

Essay Writing: 6 steps to success

Introduction

Essays are a common form of written assessment at university. They are a structured response to a question or proposition that uses scholarly evidence to justify a perspective. When writing an essay, consider your process to ensure you write a strong, reasoned and evidence-based response.

The Essay Writing Process

This diagram represents the writing process for an essay but can be adapted to other forms of written assessment.



Understanding the essay writing process

1. Task Analysis:

Read all your assessment materials, including the task and criteria sheets. What you are being asked to write about? How long does your paper need to be? What level of research is required? Identify the task words like discuss, explain, analyse, evaluate, as these will assist you to understand how you should frame your response. For more information on [task words](#) refer to our table in the *Academic Success* eBook available via your Studydesk.

2. Brainstorm:

Break down your assessment question. [Brainstorm](#) possible responses based on what you already know about the topic.

3. Conduct research:

Do background reading to gain a general understanding of the topic. Keep focused by targeting your research using key words from your assessment question.

4. Plan your paper:

Create a plan that outlines what your paper will cover. This may include a draft introduction, bullet points for each section to the body of your essay based around 1 key topic or issue, and a draft conclusion.

5. Write a draft:

Write a full first draft using your plan as a guide. This will ensure your essay is logical and ordered. The What is an essay resource has more information on essay structure.

6. Editing and re-drafting your work:

Don't submit your first draft, re-read and edit your work. Don't be afraid to re-write material, move sections around, or add more evidence. Proofread your work for errors.

N.B: The writing process is iterative. You may need to return to previous steps in this essay preparation process, for example after the planning step, you may decide you need more evidence so you would return to the research step.



Further support

Contact your student learning advisors via the Support for Learning team here:

supportforlearning@unisq.edu.au

Ph: +07 4631 2372