

Conclusion: Your conclusion is the final paragraph of writing in an assignment. It must summarise (very briefly) every important idea you have discussed in your work, as well as draw conclusions based upon the evidence you have presented. You need to make sure that you have directly answered the question. It is always useful to link your conclusions back to the essay title.

- Summarise each of your points in the order in which you have presented them...
- State your main conclusions based upon the evidence you have presented...
- Link your conclusions back to the title – make sure you have directly answered the question and that your reader finishes your essay with a clear sense of your viewpoint on the topic (you must do this without saying 'I').

Useful References

Cotterell, S (2008) *The Study Skills Handbook*, 3rd Edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pages 147-152

Price, G & Maller, P (2007) *Effective Study Skills: Unlock Your Potential*. London, Pearson Educational. Pages 258-259

Wilson, E & Bedford, D (2009) *Study Skills for Part-time Students* Harlow: Prentice Hall

Smith, P (2009) *How To Write An Assignment, proven techniques from a chief examiner that really gets results* Oxford: How to books Ltd

Shiach, D (2009) *How To Write Essays A step-by-step guide for all levels, with sample essays* 2nd Edition. Oxford: How to books Ltd

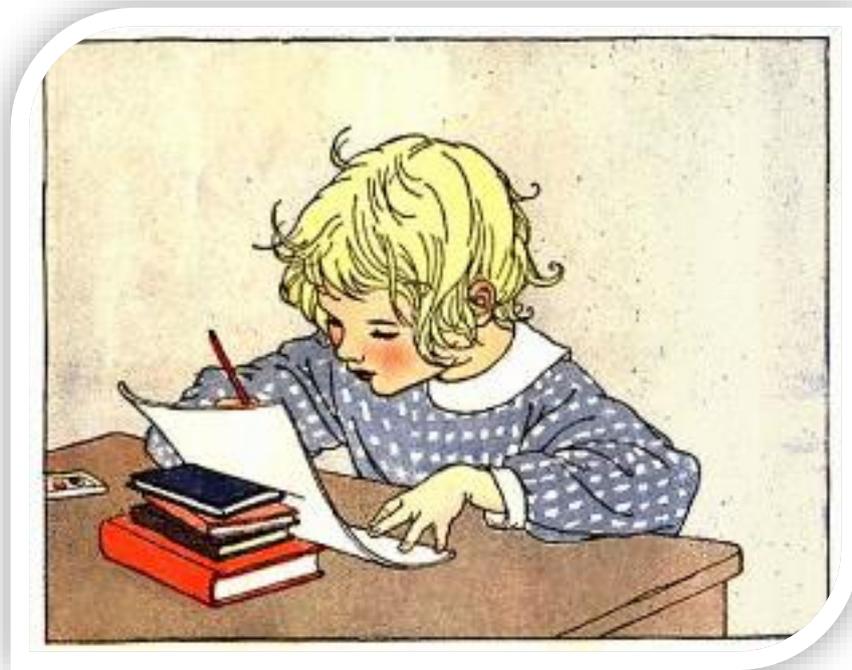
Useful Websites

Planning Essays and assignments. (2008) University of Southampton
http://www.studyskills.soton.ac.uk/studytips/plan_essay.htm

Planning your assignments (2015) Leeds University
<http://library.leeds.ac.uk/skills-planning>

Assignment Survival Kit

Planning Your Assignment



Library

Contact us on: all_library_staff@hughbaird.ac.uk

The Purpose of Assignments

Assignments are set so you can display your knowledge and understanding.

They may have different formats depending on the subject. If you have been given a format to follow make sure you follow it as closely as you can.

Your tutor would like to see:

- Clear English
- Your ability to answer the question
- Evidence of you reading round the subject i.e.
 - don't just parrot information from one lecture or one course book
- Your use of evidence to back up each stage of your argument
- That you have thought about the evidence and theories you are writing about and treat them objectively and critically
- That you are able to discuss issues and ideas that relate to the question
- That you can demonstrate your understanding of those issues and ideas
- That you can reference effectively. Showing that you know who said what and when, where, why and how
- Analysis not description
- Precision not generalisation
- Evidence of proof reading i.e.
 - don't hand in work that's full of grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes.
- Evidence of editing i.e.
 - is your material in the best possible order?
 - Are your words really saying what you want to say?
- That you can demonstrate transferable skills such as:
 - Time management
 - Presentation
 - Computer skills

The Stages of Essay Writing

Groundwork	What?	Why?
	Deadline date, time and place to hand it in.	So you can plan stages of the essay to manage your time and workload effectively to avoid an <i>'all-nighter'</i> or <i>last-minute panic</i> .
	Word count or number of pages	This limits the amount of research done to what you can actually use. This <i>saves wasted effort</i> .
	Format/structure	The tutor likes it done this way; s/he thought of it and if you follow this it <i>should address all the learning outcomes</i> . It would be best to follow it.
	Percent worth	<i>This limits effort made, to that required.</i>
	Learning/knowledge/ Professional outcomes	Often these give you great starting points and suggest important areas you may have missed. Many courses are designed to <i>train you up</i> to in the <i>expectations of your future career</i> .
	Academic criteria	So that you demonstrate research done (theory) and apply this (by giving examples/linking it to practice). Also, that you can use and acknowledge a range of views by <i>referencing correctly</i>
Research	Analyse the question	In order to answer the question you first need to understand what you are being asked to do.
Essay Structure	Introduction: An effective introduction will have 3 aspects to it.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information your reader needs to know 2. What you are going to do and how you are going to do it 3. Say what you are going to argue, if applicable
	Middle: The main body should be written as a series of paragraphs. It's better to discuss fewer ideas in more depth, building your argument by putting your ideas in a sequence to make a persuasive argument. One main point in each paragraph.	Each paragraph should; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contain one main idea or argument • The first sentence(s) outline what the paragraph is about. • Then provide evidence to support that main idea. You might use data, facts, quotations, arguments, statistics, research, etc. from your readings as evidence. If you don't have any evidence to support a point, do not include it! • The concluding sentence of the paragraph should explain how and why this evidence is significant to the overall argument or idea, and link to the next paragraph, if taking the argument or idea further.