

Discuss the components of a good essay, and identify common mistakes to avoid

‘The scariest moment is always before you start, after that things only get better’

(King.S. ‘A memoir of the craft’).

Every student in their time at university will have to learn and accomplish how to write an essay. This piece of writing explains how to approach them and their key elements. To establish occurring faults and how to bypass them. The topics we will examine are the title, Introduction, thesis, main body and the conclusion.

W.H.Auden the poet(1907-1973) wrote ‘The aim of education is to induce the largest amount of neurosis that an individual can bear without cracking up’ (cited in Omar, 2002). Examination of the essay question is written in the Introduction. This gives the reader an insight as to what to expect.

Before starting the essay, the writer needs to analyze the question being asked of the student. Consider the title and what it asks of you. Gather information from books, Journals and legitimate websites. Create drafts on the topics, gather and list the data. Be careful as you cannot use it all, so remember to be selective. Mind mapping is a good way of recording what you have, focusing your thoughts visually. You can filter your ideas as you go along. Examination of the essay question is the starting point in your Introduction.

The **Introduction** will demonstrate what you need to do. Clarifying how you read the question and researching the topic you are to explore.

Five principles for a good essay

Cited: A study by Townsend.M.et al (1993)

Examined a range of essay writing guides and arrived at five key criteria for an effective introduction. A good introduction for an essay should:

1. Discuss the importance or timelines of the topic.
2. Start the problem to be addressed.
3. Indicate the scope of the essay.
4. Define terms to be used.
5. Delineate the argument to be presented

The essay contents are put in sequence of each other, Introduction, thesis, main body, conclusion, referencing and bibliography. This gives a reader an understanding of how an essay is structured. The problems of an essay can be addressed by constantly referring to the question. This way it allows you to focus on what's being asked of you. The writing. should be brief and to the point, stating the essays elements. A clear outline of terms to be used in the essay, would be the key words in the question. E.g. Discuss, components, good essay, identify and mistakes to avoid. Helpful tools such as web sites are a great way to learn about essay writing.

Writing essay tour-student learning development-University of Leicester

Welcome to the writing essay tour. Are you currently writing an essay? Are you looking for resources to help you and develop and enhance your essay writing? If the answer is yes, this tour is for you. We have divided the essay writing process in four stages and listed resources most likely to be helpful at each stage.

- Getting started

- Managing and organising the material
- Getting down to writing
- Finishing touches

<http://www2.le.ac.uk>writingessaytour>

So, this is an introduction to an essay which then leads into the main body of the writing. This will be discussed in the next paragraph.

The main body of the next three paragraphs will go into essay writing. In essay writing evidence on the topic question needs researching from possible lecture notes, journals, books and web sites. This research will help to prove your theory. The library in your university should have all the books you require. Buying all the books needed for the course proves expensive. Categorize the books until you have the relevant information required for the topic. Make sure the information relates to the issue you are dealing with. Declare and differ the opinion of the topic question. Assess the opinions you researched against each other. State which example of work you wish to check out, Acknowledge the topic thoroughly. Check the proof that backs the essay topic. Elaborate as not all answers are as simple as they seem. Look at the fault in the arguments and rival views on the essay topic. Proving something about the theory, consider all the things on the topic. Lead sentences into paragraphs so they flow connecting them together.

A short guide to essay planning and structuring.

The purpose of an essay is to present in a logical, reasoned argument in

Response to a specific question. An effective structure helps your argument

To unfold clearly to the reader.

<http://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk> PDF

In the following paragraph we will look at distinguishing mistakes that are made in essays that you can correct.

Before writing your essay, brainstorm your ideas. A useful tool to get your thoughts out of your head is to use mind mapping. This is a visual tool that can be drawn out on paper. However, in this age of technology mind mapping programmes can be purchased for computers. If you prefer you can take notes and then write rough drafts. These can be used many times until you have finally got the desired result. Using the computer to keep notes can be useful and saved into many places 'OneDrive'; Flash drives or on your PC.

Common mistakes in essays are often made because the piece of writing has not been proofread. Spelling errors often made in sentences; dictionaries are good way of checking Words that sound alike but differ in their meaning. Agreement of the subject and verb, singular and plural in the context. Different elements in a sentence connected by a comma, instead of a semi colon. Punctuation mistakes making it confusing when being read. A structure of a sentence is incorrect known as a run-on sentence.

One of the paragraphs could be on the argument for and against the question being asked of you. The evidence found must be referenced correctly. Analytical thinking helps the student understand the question. Which is a detailed account of the what is being asked of them. Keep remembering the key words of the essay question and what they want of you. Keep a log of all the research you have done. The references you need for the end of the essay after the conclusion. Using references means that you recognise the writers who have written the quotes; passages.

The conclusion of an essays is the last paragraph the piece of writing. The question is examined and dissected to see what is wanted from the writer of the essay. Looking at the key word specifically. All essays need researching and referencing to find out the information required in the question. The process starts; brainstorm your ideas and

make lists using what ever technique suits the writer in cataloguing the data. Forming a structural plan to put it all into. Essay are important for students to progress in their learning. Although difficult at first, with time and tutors' feedback we will improve throughout are university life. Below is a piece of writing from Manchester university that sums up what you gain from essays you can take these skills with you when employment beckons.

Develop your skills

Find activities and opportunities to develop a range of sought-after skills while at university.

- Adaptability
- Analytical skills
- Commerce awareness
- Communication
- Decision making
- Flexibility
- Initiative
- Innovation
- It skills
- Leadership
- Negotiation
- Networking
- Numeracy skill
- Organisation
- Problem solving
- Research
- Teamwork
- Time management

<http://careers.manchester.ac.uk> >skills

So, after some thought that I think essays are very stressful, but a necessity in today's climate for sought after jobs. They do take some planning, structure and brainstorming. Time management especially important with deadlines for essay assignments, as lectures still go on and life in general. So, to sum up the first essay is always the hardest and most frustrating. With feed back from the tutors on the assignments, in time students could be master essay writers. Future jobs need these interchangeable skills. For myself this essay has been the hardest piece of writing I have ever done, which I have not always enjoyed. I have realised the importance of time management is crucial. This example has made me how I want to be proficient at this task.