

## How do you structure an academic essay?

An academic essay contains three main sections: an introduction, body paragraphs and a conclusion.

The essay you write will answer the essay question you have been given in a test, an assignment or an exam.

### Note

Structuring your essay is **one** part of the process of writing your essay. **Before** you write your essay structure you need to:

Deconstruct the essay question



Write key words and phrases to locate sources



Find, organise and evaluate quality sources



Plan your essay and create the structure

The table below gives the key features that are present in each section of the essay.

Sections	Key Features
<b>Introduction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General statement on the subject/topic</li> <li>• Statement of the perspective/ viewpoint (thesis statement)</li> <li>• Brief summary of what you are going to present)</li> </ul>
<b>Body</b>  <b>Paragraphs</b>  Presentation of discussion/argument Paragraph by paragraph	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>P</b> Main idea (topic sentence) <b>E</b> Explanation/elaborate <b>E</b> Evidence/ supporting details <b>L</b> Concluding sentence</li> <li>2. <b>P</b> Main idea ( topic sentence) <b>E</b> Explanation/elaborate <b>E</b> Evidence supporting details <b>L</b> Concluding sentence</li> <li>3. <b>P</b> Main idea (Repeat as for paragraphs 1 and 2)</li> </ol> <p><b>NOTE – Each main idea must link to the viewpoint/ thesis statement in the introduction.</b></p>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary of the main points</li> <li>• Final comment</li> </ul>

Explain how you interpret question and indicate your perspective

Say what you are going to write about and in what order. Roadmap

Each paragraph will have a different topic sentence

Each paragraph will link to the thesis statement and contribute to the overall answer

Each paragraph is just one in a series of paragraphs which together answer the question

Use PEEL for your paragraphs P= point, E= explain, E = example/evidence, L = link to question

Don't add any new material to the conclusion

See the link below for a structured essay sample and some practice activities.

<http://www.monash.edu.au/lis/lionline/writing/general/essay/sample-essay/2.xml>

### **Key tip**

The thesis statement is central to your essay

The thesis statement is usually found in the introduction or introductory paragraphs and is a response to the assignment question. It indicates your perspective or position on the question. It can be just one sentence in length.

The paragraphs in your essay relate to the thesis statement. Each paragraph contributes to the overall argument which answers the thesis statement.

If you want to know more try the links below

<http://owll.massey.ac.nz/assignment-types/essay-thesis-statement.php>

<https://airport.unimelb.edu.au/gate2/writing/types/essay/thesis.php>