



## 2. Critical thinking\*

**University Graduate Profile Theme:** Graduates of the University are expected to be able to contest knowledge and practice, critically consider ideas, texts and research and think reflectively and reflexively.

**Bachelor of Commerce Graduate Capability:** Graduates will be able to analyse and critique theory and practice to develop well-reasoned arguments.

**Progression statement:** In your initial courses, you will develop skills in locating and evaluating information from several sources, comparing and contrasting arguments using logical and systematic thinking. Your assessments will ask you to build evidence-based arguments. In your 200 level courses, you will become more accomplished in your analysis and you will be prepared to challenge ideas, using information from multiple sources. In assessments, you will demonstrate your ability to build and defend an evidence based argument. In your 300 level courses, you will learn to and be assessed on building evidence based and strategic arguments that show flexible thinking. You will challenge ideas and assumptions, taking multiple perspectives, evaluate evidence from a wide range of sources and present a logical and coherent critique.

**Definition of critical thinking:** *Critical thinking is the habit of mind characterised by the exploration of issues, ideas, artefacts and events before formulating an opinion, conclusion or course of action.*

	Indicators	100	200	300	700
2.1	<b>Definition and explanation of the issue</b>	Describes the issue clearly, taking into account its immediate conceptual and practical contexts and boundaries.	Issue is defined and explained with interpretation of alternative perspectives, evidences, contexts and stakeholders.	<b>The issue is defined and explained</b> comprehensively with important influencing factors and contexts being considered. Implicit issues are identified, and their relationships to each other are explained.	The issue is defined in depth. Explanation shows a critical and comprehensive understanding of the underpinning theories and principles and any related or implicit issues.
2.2	<b>Selecting and using evidence</b>	Uses information/evidence from reliable sources. Distinguishes between assumptions, opinions and facts.	Information is gathered from relevant sources beyond those provided. Some analysis and evaluation of evidence is demonstrated.	<b>Identifies and critically evaluates important information and evidence</b> for accuracy, validity, and relevance.	Identifies evidence from highly reliable sources. May provide new data or information for consideration. Presents an accurate interpretation or questioning of evidence and information.
2.3	<b>Argument</b>	Acknowledgement of different sides of an issue/argument.	A structured argument is developed which takes into account the complexities of an issue, the evidence and/or alternative points of view.	<b>A coherent and evidence based argument is developed</b> , which takes into account the complexities of an issue, new and high quality sources of evidence and/or points of view.	Argument is based on a sound logic and comprehensive synthesis of valid and diverse perspectives or evidences. Shows a clear and sound line of reasoning to justify plans and proposals.
2.4	<b>Conclusions and related outcomes</b>	Conclusion is presented with reference to context, assumptions, data, and evidence.	Conclusion is logically tied to the argument and based on a view of evidence and information from different points of view.	<b>Conclusion</b> is logical and <b>reflects the issue and the student's argument</b> . Consequences and implications are detailed, considering relevant assumptions, contexts, data, and evidence.	Conclusions, consequences, and implications are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order.

\* The rubrics at each stage relate to B students and above.

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Indicators	Below Standard	Meets Standard*	Above Standard
<b>Definition and explanation of the issue</b>	The issue is not defined and/or explained.	<b>The issue is defined and explained.</b>	In addition to meeting the standard, the issue is defined in-depth and contextual issues are considered.
<b>Selecting and using evidence</b>	Does not identify or evaluate important information and evidence for accuracy, validity, and relevance.	<b>Identifies and evaluates important information and evidence.</b>	In addition to meeting standard, provides new data or information for consideration.
<b>Argument</b>	A coherent and evidence based argument is not developed.	<b>A coherent and evidence based argument is developed.</b>	In addition to meeting standard, student's argument encompasses a range of perspectives and/or high quality sources of evidence.
<b>Conclusions and related outcomes</b>	Conclusion fails to reflect the issue and the student's argument.	<b>Conclusion reflects the issue and the student's argument.</b>	In addition to meeting the standard, the consequences and implications are detailed.

\* The 'meets standards' criteria have been written for a graduating student. It may need to be softened if you are assessing a 100 or 200 level course.

**Glossary**

- Assumptions: Ideas, conditions or beliefs (often unstated) that are "taken for granted and accepted without evidence".
- Context: The historical, ethical, political, cultural, environmental setting or conditions that influence and complicate the consideration of issues, ideas, artefacts and events.
- Validity: The quality of being logically or factually sound.



## BUSINESS SCHOOL

### Sources

Main source: Association of American Colleges and Universities Critical Thinking Value Rubric.  
Secondary source: Washington State University's Critical Thinking Project.