Outcomes

Revise:

- what an essay is and the different types of essays
- the general structure and style of essays
- how to write an essay
What is an essay?

An essay is an extended piece of writing that presents an argument or arguments for a particular position on a topic. The position is outlined in the thesis statement, found in the introduction of the text, and must be supported by current theory and research, and by logic.

Why write essays?

An essay is an opportunity to demonstrate your ability to:

- follow instructions,
- search for and select appropriate resources,
- read widely,
- analyse and critically evaluate what you read,
- explore and consolidate what you are learning,
- organise your thinking,
- work to deadlines, and
- communicate effectively in writing.

All of these skills are valued by employers and will benefit you as a practising professional.

Essays are different from Reports


**Essays**
- Present arguments
- Need to be read in their entirety
  - there are usually no headings and sub-headings
- Contain longer, connected paragraphs
- Rarely make recommendations

**Reports**
- Present information
  - often in tabular or graphical form
- Can be scanned quickly and out of order
  - headings and sub-headings make this possible
- Contain short, concise paragraphs and in some cases dot points
- May make recommendations
There are different types of essays

There are many different types of essays:

- argumentative,
- descriptive,
- analytical,
- exploratory,
- review, and so on.

The assessment question and task instructions determine the type of essay you will write.
Essay Structure

The content of an essay depends on the type of essay that is to be written, but all essays have the following structure:


- **Introduction**
  - contains the thesis statement

- **Body**
  - the content
  - presents the arguments for the thesis statement in detail and with support

- **Conclusion**
  - paraphrases the thesis statement
  - summarises the research that supports it

- **References**
  - the end-text references must match the in-text references
Essay Structure/Model

- move cursor over image -

general statement

introductory paragraph

state thesis

middle paragraphs

premise 1

premise 2

premise 3

concluding paragraph

restate thesis

general statement

argument
Writing your essay

There are 7 steps for writing a successful essay:

1. Analyse the essay question.

2. Write a draft thesis statement.
   This may require some brainstorming and/or preliminary reading.

3. Make a plan – a map for your essay.

4. Search for and select appropriate resources.

5. Read and take notes. Select and organise notes to support the thesis statement.

6. Write and revise the introduction, body and conclusion of the essay.
   Use separate paragraphs to develop each argument or point that supports your thesis statement.

7. Edit and proof-read.
Step 1

What type of essay are you required to write?
What is the topic?

Analyse the assessment question and carefully read the task instructions.

Identify the task words, the content words and the limiting words.

Example

Identify the task words, the content words and the limiting words in the following question:

While most university courses require students to write essays as part of their assessment, graduates are never required to write essays in the workplace.

In an essay of 500 words, discuss the validity of setting essay assignments as a component of student assessment at university.

Discuss means to examine, giving the details and the points for and against. You must develop a logical argument backed by sound evidence.
Step 2

- Brainstorm the topic
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZJj6DwCqSU

- Draft an initial thesis statement
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4sx42_C10zw

- Select some key terms to use for searching the library databases suitable to your discipline.
Step 3

- Write an outline or map for your essay.
- Include your draft thesis statement.
- Indicate what information will go where.

Write an outline or essay map for the following question:

While most university courses require students to write essays as part of their assessment, graduates are never required to write essays in the workplace.

In an essay of 500 words, discuss the validity of setting essay assignments as a component of student assessment at university.
Step 4

Search for and select appropriate resources.

Familiarise yourself with the library home page and the databases most suitable to your discipline.
Step 5

Read and take notes.

Plan how you are going to take notes. Do it in an organised way that enables you to take notes from a variety of resources on the same point and collect the referencing details.
Step 6

Write and revise.

Begin with the provisional thesis statement.
Write a preliminary introduction.
Write the body. Include in-text references as you go.
Revise the body.
Revise the introduction.
Write the conclusion.
Step 7

Edit and proof-read.

Edit for meaning and organisation.

Proof-read for surface errors: grammar, punctuation, spelling.
Academic Style

Academic style:

- is clear and concise
  - position has meaning (in most instances, place your subject up front)
  - avoid any unnecessary words, make every one count

- uses active voice when possible

https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=CNGBqXQGb7c

- is objective
  - avoid personal pronouns

- uses full sentences with correct grammar and spelling

- is organised into paragraphs
  - each develop a single idea
  - presented in a logical sequence

- contains accurate referencing
Formatting

- Separate title page
- Separate References page

*Read your task instructions carefully.* Ask questions of your tutor, lecturer, or unit coordinator to clarify any instructions that are not clear.
Summary

- An essay is an extended piece of text that argues a position on a subject.
- An essay is composed of well-structured paragraphs: an introduction, body paragraphs presented in a logical order and a conclusion.
- A thesis statement in the introduction controls the content of the body of the text.
- A concept map will help you realise what you know and understand already. It will help you write a draft thesis statement and an essay outline or plan.
- Plan your essay before searching for resources, reading and taking notes.
- Take notes in an organised way and include references with your notes.
- Write a draft, revise, edit and proof-read in order to submit your best draft.