

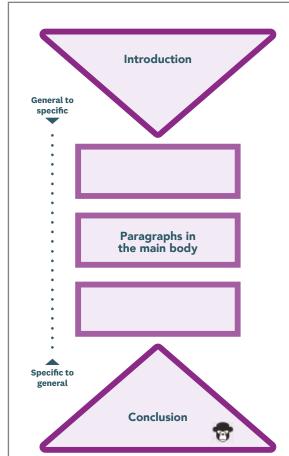
ESSAY STRUCTURE

When you are ready to start writing your assignment (because you have started the research into the subject you are writing about including thinking, reading and discussing), you can start to think about how you will put your argument across to the reader. The clearer your writing is the easier it is for your reader to understand you. As well as your grammar and tone, how you structure your essay is an important consideration. Different types of assignment may have different structures but nearly always a written report will have

To write an effective essay, you need:

- An introduction: this will give the reader an idea of what your essay is discussing
- A main body: this usually takes the form of several paragraphs, each looking at a key point that you want to
 make. This is where you show your research and background reading by including other people's ideas and
 interpretations of the subject
- A conclusion: this gives the reader an overview of your argument and summarises what you have covered in the essay

NB Always check your module guidelines for specific detail on how to structure your assignment pieces.



Introduction

This section sets out what you were going to tell the reader and also describes the way that it is set out. Having an interesting sentence to open it can be useful as well as giving an interesting piece of information or a quotation. Avoid rhetorical questions — if you ask a question here you must answer it. Also, it may be appropriate to give context.

Main body

Decide how you will structure the main part of your essay – will it be by theme, critical incident, or a specific outcome? Is there a narrative or a chronology that will provide the thread to lead the reader through? Start each paragraph with a topic sentence – this describes what your paragraph is about. You can use the PECTA model to structure each paragraph – point, evidence, critical thinking and argument. Make your last sentence a concluding one or transition statement (helping to link to the next paragraph or section).

Conclusion

Write a transition sentence, to make the shift from the main body to the summing up. Sum up all your main points again, but don't just repeat what you said, use a different vocabulary. Include a final reflection of what you have learnt and what you will take forward from this. A critical reflection of your own viewpoint may be appropriate here. Make a universal statement on your essay to help the reader connect with your main points.

Additional Help

There are some models and tips that can help with academic writing such as the PECTA and PEEL paragraph structures, the Quotation Sandwich, and the Harvard Referencing Guide. See https://www.musostudy.com/top-tips/ for more.