

Section A

MAKING & TAKING NOTES

Different ways of making notes:

(a) **Annotation;**

An addition made to information in a book, document, online record etc

Writing in the margins, underlining facts, highlighting the main points, using question marks, ticks or crosses to show whether you agree or disagree with the points made in the text

(b) **Outline notes;**

Use just keywords and phrases. The notes are usually sequentially numbered, or headings, sub-headings and indentation can be used.

(c) **Column notes;**

The column format of note-making is more appropriate for Mathematics and Science courses. (Table like notes)

(d) **Mind maps;**

It's a diagram that's used to represent words, ideas, tasks, or other items linked to and arranged to a central keyword or idea.

Mind Maps do not follow a linear sequence.

The main topic forms the nucleus while the main ideas and concepts branch out from it.

(e) **Summary notes**

Summary notes are a condensed version of the information, written in paragraph form, its breaking down in chunk form.

Making Notes from Printed Materials

1. Understand the objectives.
2. Read the whole chapter and then try to summarise it in a few sentences
3. Leave spaces in between notes, to allow for additions or changes later.
4. Reread the chapter and improve on the notes providing more details.
5. Use your own words instead of copying from the text.
6. Understand the material better.
7. If you copy word for word, put them in inverted commas to show that they are quoted, and also to write down the original source.
8. Read over your notes to make sure you understand them.

Note Taking

- (a) Avoid distractions
- (b) Listen to the message being said
- (c) Always relate the ideas to previous tutorial discussions,
- (d) Look for clues for important points from the tutor
- (e) Take notes for future reference
- (f) Identify noteworthy materials.
- (g) Write down the date/time/lecturer
- (h) Try to identify key issues, keywords, key phrases
- (i) Create spaces as you take notes.
- (j) Use your own abbreviations

Revision means active participation of your brain. Your brain needs to work on collating and analysing those key concepts and ideas, register them and apply them to new situations

Fast Reading

- to gain an overview or background information of a topic;
- to locate specific information;
- to identify if the material is relevant to your needs; and
- to know what the content is all about.

Fast reading consists of the following:

(a) Scanning

- Scanning is very quick absorption of the content and
- Is done when you want to locate specific information.
- In scanning, your eyes run quickly down the page to see if it contains the information you require.
- Eg, looking up a number in a telephone directory
- When scanning a text, your eyes look out for particular keywords or phrases.

(ii) Why Scan?

- locate the information required quickly and efficiently
- Scanning will provide a moderate level of information.
- Most web pages may be read by using this technique.

(iii) How to Scan?

- Use the process of keyword spotting.
- Read only as much information as you need.

How to scan a book:

Step 1

- Note the title and author of the book.
- Open a book and look at the table of contents.

Step 2

- Read the chapter headings and subheadings.
- Does it give you an idea if the book is relevant to your needs?

Step 3

- From the Table of Contents go to the relevant sections of the book
- Read the First paragraph, or glance through the headings in the section.
- Read the opening paragraphs or a sub-section of a chapter.

Step 4

- Search the index for the keywords to your topic, Look for keywords as well as alternative keywords.
- Note the other page/pages where the subject is dealt with and refer to the appropriate pages.
- Read the paragraph before and after, if you would like more information.

Step 5

Look out for additional hints given by the author such as:

- Words in bold
- Words in italics
- Underlined words
- Subheadings

(b) Skimming

- Skimming involves running your eyes down the page very quickly over the main features of a piece that you are reading i.e. the title, headings etc, to get a good general impression of what the material is all about.
- In doing so, you will be able to Find the focus or central theme or subject matter of the material in no more than a couple of minutes.

(ii) Why Skim?

- Skimming is done when you need to cover a large amount of material in a short time
- When you are not looking for anything in particular.
- Skimming is done to assess if the book is relevant to your requirement.
- Skimming is doing selective reading in a speedy manner. It is an efficient technique for getting a general idea, without reading every word from a book.

By skimming you, are able to:

- Get an overview of the authors main line of argument; and
- Identify the main idea or theme of the book or article.

(ii) How to Skim?

- Skimming involves reading only parts of the text.
- It is useful to prepare for skimming by reading the title and author summary.
- Initially it will be the headings in bold typeface that will draw your attention.
- Then search through the text very quickly by reading the First and last paragraphs and note the keywords in between.
- Move your eyes across the page to locate keywords or phrases.
- Begin with the top left-hand corner and move across then down and to the right in a zig-zag manner.
- Focus only on keywords in the text.

