

Essay checklist

Introduction:

- Do you clearly state your main point (thesis statement)?
- Does your thesis statement answer the essay question?
- Do you clearly show the direction/plan of the essay (what you are going to cover or focus on)?
- Is the Introduction of suitable length (around 10-15% of your essay word count)?

Body:

- Does every paragraph have a topic sentence (usually the first sentence of the paragraph), where you clearly state the main idea of the paragraph?
- Is the main idea of every paragraph relevant to the essay question?
- Do you support your points with evidence? Do you provide examples?
- Do you analyse your points, rather than just present or describe them?
- Do you use quotations/paraphrase only to *support* your own points, rather than to *make* your points?
- Do you use a mixture of direct quotations and paraphrase to incorporate your reading material into the essay?
- Do paragraphs logically follow each other?
- Do you cite all the borrowed information (either as in-text citation or footnotes/endnotes)?
- Are any of your paragraphs too short or too long?

Conclusion:

- Do you restate the thesis/ main ideas mentioned in the Introduction?
- Do you briefly summarise the main argument and conclusions/results of your research?
- Do you make connections with the wider context?

Overall structure and style:

- Do your paragraphs flow logically and smoothly?
- Do you use transitions (however, therefore, as a result, for instance, additionally...) to make logical connections between sentences and paragraphs?
- Is your tone confident? Did you minimise the use of hedge words (possibly, perhaps, it seems, it appears...) so they do not weaken your argument?
- Are your sentences clear, grammatically correct and to the point?
- Did you check your essay for typos and spelling mistakes?
- Did you keep to your word limit?

Referencing:

- Did you check with your School which referencing style should be used?
- Do you cite everything you borrowed from someone else, whether you quote their ideas directly or summarise/paraphrase?
- Do you always reference twice: once in the body of the essay, once at the end of the essay in your Reference List/ Works Cited / Bibliography?
- Do you use reliable sources, such as peer-reviewed articles (not Wikipedia, Cliffsnotes etc.)?