Essay Checklist

Study Development Factsheet

Use this checklist alongside the Guide to Essay Writing factsheet to make sure your assignment is ready for submission.

## Structure

* Have you answered every part of the question? Check the assignment instructions!
* Does your essay stay focussed on the question and have a clear argument?
* Do you address the relevant learning objectives?
* Does your essay have a logical progression, with every paragraph following on from the last?

## Introduction

* Is there a thesis statement (a statement of the main point of your essay)?
* Does your thesis statement directly address the question?
* Have you included a brief essay ‘map’, describing how the essay is structured?

## Body Paragraphs

* Does every paragraph stick to a clear topic? Each paragraph should only cover one main point.
* Does the first sentence of each paragraph (topic sentence) clearly introduce your new point?
* Are the important concepts discussed clearly?
* Does the evidence provide relevant and credible support?
* Do the sentences flow coherently or have you wedged some ill-fitting concepts side by side?

## Conclusion

* Have you given a brief summary of the main points?
* Have you expressed a point of view that responds directly to the question asked?
* Does your conclusion follow logically from the body of your essay, and mirror your introduction?
* Have you avoided introducing any new information?

## Referencing

* Have you used a range of academic sources to back up your work?
* Have you stayed faithful to the authors’ original meaning, and not taken their ideas out of context?
* Have you distinguished between fact and opinion in referring to your sources?
* Have you cited your sources accurately? (Check out ‘reference guides’ on the library website)
* Is your reference list or bibliography correct? (Check out ‘reference guides’ on the library website)

## Style & Genre

* Have you used the correct genre: report, essay, reflection, etc.?
* Have you used formal language, writing words in full and avoiding contractions such as ‘don’t?
* Have you used the terminology of your discipline appropriately?
* Have you used appropriate evidence for your discipline?
* Is there any repetition?
* Are your sentences clear and concise?
* Have you cut out anything unnecessary?

## Presentation

* Have you followed the presentation instructions in your module handbook? Check to make sure!
* Unless otherwise stated, use 1.5 spacing, size 12 font, and set adequate margins.
* Have you stayed within the word limit?
* Have you saved a copy, made a back-up and printed an extra copy for proofreading?
* Have you checked your spelling?
* Have you checked your grammar (perhaps using TextHelp)?

**Finally, look at the marking criteria. What grade would you give yourself? Ready to submit? Good!**

**Support**: Study Development offers workshops, short courses, 1 to 1 and small group tutorials.

* Join a tutorial or workshop on the [Study Development tutorial and workshop webpage](https://www.yorksj.ac.uk/students/study-skills/study-development-tutorials/) or search ‘YSJ study development tutorials.’
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