Slow Reading

Slow reading allows you to maintain your concentration in order to gain a detailed understanding of the material you are reading.

(a) Why?

A slow reading style is adopted when you need to be very thorough about what you reading, especially when you:

- have to analyse and understand;
- need to evaluate and be critical;
- need to remember the information you read; and
- have to follow instructions.

You may adopt different approaches for slow reading.

Two important approaches:

(i) An Analytical Approach is used when you need to understand terminology, follow instructions or remember what you have read. Analytical reading involves being an active reader. You have to create questions and Second answers as you read, for example: “How logical are the ideas?” or “Can conclusions be drawn from the evidence given?”

(ii) A Critical Approach is used when you need to evaluate the material you are reading. As you read academic texts you are expected to think about the author’s intention.

SQ3R is an active and systematic approach to reading academic material. This method helps to link up new information with what you already know. In SQ3R you will do the following:

S = Survey: Start with surveying the materials and get the best overview of the information content. It is like reading a map before you make a trip.

Q = Question : Ask appropriate questions to provide your reading with specific focus. Asking questions is an active reading process.

R = Read: Question yourself while you read. Stop often and try to answer. Read slowly for difficult passages.

R = Recite: Try to recite for comprehension and recall. After each reading organize the information in your mind Check your recall against the book or article.

R = Review: Review the consolidation and integration of the information gathered. Are the main issues identified? Do the notes make sense? Are you able to understand the article you have read?

Strategies for Managing Stress

The following are some strategies for managing stress:

(i) Take Action to Organise Yourself

You can control the way you spend your time and energy so that you can handle stress more effectively. For example if you are working full time in the day, you may want to plan your learning after 10 pm at night when everyone is asleep or be an early bird and start your day 1 or 2 hours earlier.

(ii) Control Your Environment by Controlling Who and What is

Surrounding You In this way, you can either get rid of stress or get support for yourself.

Be in the company of your learning peers so that you maximize your leisure or unplanned time.

(iii) Give Yourself Positive Feedback

Remember, you are a unique individual who is doing the best you can. Feed your subconscious mind, for example: you can tell yourself that you are going to pass this semesters exams with flying colours. You will assure yourself of getting at least 3.0 Grade Point Average for this semester. If you keep these thoughts in you, and work hard, you are very likely to achieve what you want.

(iv) Reward Yourself

It really helps to have something to look forward to. Take up a mind relaxing activity or plan regular leisure activities.

(v) Exercise Your Body

Your health and productivity depend upon your body's ability to bring oxygen and food to its cells. Therefore, exercise your heart and lungs regularly, a minimum of three days per week for 15-30 minutes. This can be in the form of activities such as walking, jogging, cycling, swimming or aerobics.

(vi) Relax

Take your mind off stress and concentrate on breathing and positive thoughts. Dreaming is relaxing too, along with meditation, progressive relaxation, exercise, listening to relaxing music, as well as communicating with friends and loved ones.

(vii) Rest as Regularly as Possible

Generally, 6 □ 7 hours of sleep a night is sufficient for adult learners. Take short breaks. There is only so much your mind can absorb at one time. It needs time to process and integrate

information. A general rule of thumb: take a ten-minute break every hour. Rest your eyes as well as your mind.

(viii) Be Aware of Yourself

Be aware of distress signals such as insomnia, headaches, anxiety, upset stomach, lack of concentration, cold/flu, excessive tiredness, etc. Remember, these can be signs of potentially more serious disorders (i.e., ulcers, hypertension, heart disease). Always listen to tensions in our body. For example, check if you are gripping the steering wheel too hard when driving!

(ix) Eat a Balanced Diet

Avoid foods that are high in fats and sugar. Do not depend on drugs and/or alcohol. Caffeine may keep you awake, but it may also make it harder to concentrate. Remember, a 20-minute walk has been proven to be a better tranquilizer than some prescription drugs.

(x) Learn to Enjoy Yourself

It has been shown that happier people tend to live longer, have less physical problems, and are more productive. Look for the humour in life when things do not make sense. Remember, you are very special and deserve only the best treatment for yourself.

Coping with Learning

Some ways to cope with everyday study problems are as follows:

(i) Recognise Your Own Resources

Assessing your strengths and weaknesses can help you see what you have at your disposal to help you cope. For example, know where you can get reference books. Ask yourself: „Are they only available at the library nearest to me or can I get them online? How do I get these online books?

