



# Essay: Education example

## Example of an Introduction

**University education should not be free. Discuss.**

**Background**

Establishes  
the context

In the current Australian Higher Education (HE) sector, while students have access to government financial support through Study Assist (Department of Education 2013), many are expected to repay their debts once in the workforce. This is in direct contrast to the fee-free education system which existed during the Whitlam years. In the present climate of diversity and equity, it could be argued that the fee-free system should be reinstated to increase student numbers and widen participation in the Australian tertiary sector. However, there

**Position**

The  
argument  
you are  
presenting  
in the essay

are a number of factors which suggest that the existing system of educational funding is much more beneficial and realistic than a wholly government-funded scheme. Social factors and financial values in particular are discussed in this paper to illustrate the advantageous implications of upholding student fees within the Australian HE context.

**Issue**

The issue in  
relation to the  
context

**Scope**

The ideas  
which will be  
developed in  
the body and  
in what order

## An example of a body paragraph

### Support

These sentences include evidence and/or examples to support the ideas which the writer presents.

**Note:** all ideas in this paragraph are relevant to the topic sentence and to the essay topic.

### Closing statement

This sentence indicates that the writer will move on to a new paragraph and new focus.

To begin with, it may be assumed that the predominant factor influencing a student's choice to enrol at university is financial circumstance. Dobson and Birrell (1996, p. 81) argue that this is particularly valid for students who are financially disadvantaged. If true, a free university education system might encourage a greater number of individuals from lower socio-economic groups to enrol, and thus increase student numbers across the HE sector. However, evidence suggests otherwise. For example, with the introduction of HECS in 1989, where studying went from being free to accruing a cost, student numbers did not essentially decline; instead, they continued to grow (Andrews 1997, p. 4). This implies that enrolment numbers had not necessarily been affected by the re-introduction of student fees. Furthermore, other studies have indicated that factors which are not cost-related can encourage or even discourage students to enrol. According to Birrell et. al (2000, p. 51), such factors include peer pressure, family support, the perceived value of tertiary education and, inevitably, the state of the labour market. With this in mind, it is highly unlikely that the re-introduction of a free education will increase participation alone. Other factors such as social, family and general perception can motivate or demotivate individuals to study at tertiary level.

### Topic Sentence

The first sentence introduces the focus: influence of **financial circumstance** on uni enrolment.

### Development

These sentences develop the idea introduced in the topic sentence.

**Note:** the writer looks at both sides of the argument in this paragraph. This is because the essay instruction is to 'discuss' the topic.

## An example of a conclusion

In summary, while the notion of a free university system seems ideal, it is not realistic nor necessarily beneficial to the student or the institution as a whole. As mentioned, student motivation to study at tertiary level is more likely to be influenced by social rather than financial factors. In addition, students learn the values of saving and budgeting if they are required to pay for their studies. It is also noted that the current co-payment system in place, provides not only students with alternative payment options, but also provides the education sector with funding which would not exist otherwise. A fee-paying university system is therefore vital to the growth and development of society at large.

### Topic Sentence

This sentence clearly shows that this paragraph is a conclusion by starting with 'In summary'. It also restates the writer's position (response to the essay question)

### Summary of ideas presented

- from body paragraph 1 (i.e. social factors' role in motivation to study)
- from body paragraph 2 (i.e. learning to budget)
- from body paragraph 3 (i.e. funding to the education sector)

### Conclusive statement

This final sentence shows the writer's overall argument that university education should not be free

### Essay example adapted from:

Belmont W & Sharkey M, 2006, *The Easy Writer: formal writing for academic purposes*, Pearson Education Australia, NSW, pp311-319.

## References

Include a reference list at the end of your essay on a new page entitled **References**. Check your course outline to identify the referencing system you need to use. This Essay example uses the **Harvard Referencing System** (For guidance on referencing, visit: [www.unisa.edu.au/Referencing](http://www.unisa.edu.au/Referencing)).

### Example of reference list

#### Note the following:

Alphabetical order

Single line spacing

A space between each reference

Full bibliographic details

Specific formatting  
(spacing, use of  
punctuation, font style, etc)

#### References

Andrew, L 1997, *The effects of HECS on interest in undertaking higher education*, Australian Publishing Service, Canberra, Australia.

Birrell, B, Calderon, A, Dobson, I, & Smith, T 2000, 'Equity in access to higher education revisited', *People and Place*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 50-60.

Department of Education 2013, *Study Assist*, Department of Education, Australian Government, viewed 21 April 2014, <<http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/StudyAssist/>> .

Dobson, I, & Birrell, B 1996, 'The impact of proposed changes to Austudy eligibility on higher education students', *People and place*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 81-84.