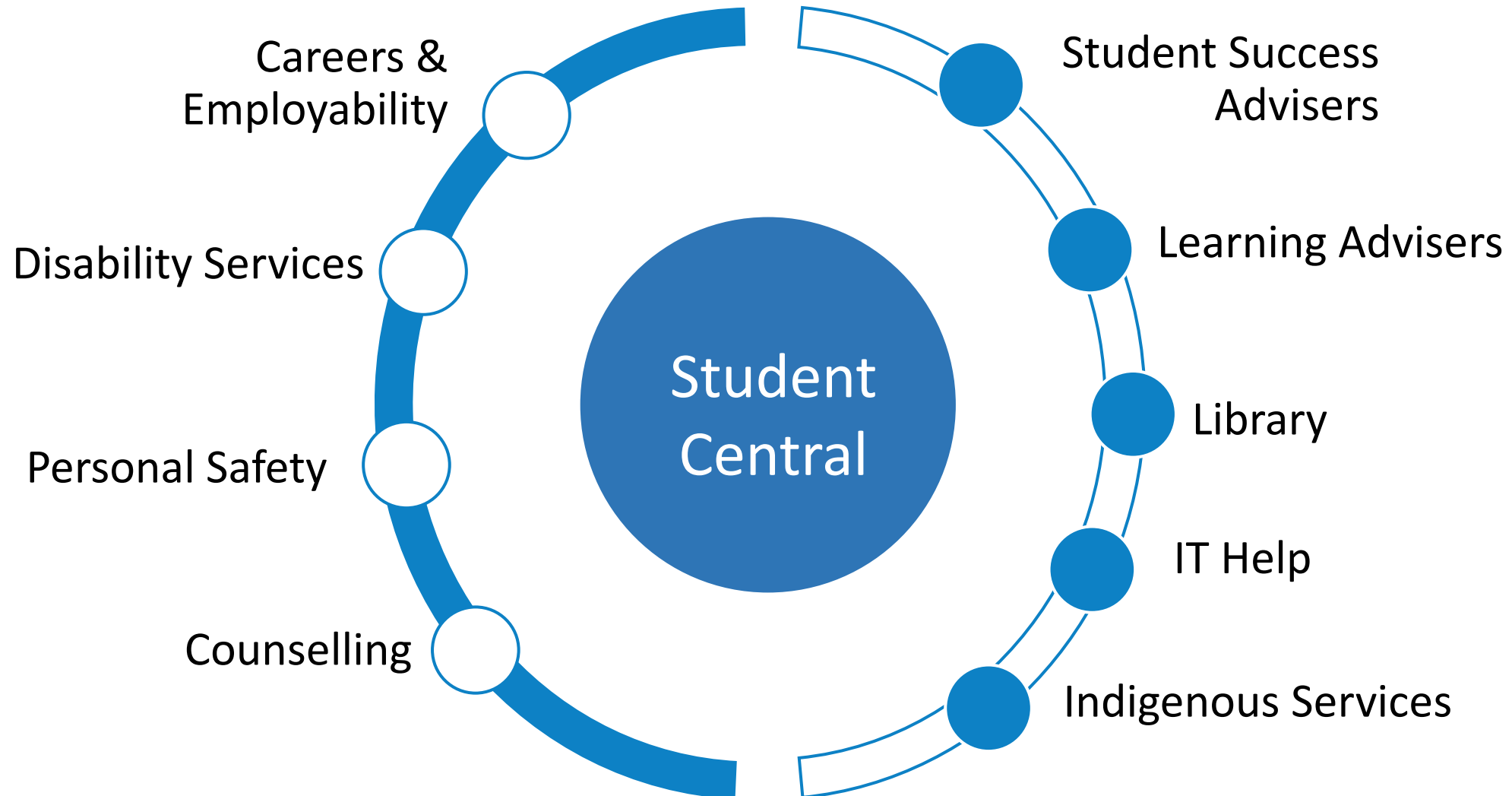- Aim to develop, sharpen, and refine your academic skills.

Adapted from: Wilson 2009; Tinto 2003

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Where do your needs lie?

- You are an expert on yourself.

- Identify your areas of concern and address them early.

- Research these areas and ask for support.

- Use Canvas, the Student Portal, and the UniSC website to access information on support services and resources.

Student Services at UniSC

Student Central

Careers & Employability
Disability Services
Personal Safety
Counselling

Student Success Advisers
Learning Advisers
Library
IT Help
Indigenous Services

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Student Wellbeing

Counselling Services

- Personal, study, or health-related.
- Individual and group counselling.
- Training and drop-ins (e.g., resilience, mindfulness).

AccessAbility Services

- Support for students with a disability, medical condition, mental health issue, learning disorder, injury, or illness.

For more information, visit www.usc.edu.au/studentwellbeing

Career Development

- Career advice and guidance.
- Application reviews.
- Interview skills.
- Employability workshops.
- Connecting to industry.
- Work experience scheme.

For more information, visit usc.edu.au/learn/student-support/careers-and-employment/careers-services

Have a question?
Ask a [Learning Adviser](#)!

Learning Advisers are trained professionals who are ready to help you develop a wide range of academic skills.

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