

Dance in Context Essay writing

Planning your essay:

Prepare Rigorously - Proofread Ruthlessly - Format Religiously

Use your word count – 1500 words must be divided up.

As a rough estimate (based on 1500 words):

- 10% of the word count should be used on your introduction – 150 words
- 80% of the word count should be used on the main body – 1300 words
- 10% of the word count should be used on your conclusion – 150 words

Of the main body (80% of total essay), you could divide your assignment into:

- 3 paragraphs of 433 words each
- 4 paragraphs of 325 words each
- 5 paragraphs of 260 words each

Essay structure: The Diamond

The **introduction** has its own structure and is separate from the main body.

The **main body** is the development of your argument into clear sections consisting of paragraphs.

Each of these **paragraphs** in itself has a **start, middle** and **end**.

The **conclusion** also has its own structure and purpose and is separate from the main body.

Thinking of your essay as a diamond will remind you that whatever points you start you have to finish off (this also applies to paragraphs).



This is key to making your work-flow:

Each paragraph will also follow the diamond pattern.

An opening sentence will be followed by supporting evidence and/or examples to back up your points.

You may of course present any opposing argument as well, to show you are considering alternative viewpoints, but your motive here will be to show that your argument is best.

This will be followed by a mini conclusion, which may be your comment or a link to the next section/paragraph.

Followed by:

An opening 'topic' sentence,

Supporting evidence and/or examples to support or contrast with your point.

A mini conclusion to the paragraph. Your comment or link to the next section/paragraph

Paragraphs need to PEEEE

- POINT: You need to first provide a point to the paragraph. This will need to link in with the end of the preceding paragraph somehow, using connective phrases.
- EXPLAIN: you then need to contextualise the point and explain a little about it.
- EXAMPLES: you then need to introduce examples, e.g. contemporary case studies such as the current development of improvisational practice in choreography.
- EVIDENCE: For instance, statistics or research studies, depending on the topic. **This will include referencing of source material.**
- EVALUATION: This is where you weigh up what has been said in the paragraph, giving you the opportunity to then identify an issue which you can then go on to discuss in the next paragraph. Final sentence links to first topic sentence. This sentence effectively comments on and concludes this paragraph. It needs to link to the next paragraph as best you can.

Essay Musts:

- Check you have answered the question:
Know the difference between - Investigate/evaluate/analyse/critique
- Font Size: 11 or 12
- Font: Avenir, Arial, Tahoma, Verdana
- Line spacing: 1.5
- Paragraph spacing: 1.5
- Paragraph indentation: No
- Numerical numbers to 10 need to be written out e.g. one, two, three.
- DO use short sentences.
- Grammar: use commas (can you split the sentence in two instead of one long sentence), full-stops, colons (can be useful to optimize the structure of your assignment. You can place them before lists or long quotations), check your use of capitals.
- Check your sentences make sense. READ AND READ AGAIN.

- Write in the third person ONLY. Use a formal tone – not conversational or from your point of view – the reader will know it is your opinion.
- Use a higher level of language e.g. use ‘major distinction’ rather than ‘big difference’, ‘differentiate instead’ of ‘tell the difference’.
- Don’t use Don’t – No Can’t, Won’t, Shalln’t, didn’t – Cannot, will not, shall not, did not.
- Avoid slang – Children instead of kids.
- Use the right words
Affect or effect – you affect a situation to achieve the desired effect
Fewer or less – former for numbers the latter for quantity – there were fewer students than last year but less work than before
Their, they’re or there
Your, you’re
- Avoid vagueness – this/that or it – use instead The work, The choreographer etc
- Don’t use ‘?’ unless you really need to and never use ‘!’ unless it is in a quotation.
- Write in the active voice. Think about who is doing the action in the sentence, and put them (or it) at the start. Avoid using the passive voice (e.g. “It has been demonstrated by some experts that...”). Instead, say “Smith and Jones (2012) demonstrate that...”

Contents:

- Title Page (including your name, student number, programme title (BA Dance), module title, component e.g. component 2 essay, essay title and name of lecturer.
- Your essay – introduction, body and conclusion - Please note: Unless specified you do NOT need to subtitle sections.
- Bibliography/reference list

Before you submit:

Check your spelling

CHECK AND DOUBLE CHECK YOUR REFERENCES, CITATIONS AND QUOTATIONS – USING HARVARD REFERENCING