

WRITING ESSAYS

There are two main types of essays:

- Those based on theory, and
- Those based on the application theory to a practical situation or scenario.

Essays based on theory

Often centred on problems or issues under debate and generally require a formal response to a set question, statement or a proposition. This is to encourage you to research and think critically about the various viewpoints and ideas presented in the literature to enable you to form your own **viewpoint/position/answer to the question**. So in this kind of essay you have to have a viewpoint (argument) and convince the reader, that **your viewpoint or perspective is credible i.e. develop your argument**. You do this by using the ideas of others to justify your viewpoint.

Essays based on theory and practice

Generally require either:

- Relating and/or evaluating a theory (or theories) to practice/s, or
- Evaluation of a practice by using criteria from theory.

Essay structure

Introduction	Where you state your point of view or position on the topic, outline how you will answer the question, the main topics of discussion and define key terms in the essay question.
Body	Where you develop your argument/discussion in a logical and ordered way. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence to introduce this idea. Use in-text referencing when citing sources.
Conclusion	Where you draw the ideas you have presented to a logical conclusion and reaffirm your viewpoint/position.
List of references	Where you list all of the sources of information, audio, visual, internet resources, texts, journals etc. which you have read/accessed to come to your opinion.

Format

Generally essays are written without headings but headings may be allowed for the purpose of your essay (check with the lecturer/unit coordinator). Bullet points however are not usually used in an essay.

Tips

- Analyse the question carefully and underline key words.
 - Do a quick brainstorm/mind map of your initial ideas and develop them – then do your research!
 - Write a first draft and then improve it.
 - Use quotes or paraphrase to support your ideas.
 - Go back and look at the essay question – have you answered it? Check the key words in the question.
 - Spell check and use a proof reader.
 - Check the word count.
 - Make sure your formatting is well thought out.
- Include a title page that includes the question.

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