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International Gastronomy Management Academic Writing Tips: Essays and Reports Spring 2026

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Academic Writing Tips

- The following slides are designed to help you develop an understanding of the requirements associated with ***Essay Writing.***

Academic Essays

- The most appropriate software to use for an academic essay would be Microsoft Word.
- Like academic reports, academic essays are usually written in the third person. You must present your ideas as a coherent argument and structure this in a way that makes sense to the reader, covering one idea at a time.

Academic Essays

An essay is a **continuous** piece of writing, set out in paragraphs, responding to a question or a title. When preparing to write an essay, it is essential to identify the main requirements of the title. You must be clear about what areas your lecturer wants you to cover. These will then determine the organisation of the essay.

- Unless reflective, academic essays are usually written using the 'third person'. This means avoiding the use of personal language such as: I, me, we (1st person) and you and yours (2nd person)
- Always refer to the assessment brief for guidance. If there is anything you do not understand please ask your lecturer.

What’s the structure?

The structure of an essay starts with an introduction. The main body of your essay follows through with a series of arguments and debates, backed up by evidence. This will enable the writer to form conclusions.

An essay does not normally use headings within the work, although it will have a main heading, usually setting out the title or question given.

What is the Structure Continued…

- Essays are ***not*** the same as reports. There must be ***no*** inclusion of a contents page, side headings, graphs, charts, tables, diagrams, illustrations, photographs, bullet points or such like within the essay.
- Hidden within this straightforward structure you must ensure that the essay has a logical flow, separated by paragraphs leading the reader towards the conclusions via a series of arguments, backed up by evidence.
- Essay's are argumentative and ideas based
- An essay will always contain references and be written in clear and precise language. It should be free from spelling and grammatical errors.

First things first - Cover Page

For academic work you should always include a cover page:

- Your Name
- Student Number
- Title of Essay
- Module Tutor
- Submission Date
- Word Count

Academic Essay Format

- The first thing an academic essay should do is introduce the topic and surrounding context, to establish a framework through which you will be approaching your argument. It **sets the scene** for what is to follow!

- The body of your essay should back up what you established in the introduction. Begin each paragraph with a sentence establishing the topic and your argument, ideally following a similar pattern across all paragraphs for cohesion. The points you raise in each paragraph should be backed up by evidence.

- **Consider depth and breadth. An essay isn't everything you have ever found out about a topic!**

Academic Essay Format

- Your conclusion should bring together all of the arguments you have presented throughout your essay, as well as linking back to what you set out in the introduction. The conclusion should only be a summary of key themes and ideas that have already been raised, with no new information or arguments introduced at this point.
- An academic essay should always include an accurate list of any sources and references incorporated throughout.

Academic Essay Format

- An academic essay should always include an accurate list of any sources and references incorporated throughout.

Top Tip!

- Proofread your essay once completed to ensure that it flows properly, contains all of the ***necessary aspects*** and is free of grammar, spelling and punctuation mistakes.

One Final tip!

- Reference, Reference, Reference!
- Remember that regardless of which method of assessment you are required to use, you must acknowledge any instances where you use someone else's words, ideas, images or research in your own work.

Reports	Essays
• Formally structured • Informative and fact-based • Written with a specific purpose and reader in mind • Written in a style appropriate to each section • Always include section headings • Can include bullet points • Can include tables or graphs • Offer conclusions • Offer recommendations for action • Include in-text citations and a reference list	• Semi-structured • Argumentative and idea-based • Not written with a specific reader in mind • Written in single narrative style throughout • Usually **do not** include sub-headings • Usually **do not** include bullet points • Usually **do not** include tables or graphs • Offer conclusions • Include in-text citations and a reference list

Any questions? ☺

Guidance on word lengths of sections in a typical essay

Total length of essay	1,000 words	2,000 words	5,000 words	10,000 words
Introduction 10-15%	100 – 150 words	200 – 300 words	500 – 750 words	1,000 – 1500 words
Body 80% paragraphs	3 paragraphs of 200 words	4 paragraphs of 400 words	8 paragraphs of 500 words	16 paragraphs of 500 words
	or	or	or	or
	4 paragraphs of 150 words	5 paragraphs of 300 words	9 paragraphs of 450 words	17 paragraphs of 450 words
Conclusion 5-10%	50-100 words	100–200 words	250–500 words	500–1,000 words