(ii) You Do Not Have to Cope Alone

Talking with family and friends may help you to get through difficult times in your studies. student counselor for help you cope with difficult and stressful situations.

(iii) Be Realistic

Set attainable goals. If you have 3 assignments to complete for the semester, check the deadlines, and plan sufficient time for each assignment.

(iv) You Cannot Achieve Absolute Control

In becoming a successful learner, you need to cooperate and collaborate. Remember, you cannot do it alone. Your peers and tutors will play an important role and you will benefit from joining study groups and keeping in touch with your tutor.

(v) Learn to Accept Failure

Do not be too upset when you do badly on your first test or first assignment. There is a gradual process of doing better. Speak to your tutor if you are not happy about your results, and SECOnd out how you may improve.

Terminologies

Central Processing Unit (CPU) It processes the input data (from keyboard, mouse or etc.) and passes the data to the output components of the computer. It is also referred to as the brain of the computer. Responsible for storing & retrieving media from storage devices.

Video Display Unit (VDU) It presents to you the visual display of information that you input. It is commonly known as the monitor.

Keyboard It is an input device for typing text-based information. You are able to communicate with the computer with this equipment.

Mouse It is an input device used mainly to point and select items.

Floppy Disk Drive This is the input and output device. It allows you to read files stored in the diskette and to write on or to save files for future use. It is also called as A drive. The standard 3.5" floppy diskette holds 1.44 MB of data.

Printer: A peripheral which produces a hard copy from softcopy . usually on paper.

Modem: Allows to comm. Between two comps over www using phone line

URL: uniform resource locator

Hyperlink: internal & external hyperlinks, jumps to other locations

Website: A collection of related webpages, images, videos, and other digital assets hosted on a server

www: worldwideweb is a universe of cutwork accessible info, an embodiment of human knowledge.

Online Learning(refer to Blended learning of section B)

Microsoft Applications:

A package of software consisting Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel. Microsoft PowerPoint, and Microsoft Access, Microsoft Project and Microsoft Outlook.

Microsoft word: Microsoft Word is a powerful tool used to create professional looking documents. The different versions of MS Word are Word 97, Word 98, Word 2000, Word ME and Word XP.

Word Functions: Format text, insert tables, insert illustrations, insert page nums & dates, spell check, print docs

Microsoft Excel, a powerful and flexible spreadsheet programme designed for the Windows environment allows you to create professional spreadsheets and charts. It performs numerous functions to assist you in your projects. It is a powerful programme for organizing, analyzing and presenting data and is often used by:

- Accounts officers in businesses or companies for stock-taking, accounting, payroll etc.
- Teachers for recording students mark in a course or subject.
- Scientists for analyzing the results of experiments.
- Any individual for personal financial analyses.

Using excel a teacher will be able to:

- input data into the worksheet;
- do automatic calculation using formula;
- update data easily;
- run a command to arrange data by name of student or marks; and
- get students performance report in graphical format

Excel functions: Perform Maths operations, lots of preloaded functions (avg, sum, hlookup), sort data, work on multiple sheets, convert data to various types of charts, add borders & shading

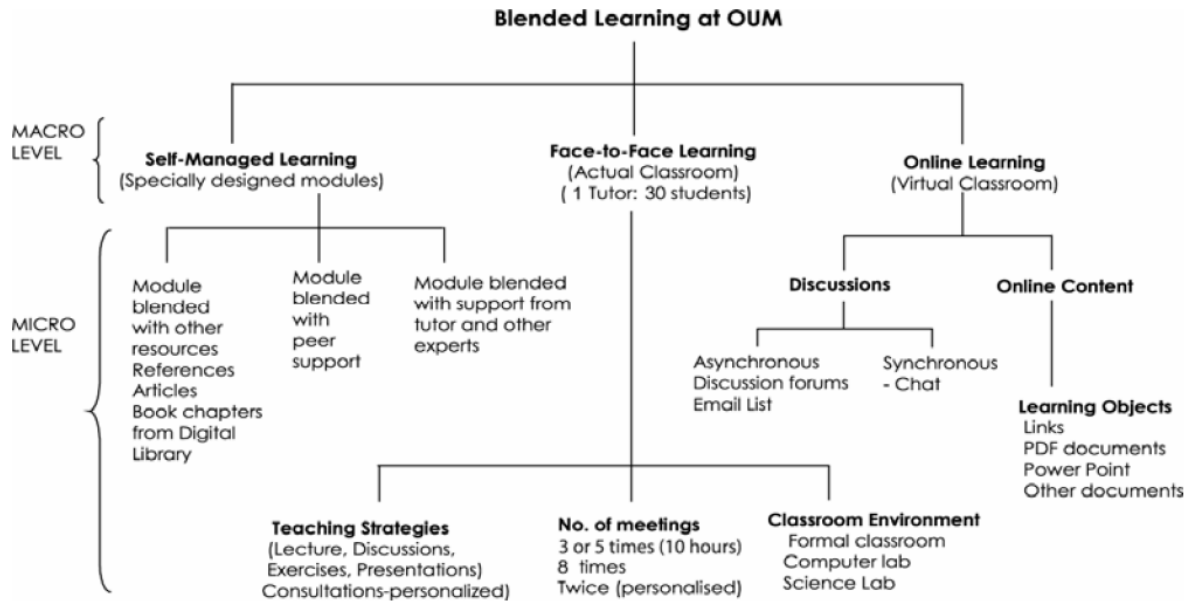
Microsoft PowerPoint is a powerful tool used to create professional-looking presentations. You can create your presentations either by using your own creativity or by using the ready-made templates.

