Oral Presentations – Preparation

The preparation stage of your oral presentation involves deciding what to say, and how to organise the information so that an audience can follow it.

Consider:

**Purpose**
Decide what the purpose is and keep that purpose at the back you your mind in all your preparation.

**Audience**
Think about who your listeners are and what they expect / need to hear. Think about what they know already about the subject to help you decide on the information to include.

**Structure**
The usual structure is based on introduction, body and conclusion. This is not the only possible presentation structure. For a process over a period of time you might focus on the different stages e.g beginning, middle and end. Alternative patterns might be problems, solutions or questions and how you arrived at answers. It is important to make a good beginning but also to finish well.

Think about the flow of the presentation: What will you say as you move on to each new stage? (Look at the resource on this page called Language for useful phrases to use.)

**Content and timing**
Think about what will fit in the time you have got and how deeply you will be expected to analyse the subject. You need to show your understanding of the topic and usually that you have done some individual research beyond what is presented in class. The material you include needs to relate to your purpose for giving the presentation.

**Assessment requirements**
Make sure you refer to the assessment criteria or marking guide (if there is one). This will help you work out what you need to focus on. Usually both the preparation and delivery aspects are part of the requirements. Check whether references need to be included. Sometimes oral presentations are not assessed but they can still form part of the overall impression you make on your lecturers.