

PSY1011 Assessment 2 Guide

ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

This document contains everything you need to know in order to complete this assessment.

Please make sure to read this in full *prior* to asking any questions on Moodle.



CONTENTS

Below are the key things covered in this guide, and corresponding page numbers for easy access.

1.0 Assessment Overview	3
1.1 What is this assessment?	
1.2 Why is this assessment important?	
1.3 What is an argumentative essay?	
1.4 Connection to Unit Learning Outcomes	
2.0 Artificial intelligence (AI) policy	4
2.1 How to acknowledge use of AI (artificial intelligence) & Generative AI tools	
3.0 How to complete this assessment	6
3.1 Step 1: Choose a topic	
3.2 Step 2: Conduct your research	
3.3 Step 3: Develop your contention	
3.4 Step 4: Develop your key arguments	
3.5 Step 5: Write your essay using the provided template	
3.6 Step 6: Submit your essay	
4.0 Useful resources	8
4.1 Assessment template	
5.0 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	9
5.1 General	
5.2 AI use	
5.3 Essay preparation	
5.4 Word Count	
5.4 References	
5.5 Submission	
5.6 Grading & feedback	
6.0 Assessment criteria	13

1.0 Assessment Overview

- **Assessment name:** Argumentative Essay
- **Assessment type:** Individual written assessment.
- **Word limit:** 1800 words. No 10% leeway.
- **Value / weight:** 35% of your unit grade for PSY1011.
- **Due date & time:** Please check Moodle.
- **Assessment criteria:** Submissions will be marked against the criteria in this document.

1.1 What is this assessment?

This assessment is a 1800-word Argumentative Essay that is worth 35% of your final grade. You will gather and examine evidence to put forward a clear contention that addresses your chosen topic.

1.2 Why is this assessment important?

Essays are an important way of developing and showing your critical thinking and research skills. This assessment is not only going to help you develop skills you need to complete your degree (psychology or otherwise) but will also help develop the tools you need to communicate effectively and think critically in future employment situations.

1.3 What is an argumentative essay?

Not unlike a traditional essay, an argumentative essay is a piece of writing that takes a stance on an issue – it presents a clear **contention**. In a good argumentative essay, a writer attempts to persuade readers to understand and support their contention by rationalising their reasoning with **key arguments** and providing scientific evidence to support their arguments.

1.4 Connection to Unit Learning Outcomes

This assessment assesses the following unit learning outcomes:

ULO 2	Explain key psychological concepts and theories across major areas such as biological, cognitive, social, organisational and Indigenous psychology.
ULO 3	Outline a range of psychological disorders and discuss how they impact on the mental health and wellbeing of people in everyday settings.
ULO 4	Develop critical thinking skills in basic research methods and psychological concepts and apply them to real world situations.
ULO 5	Effectively communicate psychological ideas with diverse audiences, across various modes.

2.0 Artificial intelligence (AI) policy

AI (artificial intelligence) & Generative AI tools **MUST NOT BE USED** at any stage of writing the essay, including drafting, sentence construction, paraphrasing or editing. All submitted work must be the student's own original writing. However, students may use AI tools to assist with brainstorming ideas or exploring background information, prior to the writing process.

Please note that this means that AI also **MUST NOT BE USED** to edit, refine, polish, or shorten content that you have written yourself. This is to ensure that student work remains an authentic demonstration of their own skills, including editing skills.

This AI policy is in place because the purpose of this assessment is to provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate human knowledge and skill acquisition *without* the assistance of AI. If AI is used to craft or edit written work, it can blur the line between the student's ability to write clearly and AI assistance. We are flagging this specifically, as this is one of the most common misuses of AI found during investigations on student submissions - so please be aware of this.

A reminder that any work submitted for a mark must:

1. represent a sincere demonstration of your human efforts, skills and subject knowledge that you will be accountable for.
2. adhere to the guidelines for AI use set for the assessment task.
3. reflect the University's commitment to academic integrity and ethical behaviour.

Inappropriate usage of AI may result in considerable academic penalties, and will be reported via Monash's academic integrity system.

2.1 How to acknowledge use of AI (artificial intelligence) & Generative AI tools

When used, AI must be clearly documented and appropriately acknowledged (see [Learn HQ](#)). Complete the first page of the submission template document to acknowledge your AI use. You should provide a brief summary (up to 1 page) explaining how you used AI. You may include the following:

- **Which AI tool(s) you used** (e.g., ChatGPT, Grammarly, etc.) and for what purpose (e.g., prompting ideas, checking clarity of structure, refining your understanding of a concept).
- **How the tool supported your thinking, not your writing** — i.e., what kinds of questions or inputs you explored to help you reflect more deeply.
- **Where in your process you used AI support** (e.g., early brainstorming, clarifying concepts).
- **How you ensured the final written submission was your own, original work.**
- **If applicable:** a URL or reference to the tool used.