PPT Functions: preloaded designs, templates, insert illustrations, types of animations, types of transitions, various ways to slide navigate, save to use on another comp, various slide views.

Section B

Blended approach to learning:

which employs multi-mode strategies. Accordingly, learning takes place through real and virtual interactions between learners and tutors via self-managed learning, face-to-face interactions and online learning methodologies. Blended learning is essentially combining online learning, or more technologically advanced forms of learning methods, with the traditional methods such as face-to-face interaction and the actual classroom. Blended learning provides you with the best of both worlds, by giving you the high level attention and guidance that can be achieved in the actual classroom, as well as the flexibility and openness of self-paced learning through online and virtual learning methods.



(a) Self-Managed Learning

Self-managed learning requires you to study independently according to your time availability. Teaching materials provided include specially constructed printed modules as the main source of learning. These are supplemented by other reading materials both printed and digital. In addition to that, the learning process also takes place through audio/video tapes, CD-ROMs and laboratory experiments. The self-managed learning approach accords many advantages to you.

Advantages of being a self-managed learner.

- 1-improved employability
- 2- Quality learning
- 3- Ability to make effective use of new technology
- 4- Preparing for lifelong learning

(b) Face-to-face Interactions (Actual Classroom)

Face-to-face interactions are the tutorial sessions that are conducted in actual classrooms by tutors at OUM learning centres established throughout the country. Issues related to course materials, assignments and other related issues are discussed during these tutorial sessions. These sessions are normally conducted fortnightly, during the weekends or after office hours, not less than 3 times per semester. The ratio of tutors to learners is kept low to ensure the quality of the sessions.

(c) Online Learning Methodologies (Virtual Classroom)

In the virtual classroom, electronic communication tools such as email, discussion forums and chat rooms are provided to facilitate interaction among learners, tutors and facilitators. In addition, electronic learning materials in the form of animation, simulations and graphics are continuously being developed to enhance the learning outcomes. Communication tools and e-

learning materials are delivered through the Internet via OUMs very own online delivery platform called Learning Management System (myLMS).

Motivational Strategies for Successful Learning

Motivation is the force which causes events in the mind to occur. It can be described as something that energises, directs, and sustains behaviour towards a particular goal. It affects how you do your work, when you do your work, how long you work on a task, how well you concentrate on your work, and which study strategies you use.

Basic strategies that could help you to motivate yourself:

- **Set Challenging but Realistic Learning Goals**
Before you begin your task, decide on the facts, concepts, or ideas that you want to learn. Set yourself realistic and achievable goals so that you will be more motivated to aim for great achievements.
- **Break Down the Bigger Task at Hand**
Make tasks more manageable by breaking them down into smaller, more manageable tasks so that you will not feel daunted or intimidated.
- **Maintain a Positive Attitude**
Maintaining a positive attitude is very important. Try to think of difficulties as challenges. If there is something you have to learn which seems threatening, consider the ways in which it can also be an opportunity to do something new.
- **Aim for Higher Peaks**
Push yourself a bit harder when you have met one set of goals. Make your next set of goals a little more challenging.
- **Use Active Learning Strategies**
Instead of passive learning, make the effort to use active learning strategies. Do take the initiative to seek out resources, such as going to the library, using websites, talking to your tutors and having discussions with peers face-to-face or online.
- **Learn from Mistakes**
Do not get discouraged from the mistakes that you have made while learning. Instead, get someone or new resources to help with your learning. Find support from your tutors, peers or anyone who can help you. Look back at your approach to learning. Ask yourself, „Is there a better way of doing things?
- **Monitor Your Learning**
To motivate yourself, you have to look at your progress while learning. Get feedback from your tutors on your tests and assignments. Discuss your grades with relevant authorities.

