# THE AUTHOR’S OWN VIEW

Items which are the opinions of the author are underlined, and those which are a summary of others’ thoughts are *in italics*.

*Understanding essay writing seems to be a challenging task for many students – according to much research* (Watson, 2003). *Research has suggested that students particularly struggle with giving their work structure and with understanding the criteria that lecturers use* (Watson, 2003; Paulson, 2012). Of course, there are other areas that some students seem to struggle with as well: *providing sufficient references to research is something that many academics note as an issue* (e.g. Scott, 2004) and – as noted by Blade (2002) – *understanding whether evidence from personal experience is better than evidence from the literature is also a difficulty for many students. As stated by Scott, ‘These basic issues are key to doing well in academic work’* (2004: p. 112).

However, what this debate misses is how lecturers and academics can enable students to understand how academics think. Lecturers can teach students about the criteria and show students what good work looks like, but until the student understands what is in the mind of an academic and how assessment works, then a great deal of this teaching may be ineffective. Students need to be given examples and be given the chance to assess others’ work.

Some work has already begun in this area. *Work by Price (2003) has shown that assessment feedback and engaging students in peer-to-peer learning has some benefit, but of course the effectiveness of this rests on how well the students can understand what the criteria mean and how they can be recognised in academic work*. What may be of some considerable interest is some research work into how academics develop those skills themselves, and studies in this area may provide some clue as to how to help students understand and recognise these skills also.

In conclusion, we can argue that we are making progress. It is not easy and there will be challenges along the way, but if we can develop students’ understanding of how to demonstrate their critical thinking skills, then we will have gone some way to fulfilling our aim as facilitators of learning.

**Phrases from the above text indicating views from research and the literature**:

‘… according to much research’

‘Research has suggested … ’

‘ … is something that many academics note as an issue (e.g. Scott, 2004)’

‘ … as noted by Blade (2002)’

‘As stated by Scott (2004) … ’

‘ “Work by Price (2003) has shown … ’

Any statement that has a citation will have come from the literature and other people’s research.

**Phrases from the above text indicating a personal view**:

‘ … what this debate misses is’

‘ … then a great deal of this teaching may be ineffective’

‘What may be of some considerable interest is some research work into …’

‘In conclusion, we can argue ... ’

Any statement that does not have a citation will be assumed to be your own thinking. IF IT IS NOT YOUR OWN, THEN YOU MAY BE COMMITTING PLAGIARISM .