

## Academic Writing: Essay Structure – Arts Subjects

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Each subject and/or discipline has its own conventions and format. These are **general** guidelines only. It is your responsibility to check with your course guide, course coordinator or teachers to find out the preferred format.

### Introduction (Introductory Paragraph)

In the introduction, you should show:

- What you think the question is asking
- How you will answer the question

You do this by:

- Explaining how you interpret the question
- Identifying the issues that you will address
- Giving a brief outline of how you will approach each issue

### Main Body

In the main body, you should show:

- That you have a series of points that will support your overall argument
- That each point is supported with evidence
- How each point relates to the question

You do this in paragraphs:

- First sentence: Introduces the subject/main idea of the paragraph
- Subsequent sentences: Develop the theme, include relevant examples, details, evidence, quotations, references
- Last sentence: Summarises the paragraph or leads into the next paragraph

Remember, you **must show** that you are aware of:

- The weaknesses, as well as strengths, in your argument
- Contradictory points of view

### Conclusion (Concluding Paragraph)

In the conclusion, you should show:

- That you have identified the main arguments/points throughout your essay
- That what you have written is relevant to the original question
- That you have presented a coherent argument

You do this by:

- Summarising the argument/main points
- Stating general conclusions i.e. make clear why these are important/significant
- Linking to the title/question

**The conclusion should not introduce new points in the argument. These belong in the main body.**

### **Bibliography**

You may need to append a Bibliography – check course guidelines.

If you are using the Harvard system citation format, you will need a Works Cited list.

Library guide on *Referencing and Citing*:

<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/guides/gen/uggen007.pdf>