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Aims

The study skills learnt in this section should enable the student to: -

- Plan a written assignment
- Understand the different types of assignment
- Select a pertinent title
- Take into account the reader's needs and wishes
- Pick out the differences between essay and report writing
- Avoid plagiarism
- Organise his/her work effectively

Section 1: Opening Comments

An **Assignment** is any oral, practical or written task given to a student with a view to assessing his/her competence in a particular subject area. It can include anything from set essays and reports through to verbal presentations in class. **Assignment skills** are those which the student uses to produce the highest possible marks for which their subject knowledge allows.

One type of assignment is an **essay**, which is a written attempt to describe facts and to logically put forward a case, using any available evidence. Usually confined to one subject, it derives from the French word '*essayer*' meaning '*to attempt*.' When preparing an essay its best to be aware that most readers follow a set order of interest, which is: -

- 1.1 Themselves first
- 1.2 Other people next
- 1.3 Things affecting themselves next
- 1.4 Things affecting other people next
- 1.5 Abstract concepts last

In terms of their content and style essays range from the very straightforward to the very complicated and appeal to readers at different levels of education.

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