

Introductions

Look at the introduction (below) from last week's sample essay.

Essay question: Explain how academic skills are useful when working in health and social care.

Academic skills have often been considered as different to employability skills. In this essay, I will discuss how they overlap by considering three examples. I will argue that skills in research, writing and critical thinking mean that better care can be provided to service users. I will take each of these skills in turn, discussing what they involve and how they apply to a health and social care context.

What is the purpose of each sentence?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

How could this introduction be improved?

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Look at these two introductions from student essays in the Cottrell (2019) book.

Essay question: The ethical implications of stem cell research outweigh the benefits – discuss.

[NB stem cells are cells that can grow into other types of cells – they can be used for research or in treatments to replace diseased cells with healthy cells]

Corrigan et al. (2006) describe stem cell research as ‘something of a political, ethical, social and legal minefield’. In this essay I shall explore this ‘minefield’, examining key arguments for and against stem cell research from the perspective of both the perceived benefits and the ethics of such research. I shall argue that whilst the *potential* benefits, as opposed to the *actual* benefits, of stem cell research are great enough to justify its continuance, great care must be taken to address more subtle social ethical implications such as access to stem cell therapies and unrealistic expectations of what stem cell research can achieve.

(Cottrell, 2019, p.337)

Stem cell research is an emotional issue, which leaves audiences divided. Is it something that might save countless human beings or an immoral activity, responsible for the deaths of thousands of babies? There are strong arguments on both sides, as this essay will show.

(Cottrell, 2019, p.341)

Which is the best introduction and why? What are the problems with the other one?

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Conclusions

Look at the conclusion (below) from last week's sample essay.

In this essay, I have suggested that developing academic skills, such as research, writing and critical thinking skills, prepares future health and social care professionals for some of the tasks they will need to undertake in employment. Any individual worker is part of a complex system that is facing challenges due to changes in the population, major health conditions, inequalities, the distribution of resources and technologies including the availability of vast quantities of information. Developing skills in managing and using some of that information will enable professionals to do their best for people needing care.

What is the purpose of each sentence?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How could this conclusion be improved?

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Look at the conclusion from one of the student essays in the Cottrell (2019) book (from the same essay as the first introduction above).

This essay has examined some of the key ethical issues relevant to the use of human stem cells in research. In considering the benefits of stem cell therapy, it indicates that the evidence for clinical efficacy is still rather limited. Moreover, the hope that stem cells will lead to cures for serious illness and injury has led to unrealistic reporting of achievements, which in turn has led some people to seek experimental treatments with little evidence that they will be successful. There is agreement between many key figures that stem cell therapy holds great potential to benefit human well-being. When this potential is aligned with good regulation that supports high quality clinical research and helps to manage expectations, then the benefits of stem cell research could be said to outweigh the negative ethical implications.

(Cottrell, 2019, p.339)

Why is this a good conclusion? (You may wish to open the Cottrell (2019) book to skim the whole essay.)

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Homework

Try to find time to read the essays on pages 337-341 in Cottrell (2019) and the advice on writing essays.

References

Cottrell, S. (2019) *The Study Skills Handbook*. 5th edn. London: Red Globe Press.