Assignments allow you to practise what you learn in the lectures and tutorials in your course. Submitting a well prepared assignment will ensure you are better prepared for the exam. Here you will find some useful tips on assignment preparation.

- Always leave plenty of time to complete the assignment to avoid a last minute rush.
- Make sure you understand the assignment question or brief, which will typically comprise four crucial parts:
  - A broad definition of the topic
  - Instruction about what is required (discuss, analyse, compare, etc)
  - A time or word limit
  - The due date.
- Plan your research and reading strategy to focus only on relevant information. Avoid the temptation to read too widely unless you have unlimited time. Often the lecturer has set prescribed reference material which you should make sure you read.
- Plan the structure of the essay or assignment, with major headings and sub-headings to show the various parts of the argument or evidence you are presenting. A typical essay plan comprises:
  - Introduction: a brief summary of the nature of the question and your argument or thesis (if you are asked to advance one)
  - The arguments: the views of the major writers in the topic, and the evidence to support these theories
  - Conclusion: clearly and concisely summarise the main arguments and the conclusion.
- Don’t procrastinate - just start! As long as you get started on a draft version of your assignment you can tidy it up later. Often writing about a topic generates ideas and gives you clearer direction for the remaining research required.
- Ideally leave the draft for a few days to allow it to mature. Then revise it and re-revise it if necessary.
- Presentation is important, so follow the layout instructions precisely.
- Keep electronic copies of the assignment in different locations (e.g., portable hard-drive, USB thumb-drive, virtual backup drive, etc.).
- If there are technical difficulties submitting your assignment online, email a copy to your tutor as evidence that you have completed the assignment by the due date and time. You will still need to submit your assignment online once the technical problem is overcome.