Anxiety

There is also stress caused by anxiety. As an OUM learner, you may get anxious when you are about to face an examination or when it is time to hand in your assignment. Much of the

anxiety comes from the fear that you might not perform well in the task, be it an examination or an assignment.

Anxiety caused by such events can be either anticipatory anxiety or situational anxiety.

Anticipatory anxiety: The distress that you feel while studying or preparing for your quizzes/tests and assignment and thinking of what might happen when you are taking the quizzes/tests or are late in handing in the assignment.

points that can help you overcome anticipatory anxiety:

- Relax.
- Be focused.
- Think positive.
- Study in a group.
- Have a specific study time.
- Get a set of complete notes.
- Get comfortable with your study place.
- Know where you stand and where you are heading.

Situational anxiety: Anxiety that occurs during an examination and before an assignment is due.

Below are important points on how to manage anxiety in the examination room, or how to manage the stress of getting assignments done:

- Be punctual.
- Organise your work schedule.
- Avoid highly anxious friends.
- Read and understand the instructions.
- Work at a comfortable pace.
- Ask for clarification.
- Keep moving.
- Relax.

Thus, the most important thing that you can do to control your anxiety level is by studying and knowing the material well enough so that you can recall clearly even under stress. Learn to set goals, motivate yourself, practice good time management and avoid laziness, procrastination or day dreaming.

ACTIVE AND REFLECTIVE LEARNERS

☑ Active learners tend to retain and understand information best by doing something active with it: discussing or applying it or explaining it to others. Reflective learners prefer to think about it quietly first.

☒ Let's try it out and see how it works is an active learner's phrase; Let's think it through first is the reflective learner's response.

☒ Active learners tend to like group work more than reflective learners, who prefer working alone.

☒ sitting through lectures without getting to do anything physical but take notes is hard for both learning types, but particularly hard for active learners.

Everybody is active sometimes and reflective sometimes. Your preference for one category or the other may be strong, moderate, or mild. A balance of the two is desirable. If you always act before reflecting you can jump into things prematurely and get into trouble, while if you spend too much time reflecting you may never get anything done

How Can Active Learners Help Themselves?

If you are an active learner in a class that allows little or no class time for discussion or problem-solving activities, you should try to compensate for these lacks when you study. Study in a group in which the members take turns explaining different topics to each other. Work with others to guess what you will be asked on the next test and figure out how you will answer. You will always retain information better if you and ways to do something with it.

How Can Reflective Learners Help Themselves?

If you are a reflective learner in a class that allows little or no class time for thinking about new information, you should try to compensate for this lack when you study. Don't simply read or memorize the material; stop periodically to review what you have read and to think of possible questions or applications. You might find it helpful to write short summaries of readings or class notes in your own words. Doing so may take extra time but will enable you to retain the material more effectively.

ETHICS

Ethics is about moral decisions, which is based on a standard of conduct that indicates how one should behave based on moral duties and values. It is based on either a personal decision, universally accepted values, or ethical obligations determined by society.

In the examination, ethics is about a set of values and standards that guides your actions, thoughts or words before or during the examination. Arguably, there are so many different values pertaining to right or wrong behaviour that tell you about ethics in examinations. In this context, we will try to look at some universally accepted ethics related to examinations. The following actions are considered unethical behaviour:

- * Copying from another paper or the work of another student during an examination.
- * Permitting another student to copy your work during an examination.
- * Possessing unauthorised notes, crib sheets, additional sources of information or other material that is unauthorised by OUM during the examination.
- * Taking or attempting to take an examination for another student or getting someone to do likewise for you.
- * Altering or falsifying examination results.

- * Using, obtaining or attempting to obtain by any means the whole, or any part of an examination that has yet to be administered. * Copying from another paper or the work of another student during an examination.
- * Permitting another student to copy your work during an examination.
- * Possessing unauthorised notes, crib sheets, additional sources of information or other material that is unauthorised by OUM during the examination.
- * Taking or attempting to take an examination for another student or getting someone to do likewise for you.
- * Altering or falsifying examination results.
- * Using, obtaining or attempting to obtain by any means the whole, or any part of an examination that has yet to be administered.