"I used AI in the following ways and I take full responsibility for the content submitted for the assessment."

- *Provide a brief list or explanation of AI tool(s) and how they were used, [for examples see here for generic Monash responses](#), and further [information on acknowledging GenAI here](#).*

"The submission demonstrates my human capacities and good academic practices, and my abilities to think and work for myself and/or to think and work with AI and other collaborators. I have documented my use of AI and can provide evidence if requested."

If you did NOT use GenAI, please include a statement to this effect: "I confirm that I have not used any generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools in the preparation of this assessment. All content is my own work, developed independently and in accordance with academic integrity guidelines."

3.0 How to complete this assessment

3.1 Step 1: Choose a topic

The topics for the argumentative essay are the **same** as the topics for the presentations. You must select **ONLY one** of these topics for your essay. While we recommend that you stick to the same topic as your presentation to streamline your preparation, you are welcome to select any of the ten topics. You may find the list of topics on Moodle.

3.2 Step 2: Conduct your research

In your essay you must provide evidence to support your points, from a multitude of sources.

- You must include a **minimum of 7 references**
 - **Important note:** You will require *greater than 7* references from a *diverse range of sources* to demonstrate a deep understanding of the topic.
- *Journal articles* and *scientific reports* are generally considered stronger sources of evidence. Keep in mind that the *quality* of your evidence is a key element of the marking criteria, so it is *strongly recommended* that you stick to journal articles and scientific reports.
 - **Important note:** Sources that you use as *key evidence* (at least 7) to support your arguments should be **published within the last 10 years**, to align with current/up-to-date findings and understandings. Older sources (published over 10 years ago) may be used if you feel that they include *seminal* information, or provide supplementary support for evidence/points made.
- Ways to find suitable academic sources have been previously demonstrated in the tutorials. Please use the knowledge and skills you have developed in tutorials to assist you here. You can also use the following links to search for sources:
 - [Monash Library](#)
 - [Google Scholar](#)
 - [Subject-specific databases](#) (select 'Psychology')

3.3 Step 3: Develop your contention

After conducting some preliminary research, you should start to develop some informed thoughts and ideas on your chosen topic. These thoughts will help you develop your **contention** – which is a single sentence (worded as a statement), that takes a position and answers the essay topic. You will work on developing your contention in your tutorials.

3.4 Step 4: Develop your key arguments

Based on a collation of evidence from the sources you have found, it is important that you develop some **key arguments** – as these will be the focus of your body paragraphs. Key arguments are main points (worded as statements – topic sentences of body paragraphs) which support the contention. You will work on developing your key arguments in your tutorials.

3.5 Step 5: Write your essay using the provided template

Please use the provided template (available on Moodle). This will ensure that you adhere to formatting conventions and complete your AI acknowledgement. Your essay should include an **introduction**, approximately three **body paragraphs**, and a **conclusion**.

- The **introduction** should clearly introduce the topic (including key definitions and concepts), discuss the rationale for the essay (the purpose and possible translational impact of findings from the essay), signpost the contention, and outline the key arguments that will be explored in each paragraph. Your introduction should follow a [logical sequence](#).

- Your **body paragraphs** should be approximately three key arguments that you explore the current evidence towards. The key arguments should be clear themes or ideas that are clearly different from one another yet support the overall contention. All body paragraphs should follow the [TEECL structure](#):
 - **Topic sentence** – the first sentence in a body paragraph that clear states a *key argument*. It tells the reader what the main idea or claim of the paragraph will be.
 - **Explanation** – Explain what you mean in greater detail.
 - **Evidence** – Provide evidence to support your idea or claim. To do this, refer to your research (i.e., the findings from the studies discussed in the journal articles you have found). Remember that all evidence will require appropriate citation.
 - **Comment** – Consider the strengths and limitations of the evidence and examples that you have presented. Explain how your evidence supports your key argument (i.e. how does it ‘prove’ your topic sentence?).
 - **Link** – Summarise the main idea of the paragraph, and make clear how this paragraph supports your overall contention.
- Your **conclusion** should recap the importance of the essay topic, clearly state your essay findings (summarise key arguments, including limitations), and conclude the validity of your position on the topic given the current evidence. You will also need to discuss the potential **implications** of your findings toward support for the theory and real world/translational/societal impact. Your conclusion should follow a [logical sequence](#).

