

Academic key words in essay writing	
Account for:	Give reasons for; explain why something happens.
Analyse:	Examine in very close detail; identify important points and chief features
Classify:	Arrange into groups
Comment on:	Identify main issues, giving your reactions of what you have read or heard in lectures. Avoid purely personal opinion
Compare:	Show how two or more things are similar. Indicate the relevance or consequences of these similarities.
Contrast:	Set two or more arguments in opposition to draw out differences. give reasons why one may be preferable
Criticise or Critically evaluate:	Weigh arguments for and against something, assessing the strength of the evidence on both sides.
Demonstrate:	Show clearly by providing evidence

Describe:	Give the main characteristics or features of something, or outline the main events.
Discuss:	Write about the most important aspects of the topic in question; give arguments for and against a topic.
Distinguish:	Bring out the differences between two items or topics.
Elaborate:	Discuss in detail with reasons and examples.
Evaluate:	Assess the importance or usefulness of something, using evidence. Showing possible cases for both and against.
Examine:	Put the subject 'under the microscope', looking at it in detail. If appropriate, 'critically evaluate' it as well.
Explain:	Make clear why something happens, or why something is the way it is.
Interpret:	Give the meaning and relevance of data or other material presented

Illustrate:	Make something clear and explicit, giving examples or evidence.
Justify:	Give evidence that supports an argument; show why conclusions were made, consider objections that others may make.
Narrate:	Concentrate on saying what happened, in the sequence that it happened.
Outline:	Give only the main points, showing the main structure
Relate:	Show similarities and connections between two or more things
State:	Give the main features, in very clear English (almost like a simple list but written in full sentences).
Summarise:	Draw out the main points only, omitting details or examples.
To what extent...	Consider how far something contributes to a final outcome
Trace:	Follow the order of different stages in an event or process.