

**CATHOLIC CERTIFICATE IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES**  
**GUIDELINES FOR ASSIGNMENTS**

WRITING AND PRESENTATION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment writing is a technique for learning and should help you to gather, select and order information to answer a given question. It is not an invitation to write all you know about a topic, but it is an opportunity to explore specified aspects of the topic set.

There are various stages in presenting assignments and the following is offered as a guideline:

❖ *ANALYSIS OF QUESTION*

*Study the question and jot down what you consider to be the main points. You may be helped here by reading summary articles from which you should select those points which are relevant to your assignment.*

❖ *PLANNING THE ASSIGNMENT*

*It is usually a good idea to make some sort of plan before writing your assignment. It should contain the following:*

- *An introduction; what the assignment is about*
- *The main body of the assignment; three or four main points, making it clear how these relate to the title*
- *A conclusion; possibly a summary of the assignment with appropriate recommendations, again bearing in mind the title*

*The plan could become more elaborate, particularly as you give more thought to the relationship between the points in the body of the assignment. The way in which you present and sequence these will depend on the use of small but important words in the assignment title – describe, evaluate, compare and contrast, critically analyse etc. Your conclusions should also relate to these words.*

❖ **WRITING THE ASSIGNMENT**

- *The material should be organised in a logical manner.*
- *Thoughts and ideas should be expressed in simple and clear language. Jargon should be avoided. Check that you use inclusive language.*
- *The assignment should show the writer to be open-minded in approach and able to communicate within their area of Church life. Avoid phrases such as “we must”, “we ought”, and “we believe”. The assignment should illustrate knowledge of Christian-Catholic teaching without making it imperative for all.*
- *Positions taken should be supported with reasons, examples and evidence.*
- *The assignment should be as comprehensive as possible within the word limit allowed. Avoid “waffling”!*  
*Having completed the first draft of the assignment, check that each paragraph relates to the question or title.*

❖ **PRESENTATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

- *Care and attention should be given to spelling and punctuation, grammatical construction etc.*
- *Assignments should be typed (preferably) or handwritten on one side of A4 paper. Pages should be numbered. The number of words should be stated at the end of the assignment (the limit is 1,500 +/- 10%).*
- *Referencing should follow one of the recognised methods. Quotations should be verbatim, enclosed within inverted commas.*
- *Bibliography; should be a single list of authors in alphabetical order of surname. For each book etc give the author, title, place and date of publication. Please also list websites consulted.*
- *The assignment should be handed in with a covering sheet giving the following information: name/module title/tutor/date.*
- *The title of the assignment should be written on the first page or in the ‘header’.*
- *Please keep a copy of the assignment.*

❖ **USING THE INTERNET FOR ASSIGNMENTS**

- *As you are aware a great deal of material is available on all kinds of subjects on websites, but it is not all of the same quality. When you use a search engine such as Google you may find yourself accessing websites belonging to individuals or groups with some very curious agendas on religious topics. It is not easy to evaluate these websites for someone who is just getting to know the subject area. Such is the peculiarity of some of the views offered even on what look like mainstream, well-funded sites, that if you were to include them in an assignment they are usually easily spotted by the tutor. It is also quite easy to check up on parts of essays that look suspiciously like they have been ‘lifted’ from websites and simply plagiarised. Please DO NOT USE Wikipedia!*

- Offered below is a list of sites that have been checked by competent people in the subject areas of the modules of the CCRS. Using these sites will give you access to some sound ideas.
- <http://www.ntgateway.com> = Access to various New Testament websites
- <http://www.torreys.org/bible/> = Studies on biblical themes
- [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/index.htm](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm)  
= Text of Vatican II documents
- <http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc/index.htm> = Text of Catechism
- <http://www.christusrex.org/www1/CDHN/ccc.html> = Text of Catechism
- <http://www.shc.edu/theolibrary> = Theology resources
- [www.linacre.org/](http://www.linacre.org/) = Material on medical ethics
- <http://www.nccbuscc.org/> = Website of American bishops
- [www.catholic-ew.org.uk](http://www.catholic-ew.org.uk) = English & Welsh bishops website
- <http://www.lasalle.edu/~dolan/bibliography/Jesus.htm>  
= Bibliography for Christology

❖ **CRITERIA FOR MARKING THE ASSIGNMENT**

***DISTINCTION*** The work displays all or a significant number of the following:

- Evidence of good knowledge and understanding of the question and materials, relevant concepts and methodology;
- Reading beyond the recommended minimum;
- Independent reflection;
- Good level of critical analysis;
- Clear and coherent arguments supported by appropriate examples;
- Good, clear written style;
- Full and accurate referencing and bibliography.

***PASS*** The work displays:

- *Knowledge and Understanding: There is some degree of knowledge and understanding of the relevant material;*
- *Use of an acceptable range of resources is made.*
- *Argument and Analysis: An argument is attempted; the work is largely descriptive, rather than analytical.*
- *Structure and Coherence: Some attempt is made to organise material logically and to focus on the question.*
- *Presentation: The work is presented clearly and legibly, with an acceptable standard of written English within the specified word count.*
- *Appropriate use of referencing and bibliography is made.*

***RESUBMIT/FAIL***

- *Either a significant amount of the work is not the participant's own, or the work displays all or some of the following limitations:*
- *Inadequate understanding of the subject area;*
- *misunderstanding of key concept(s);*
- *Poor use of resources;*

- *Insufficient engagement with the question;*
- *Unfocussed response to the question;*
- *Inadequate use of referencing and bibliography;*
- *The work is illegible and/or shows an unacceptable standard of written English and/or greatly exceeds the specified word count.*

❖ MODERATION OF ASSIGNMENTS

The Diocese having marked its own assignments will send selected examples for moderation at the Northern Region Area Meeting.