3.6 Step 6: Submit your essay

- You must submit your essay on **Moodle**, before the **deadline**.
- Only submissions in the form of Microsoft Office Word Document files (.doc or .docx) will be accepted. If you do not have the Microsoft Office suite on your device (including Word), Australian students may access it **for free** by following the instructions [HERE](#). The *Microsoft 365 Education Suite* is available and free for all Monash staff and students based in Australia.
- Please note that a **Turnitin report** will be part of the submission process.
 - There is no strict Turnitin score cutoff, as assessments are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
 - If the report highlights things like your reference list and the Title Page please do not be concerned, we will not consider this in our assessment.
 - If you are confident that you have not plagiarised or used Generative AI to write your essay, you should not be concerned with your Turnitin report.

The following steps outline how to submit your essay:

1. Go to the “Assessments” section/tab on Moodle.
2. Click on the submission link that is relevant to this assessment.
3. Read and accept the Monash University academic integrity notice, then click “Agree”.
4. Click on the blue “Add submission” button and attach your file.
5. Click on “Save changes.”
6. Click on the blue “Submit assessment” submission (do NOT leave in ‘draft’ mode)
7. Accept the *Monash University plagiarism and collusion statement* and click “Continue.” Your assessment is now submitted and *no further changes are possible*.

If you have left your submission in draft mode and it is AFTER the due date, [DO NOT CLICK SUBMIT](#). Please contact your Unit Coordinator. Clicking submit after the due date will *change* the recorded submission time, thus making it late. Late submissions will result in penalties.

- MUA (Australian) students: contact Katherine Dixon (Katherine.Dixon@monash.edu)
- MUM (Malaysian) students: contact Yap Wai Meng (Yap.WaiMeng@monash.edu)

4.0 Useful resources

4.1 Assessment template

Please download and use the Assessment 2 Word template provided on Moodle. On the title page remember to add the essay title, your name, your tutor's name, your submission date, and your final word count in the format provided. Replace the rest of the text on the other pages with your essay and your references.

- Make sure to **rename** the document with your name instead of "YourNameHere".
- Ensure you follow **APA 7th document formatting guidelines**, which is discussed on the APA style website [here](#).

4.2 Searching for Sources & Evaluating Evidence

- [Where to search](#) for sources of information
- [How to search](#) for sources of information
- You can also use the following links to search for sources:
 - [Monash Library](#)
 - [Google Scholar](#)
 - [Subject-specific databases](#) (select 'Psychology')
 - [Science Direct](#)

4.3 Academic writing & critical thinking

- [How to evaluate evidence](#) from sources
- [What is critical thinking?](#) - how to incorporate more critical thinking
- [Features of academic writing](#) - how your writing should be structured and the type of tone that you should use when doing academic writing
- [How to summarise and paraphrase information](#) - this will be helpful for summarising your sources without plagiarising (or directly copying) them.
- [How to write an essay](#) - a broad information source for writing essays, which will be helpful for learning what you are aiming for in Assessment 2.

4.4 APA style & referencing

- [APA 7th Referencing Guidelines](#) - Monash University guidelines
- [APA 7th quick guide](#) (PDF file)
- [APA style guide](#) - from the APA Style website. Learn how to best format your document, the mechanics of style and grammar, and how to use bias-free language.

4.5 Further support

- [Monash University, Student Academic Success Learn HQ](#) - here you will find information about research and writing assessments, assessment structures and samples, tips etc.
 - *You can also book a consultation to speak with a Learning Advisor about study support*
- [Meet with a Librarian Drop-in Sessions](#) - 10-to-15-minute consultations with a librarian, open to all students. At a drop-in session you can get help with information research for your assessments, including building a search strategy, also referencing and EndNote.
- [Studiosity](#) – Access Monash University's Studiosity service for fast feedback. Feel more confident with your writing before submitting.
 - *Get same-day feedback on your draft, or chat live for fast feedback on writing, maths, sciences, and study skills.*

5.0 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

5.1 General

Help, I need an extension!

Short extensions (two days/48 hours) are available for this assessment. *Special consideration* is available for students who may require a longer extension (i.e., more than 48 hours) and have genuine exceptional/extenuating circumstances, as per [Monash's list of circumstances](#).

Read about Monash's special consideration policies on the [extensions and special consideration webpage](#).

You can apply for an extension by following the links on this same webpage.

Please do not email teaching staff directly, as we cannot approve nor process any extension requests. Extension and special consideration applications are managed centrally by the university.

