



Essay writing checklist

Refer to the assignment task and instructions

Check that:

- you understand the task and the approach you need to take
- you have followed instructions about format and structure
- you have developed a clear and relevant argument
- you have used references which are relevant and appropriate
- you have included sufficient references as per the task instructions

Update your essay plan

Refer to your initial plan and any feedback you may have received to update your approach if required.

Check that your revised essay plan includes:

- an overview of what will be included in the introduction, body paragraphs and conclusion
- paraphrased ideas from credible sources to support your argument
- in-text references to acknowledge other people's ideas
- a reference list with full bibliographic details of all sources referenced in the body of your writing.

Draft your introduction

Check that your introduction:

- provides context to the topic
- introduces the central idea and your overall argument
- includes the scope of the essay (how the ideas will be developed and ordered in the body)

Tip: As the introduction is an overview of the essay, you might wait until you have completed the body section before you finalise it. Make sure your introduction reflects what is covered in the body.

Write your body paragraphs

Check that your body paragraphs:

- are well-structured (i.e. topic sentence to introduce the idea, idea is developed, supported, and closed)
- each develop, expand on and explain one relevant idea
- include sufficient and credible references to support the ideas
- include appropriately formatted in-text references
- use linking words and phrases to make ideas flow from one sentence to the next.

Write your conclusion

Check that your conclusion:

- summarises the ideas which were developed in the body
- restates your overall argument which was stated in the introduction
- does not include new ideas
- repositions your argument within the broader context of the topic.

Complete your reference list

- Check your formatting by using the [Harvard UniSA Referencing guide](#) (full pdf guide), [Referencing Roadmap](#) (online) or the [Reference list \(Harvard UniSA\) quick guide](#) (pdf).
- If you are required to use a different referencing style, you can find resources in the [Other referencing styles](#) module on the [Referencing](#) website.