The Critical Review (critical analysis, critical evaluation)

In this type of task you need to critically evaluate or analyse

A text	A policy document
A practice	A theory
An approach	A person

Critique means

- examining / analysing the essential features of the text
- discussing and evaluating the positive and negative features of the text

Examining or analysing the essential features

- Ask 'Wh- questions':
  Who is the writer, what/where is the context, what are the main points or thesis, what evidence is used, what perspective is used, why this point of view?

Evaluating

- Ask questions about the value or worth of what you have found from your analysis:
  How useful or valuable is the idea, what is its importance, significance, relevance, what implications are there?

Task examples:

1. *Critique current policies regarding the teaching of writing in Australia.*
2. *Write a critical evaluation of three different approaches to teaching writing in the university context.*
3. *Critically analyse your own writing practices based on Smith's concept metacognition*

To prepare a critique

- Use a comparison grid to analyse your information
- Use comparison and contrast signals in your writing

To write the critique

- Briefly highlight the main features of the material to be critiqued (description)
- Ask critical questions about that material (see handout materials from previous weeks on critical reading)
- Consider how a different reader (gender, ethnicity, age, language, nationality) might respond to the reading
- Comment on what is new, stimulating, contradictory, debatable or useful in the reading.
- Consider implications for your professional practice

Examples of student writing

Note the different ways of organising information in the two attached samples:

1. by author 2. by 'issue'