- When you apply for *special consideration*, you need to provide **supporting documents** to show why you can't complete your assessment as scheduled due to exceptional circumstances beyond your control. You can read more about [supporting documents for special consideration](#).
- Make sure to apply for any extension as soon as possible, and no later than 11:55pm on the day your assessment is due. Extension applications made after the deadline are not accepted.
- Once your situation improves, it's best to keep working on your assessment and try to submit it as soon as you can. Otherwise, you may risk a late penalty if your application is not approved.
- Please note that an extension may delay any feedback on your assessment.

Help, I have questions!

Please post questions on the **dedicated Moodle forum for this assessment task**. Ensure that you ask any questions at least 48 hours *before* the due date. Queries that come in after this deadline will not be answered, as there is a strict 48 [2 days] business-hours blackout period to ensure questions can be answered timely prior to the deadline.

5.2 AI use

Can I use Generative AI or AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) to help me write this assessment?

AI (artificial intelligence) & Generative AI tools **MUST NOT BE USED** at any stage of writing the essay, including drafting, sentence construction, paraphrasing or editing. All submitted work must be the student's own original writing. However, students may use AI tools to assist with brainstorming ideas or exploring background information, prior to the writing process.

Can I use Generative AI to edit work that I have written?

AI **MUST NOT BE USED** to edit, refine, polish, or shorten content that you have written yourself. This is to ensure that student work remains an authentic demonstration of their own skills, including editing skills. If AI is used to edit written work, it blurs the line between a student's ability to write clearly and AI assistance.

How do I acknowledge my AI use?

Students may use AI tools to assist with brainstorming ideas or exploring background information, prior to the writing process. When used, AI must be clearly documented and appropriately acknowledged (see [Learn HQ](#)). Complete the first page of the submission template document to acknowledge your AI use. You should provide a brief summary (up to 1 page) below explaining how you used AI. You can refer to section 2.1 of this guide document for more information on how to do this.

5.3 Essay preparation

Do I need to be strict about adhering to my chosen topic?

Yes, please stick to the topic that you have chosen. Marks will be deducted if you stray away from your allocated topic.

Can I use subheadings?

While you may use subheadings if you wish, they are neither necessary nor recommended. Instead, clearly outline where each new major section (introduction, body paragraph, conclusion) begins by leaving an obvious gap above it, and indenting the first line by 1.27cm (or 0.5 inches). The support website for Microsoft 365 has specific instructions on how to indent paragraphs [here](#).

5.4 Word Count

How long should the essay be?

Your essay has **a maximum word limit of 1800 words**. This includes everything *except* the title page, AI acknowledgment and the reference list at the end of the document. In-text citations (in APA 7th format) *will* count toward the word limit.

Is there a 10% leeway on the word count?

No. There is no 10% leeway on the word limit. Your marker will **stop reading** at 1800 words, and any content beyond the 1800-word limit will not be assessed.

Will I be penalised for going under the word limit?

No, there is no penalty for being under the word count. However, by using fewer words, you may miss out on valuable information needed to address the marking criteria.

5.4 References

How many references do I need for this assessment?

You must include a **minimum of 7 references**. You will require *greater than 7* references from a *diverse range of sources* to demonstrate a deep understanding of the topic.

What type of references are acceptable?

For this assessment, it is preferred that you make reference to **journal articles** and **scientific reports** to ensure the use of high-quality sources. Please **do not** use letters to the editor, dissertations/thesis, opinion pieces, abstracts, or animal research.

Can I include reviews, systematic, and/or meta-analyses as references?

You may use reviews or meta-analyses **sparingly** and in only a few situations - i.e., these can highlight the overall consensus in the literature at the opening of a paragraph, or be used to define key terms or concepts. However, when exploring evidence further you should be discussing the primary sources themselves (i.e., the primary articles that directly conduct the studies, these articles have participants/methods/results). Only citing a review to support your contention/key arguments *does not* sufficiently demonstrate exploration of the literature.

How old should our references be?

Sources that you use as *key evidence* (**at least 7**) to support your arguments should be **published within the last 10 years**, to align with current/up-to-date findings and understandings. Older sources (published over 10 years ago) may be used if you feel that they include *seminal* information, or provide supplementary support for evidence/points made.

Can I use direct quotes from articles/resources if we use quotation marks?

Direct quotations are not accepted, including for definitions of key terms. Students are encouraged to express information and ideas based on their own understanding, informed by original sources, rather than quoting authors directly. In general, please paraphrase the material in your own words instead of quoting.

Where do I put my references?

You should acknowledge where information comes from *within* your essay by using in-text citations. You will also provide a reference list at the end of the essay. Both [in-text citations](#) and the [reference list](#) should be formatted using [APA 7th style](#). Please refer to formatting guidance from the Monash Library guide [here](#). The reference list should be formatted with a 'hanging indent' and references should be listed in alphabetical order. The Microsoft 365 website has specific instructions on how to create a hanging indent [here](#).

