Writing Essays

The 7 steps for writing a successful essay:

1. **Analyse the question** – identify the task words, content words, and limiting words. Remember to **view the marking rubric** before you start your assessment, it often provides further clarity.
   
   [Link to marking rubric]

2. **Brainstorm. Pre-reading. Writing a Provisional Thesis Statement.**
   What do you already know? What do you need to find out? What do you think the answer is?
   
   [YouTube link]

3. **Make a plan.**

- **Introduction**
  - thesis statement
  - approximately 10% of the total word count
  - the content
  - the number of paragraphs
  - the single idea to be developed in each paragraph
  - approximate word count per paragraph

- **Body**
  - paraphrases the thesis statement
  - summarises the research that supports it
  - approximately 10% to the total word count

- **Conclusion**
  - the end-text references must match the in-text references

- **References**
4. Select appropriate resources.
   Remember the 4 Rs: relevant, reliable, recent and readable.

5. Read, make notes and take referencing details.

6. Write and revise.
   Remember to write in paragraphs. Include in-text referencing as you write.
   Draft and revise:
   • Read your draft. Does it make sense?
   • Identify the key sentences that summarise your argument: the thesis statement and the topic sentences of each paragraph.
   • Look for words, phrases, or sentences that show the relationships between pieces of information and between paragraphs (e.g. therefore, because, in addition, in contrast etc.). Are the relationships made clear? Will the reader understand? Do you need to improve the clarity?
   • Identify supporting evidence. Is it sufficiently supportive? Is the information referenced correctly?
   • Is there any unnecessary information that does not contribute to the message or argument?

7. Revise, edit and proof-read.
   Edit for organisation and meaning:
   • The introduction.
     Is it obvious which sentence is the thesis statement?
     Will the reader be able to identify the topic?
   • The body.
     Have you used key words and concepts appropriate to the essay question and the discipline?
     Is the information presented in a logical order that makes it easy for the argument to be followed?
     Have you engaged critically with the resources you have read?
   • The conclusion.
     Has the thesis statement been rephrased?
     Are all the main ideas summarised?
     Ensure there is no new information in the conclusion. There should be no references in the conclusion.
   Proof-read for surface errors: for grammatical errors, for punctuation errors, and for spelling errors.