Essay Writing

We wanted to keep this information **brief** and **basic** but provide links to **good websites** that will expand your knowledge and, hopefully, build your confidence in essay writing. Like a lot of things, the more essays you write and the more you get involved in the subjects you are studying, the more you develop your essay writing skills. Practice, practice practice.

Essay Content and Process

Subject	Content
Title/Subject	Make sure you understand the question. DOUBLE check this if uncertain. Above all else you must answer the question. given a choice of subject, choose something you are interested in and want to explore. Your interest will shine through in how you write and make your essay more interesting.
Introduction	Keep it brief and to the point. Introduce the subject you are going to discuss and an outline of how you are going to do that. EG you could start with a definition of the main subjects covered.
Main body of the essay	This is where you develop your ideas and demonstrate your understanding of the subject. This should be broken down into paragraphs that look at different aspects of the subject in a logical and progressive manner. Always think about who is reading your essay and if you are explaining with enough detail and reference. Make sure you are always answering the question and keep focused and to the point.
Conclusion	Keep it short. As the name suggest, this is where you summarise or draw a conclusion from your arguments and discussion you have made.
References	When writing at college, especially as you progress to higher qualifications, you must include a reference list or bibliography at the end of your essay. Separate support information to referencing skills are also available.

Process

plan	This part is critical and worth spending a bit of time on. Make sure you understand the question. Discuss any doubts with your lecturer. Brainstorm the subject area (mindmaps, spidergraphs can be useful for this) List key terms and ideas – the main points that need to be included. Appreciate your time scale and word limits. And organise your time accordingly.
research	Where are you going to get the information from? What type of research is required. Check your course notes, is there a reading list. Or references in any information you have been given. Stay focussed on your main points/ideas when using search engines, eg Google Scholar. Are there specific databases covering your research area which you should be using? The college library and staff will be a great source of support, so use their knowledge, this could also save time and energy. Make sure you note where you take information from as you work.
First draft	Nothing worse than a blank page. Stick to the plan, use the structure you have already thought through and get your ideas down on paper/computer. Present your information in a logical sequential manner, broken down into paragraphs It's easier to refine your thoughts once you have a first draft.
Redraft/edit	Give yourself a **short** break and come back to your essay as a critical reader. Most essays can be improved on a second reading. Are you answering the question, should you change the emphasis, language? If you can get someone else to read it. A fresh pair of eyes and perspective can be invaluable.
Submit.	Make sure you know how the lecturer wants the essay submitted. Double check your word count and submission date. If using in Turnitin, give yourself time to make some changes.
Reflect	Always a good idea to reflect and learn from feedback from your lecturers

Further Reading

GOOD WEBSITES:

[Skills You Need – Essay Writing](#) Good, straight forward information which will expand on the information above. Worth looking at.

[Open University Essay and Report Writing Skills - FREE course requires time commitment.](#)

Watch a video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liyFKUFCQno

Library/Learning Centre

[Books Available from the College library](#)

Ebooks

[The Study skills Handbook 5th Edition](#) You will need to use your Office 365 Login details to access this by clicking on 'Open Athens'.