5.5 Submission

How do I submit my assessment on Moodle?

To officially submit your assessment, please follow the steps in Section 3.6 of this guide document.

In what file format should my document be uploaded?

You must upload your document in Microsoft Word format ONLY. Do not upload your assessment in 'PDF' or other formats. If you do not have the Microsoft Office suite on your device, you may access it **for free** by following the instructions [HERE](#). The *Microsoft 365 Education Suite* is available and free for all Monash staff and students based in Australia.

I have forgotten to click SUBMIT, and have left my submission in DRAFT mode, and it is now past the deadline! What should I do?

If you have left your submission in draft and it is PAST the due date, **DO NOT CLICK SUBMIT**. Please contact your Unit Coordinator. Clicking submit after the due date will *change* the submission date, thus making it late.

I have submitted late (i.e., after the due date & time on Moodle). What does this mean?

When an assessment is submitted late (i.e., *after* the due date & time on Moodle), including when submissions are late for extended deadlines (i.e., in the case approved special consideration), penalties are applied.

There is a 5% deduction of the available marks (as in, minus 5 marks) per day late. Example scenarios:

1. if a submission is 1 hour & 15 minutes late, 5 marks (out of a possible 100) will be deducted.
2. if a submission is 23 hours & 59 minutes late, 5 marks (out of a possible 100) will be deducted.
3. if a submission is 1 day and 2 hours late, 10 marks (out of a possible 100) will be deducted.

Any submissions that are over 7 days late will not be assessed or graded, in accordance with Monash University's [Marking and Feedback Procedure](#) (see Section 1.13).

5.6 Grading & feedback

When will I get my assessment marks back?

The turnaround time for returning marked assessments is approximately 3 weeks after submission.

How will I know that my assessment has been marked?

We will post an announcement on Moodle once all grades are finalised and released. Please be patient in the meantime. Note that we do not provide any students with their grade and feedback early, under any circumstances. Please note that an extension may delay the release of your grade and feedback.

I would like to have my assessment remarked.

As per policy, we do not remark any assessments **unless** there is a mistake in calculation of the marks for the assessment. Please familiarise yourself with the policy in *Section 5* of the [Marking and Feedback Procedure](#), noting that students do not have an automatic right to request a remark, unless they believe there has been an error in their final grade calculation (i.e., an administration error, *not* a perceived error of marker judgement).

All forms of academic writing involve skills that require time and effort to develop, and effective and constructive feedback is key to that development. If you have any specific questions about the feedback provided, please wait 24 hours after the release of grades before contacting your tutor/marker. If you would like an area of your feedback clarified, we suggest that you are prepared with specific questions to ensure that you get the most clarifying response.

Note that the person who marked your submission is the best person to contact, as they can clarify their feedback directly (i.e., *not* your Unit Coordinator or Chief Examiner).

6.0 Assessment criteria

Criteria	Weight	Description	Mark
Introduction <i>Recommendation: Approximately 350 words</i>	15	Introduction clearly introduces the topic (including key definitions and concepts), discusses the rationale for the essay (the purpose and possible translational impact of findings from the essay), outlines the contention , and summarises the key arguments of the essay.	
Conceptual and Theoretical Knowledge	20	Demonstrates a clear and accurate understanding of the key psychological concepts and theories relevant to the chosen topic. Concepts and theories/models are defined and explained in sufficient depth. Conceptual and theoretical knowledge is used to support the contention and arguments .	
Use of Evidence	15	Evidence presented provides convincing detail directly related to the overall topic. A wide range of sources (minimum of 7) are used which provide appropriate evidential support for claims made.	
Critical Thinking and Structure	20	Critical thinking is used through the essay and there is a clear acknowledgement of the strengths and weaknesses of the evidence provided and discussion of how these impact the overall interpretation of the evidence. Evidence is logically structured into key points that address the topic.	
Conclusion <i>Recommendation: Approximately 350 words</i>	15	Conclusion recaps the importance of the essay topic, clearly states the main essay findings (including limitations) and reiterates the contention and key arguments on the topic, given the evidence. Potential implications of the findings are also discussed. Critical thinking and evaluation of evidence is present.	
APA Referencing & General Presentation	15	Reference list and document structure and format adheres to APA 7th format (e.g., headings, spacing, margins, page numbering etc.). Writing is clear, concise, easy to read and understand . The essay has a clear and logical flow. Proper spelling and grammar are used.	
Total mark /100	<i>Summation of marks awarded for each criterion</i>		

Note: it is recommended that each body paragraph is approximately 350 words.