CRITICAL READING TECHNIQUES

Reading effectively

- Know why you are reading. Is it for an assignment or an exam? Know where to focus your reading. Look at your module guide and learning outcomes so that there is no need to read everything. You can focus on what is needed for the course.
- Quickly scan the material to get a general impression of the material. Keep in mind what your purpose is.
- Read more thoroughly
- Take notes – make notes in the margins, colour code the different arguments which are relevant to the purpose of your reading etc
- Pay attention to arguments, sub headings and headings
- Understand what you are reading. Try to explain it to yourself or a friend in your own words
- Record notes so that you do not have to return to the book when writing your assignments. You can refer to the notes
- Re read for assignments and exams- highlighted notes, arguments and headings will allow you to focus
- Skim and look for key words which are relevant to your assignment or your course objectives.

Active reading

- This means reading something with a determination to understand and evaluate it for its relevance to your needs.
- Underline
- Annotate
- Ask questions of the text – who wrote it? What is the intended audience? Why was it written?
- Look for signpost that will help you – key words which is relevant to your topic

Reading for comprehension

- Skim
- Question
- Read
- Remember
- Review
- Note that note taking is an essential part of critical reading
Critically process what you read

Critical thinking is the process of applying reasoned and disciplined thinking to a subject.

When reading, follow these three steps to help you maximise the experience:

1. Analyse – analyse the material and its relevance to the assignment
2. Compare – compare the differing arguments
3. Synthesize - incorporate the information so that you can use the relevant parts for your study