

ESSAY WRITING PROCESS



Step 1

Make a start early

- ✓ Find all assignment instructions
- ✓ Read the marking rubric
- ✓ Look through required/recommended readings
- ✓ Read the Course Learning Objectives
- ✓ Reread relevant lecture notes



Step 2

Analyse the question

- ✓ Understand what is being asked
- ✓ Make a summary in your own words
- ✓ Check the key words, definitions
- ✓ Know limits within the question



Step 3

Plan an approach

- ✓ Brainstorm and group ideas
- ✓ Create a quick essay plan



Step 4

Research, gather and form your ideas

- ✓ Use reading lists, textbooks
- ✓ Review notes and reading sources, etc.
- ✓ Check back to your essay plan
- ✓ Make notes
- ✓ Explore other possibilities
- ✓ Record all your sources
- ✓ Make sure things are relevant - sift and select



Step 5

Organise ideas and write first draft

- ✓ Check for logic, style, clarity, tone, structure and accuracy
- ✓ Does it answer the question?
- ✓ Analyse, as well as describe, perspectives and theories



Step 6

Edit and proofread

- ✓ Check for word limit, relevance, spelling, punctuation, repetition, grammar, correct format, correct references

Planning an Essay

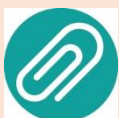
1. **Read through your relevant notes and assigned readings. Also other material if relevant**
 - A. Brainstorm, mind-map or note down important information, ideas and connections

2. **Classify and organise this material in relation to the essay question**
 - A. Group related points into broader categories
 - B. Rank categories by importance
 - C. Within categories, the general points should come before the particular points
 - D. Think also about the relationships between categories and plan for a smooth transition from one idea to the next
 - E. Make a decision about what the main argument (thesis) of the essay will be

3. **Write a plan**
 - A. Arrange the plan in sections
 - B. Number and scope of sections depends on length and depth of assignment
 - C. Under each section heading, list the points or arguments in that section. Include quotations or examples you will use
 - D. Discuss points in order of importance, starting with the most important
 - E. Include a paragraph which addresses any counterarguments/other perspectives

4. **Plan an introduction and a conclusion**
 - A. An introduction should:
 - engage the reader's interest
 - give background details or context if necessary
 - have a thesis statement
 - give an idea of what you plan to cover and the order in which you will cover it

 - B. A conclusion should:
 - sum up your main points clearly and convincingly
 - reflect the thesis statement
 - finish on a strong, positive note
 - not introduce new material



Related resources:

[Analysing the Question](#)

[Instructional Words](#)

[What Academics are Looking for](#)

[All study resources](#)