Ethics in Writing Theses, Essays and Assignments (Pg156)

Below are some guidelines for ethical conduct in writing theses, essays and assignments

- (a) Cite the published source (including, where relevant, the electronically published), to acknowledge the originator of ideas upon which you are building your work, and to acknowledge quotations by the use of quotation marks.
- (b) Refer to, or use unpublished scholarly materials only with the consent of the originator, and to acknowledge the source of the materials if that consent is given.
- (c) Refrain from plagiarism, which is the unacknowledged incorporation of another's work, into your work.
- (d) Ensure that the use of scholarly materials does not result in obstructing access by others, in particular, where such materials are held within the University library or research centre.
- (e) Faithfully represent the views of authors cited and do not misrepresent authors' views either by partial or censored quotation, or by quotation out of context, or by misleading commentary.
- (f) Seek access only to scholarly materials to which you know you are entitled or authorised, and not to attempt to access such material to which you know you are not entitled or authorised (for example, by computer hacking).
- (g) Respect the rights of other authors and refrain from tampering with digital records (whether in text, image, sound, or other format) over which the originator has copyright and/or has asserted the moral rights of ownership.
- (h) Refrain from manipulating digital records (whether in text, image, sound, or other format), whether in their original context or in a different context, so as to mislead their audience.

Section C

Microsoft Application (refer section A)

Evaluation of Information

1. AUTHORITY

Ask yourself if the author (personal or corporate) is an authority on the subject?

It would be best to look at the authors credentials which can be found in the back page or on the jacket of the book. In the case of Internet, authorship should be a major criterion. Check out who has placed the information on the Web. Look for the name of the author. Is there information on his professional background? Check links from other documents for the author's credentials and authority on the topic. Examine the URL to get to the authority behind it, whether it is a personal web directory, or an organizations official website. In the case of corporate authors, ask yourself if the corporation is directly responsible for the publication of the content. Be discerning and learn to distinguish between authoritative information and commercial information.

2. ACCURACY AND RELIABILITY

Ask yourself if the information is accurate and from a reliable source. Is there sufficient supporting information in the form of statistics, reports, footnotes, etc.?

Are the arguments presented with facts and figures that can be verified from other sources quoted in the text? It may be true that even a dead clock is right twice a day and sometimes what is „wrong% to someone can be „right to another but in terms of accuracy and reliability in academic writing, there can be no compromise. Every fact must be verified for accuracy and reliability. With regard to Internet, ask yourself the following questions: can the information be verified using print or other sources? Is the data gathering and explanation of research methods included? Is the methodology appropriate? Who is the publisher? What is the type of domain? Does it come from an educational (.edu), commercial (.com), government (.gov) or non profit body?

3. OBJECTIVITY

In academic writing, objectivity means presenting information based on facts. It should not be propaganda material or have a bias in politics, religion, gender, race, nation or personal philosophy. Is there a bias in the writing? Can you ask yourself these questions when checking on objectivity? Remember, in your assignment, it is you who are presenting the facts, not the author of the book you have in hand. Your assignment means your facts, your ideas and your arguments that are being presented, so make sure that they are supported by information that is objective and reliable, not a re-hash of someone else's propaganda. Can you also detect if the writing is commercial propaganda? Is the article written to promote or sell some product?

4. CURRENCY

Currency of information means how current the information is and if currency is important to what you are reading now. Please be mindful that not all information needs to be current. Thus, your decision-making process is important. As such, the question we pose here is: Why read outdated information unless it is for historical purposes? Why read a 2nd edition, when the 5th edition is in the market? The latest edition would ensure that the information contained within is up-to-date. Taking the trouble to refer to the latest edition and therefore the latest information is an academic responsibility that should be taken seriously because the development of a corpus of knowledge in any subject area depends on the latest information. Year of publication in the copyright page of a book is useful to determine the currency of the content

5. SCOPE

Scope means the coverage as far as readership is concerned. To determine the scope of the content you are reading, ask yourself the following questions: For which target group is the information written? Is it meant for general reading or for academic reading? How comprehensive is the scope for this target group? Is the reader expected to read several books just to gather information on one aspect? The scope of the matter written about is important because unless the information provided is comprehensive, you would have to read several books just to get the same information.