

### STEP 1

#### PLAN AND PREPARE

- [Analyse the assignment task](#) carefully and read the marking criteria. Clarify any points with your educator.
- Brainstorm your initial ideas in a mind map and use this to inform your research and create a [plan](#).

### STEP 2

#### RESEARCH AND TAKE NOTES

This is often the most time-consuming stage of completing your essay.

- Search for relevant sources via the [Library](#). See the [Library guides](#).
- Keep a record of your quotes, paraphrased content and your own ideas. Avoid plagiarism by noting full bibliographic information and page numbers for [quotes and paraphrases](#).
- [Read](#) and [take effective notes](#). Take notes under headings related to the essay question.

### STEP 3

#### REVIEW YOUR PLAN AND WRITE YOUR FIRST DRAFT

- Review your mindmap; has your position changed? If so this is ok. Sometimes after conducting research we may discover new information.
- Decide what points you will make to support your position and use them to [plan your body paragraphs](#)
  - Look at the evidence you have collected how can it be organised together. For example: if you were writing an essay on the impacts of drugs you might group together economic factors and then social factors. You can include counter arguments, this is where you present arguments against your own and then point out the reasons they are wrong.
  - Check your final plan against the question to make sure all your paragraphs are on topic and support your position.
- Use [academic writing](#) and include [paragraphs](#) that include topic sentences and supporting evidence to write your essay one paragraph at time.

### STEP 4

#### REVISE AND RE-DRAFT

- Look at our guides on creating [Paragraphs that Pop](#) and [Sensational Sentences](#)
- Check the [referencing guide](#) to make sure you have referenced everything correctly.
- Format the assignment correctly. Refer to the [presentation checklist](#).

### STEP 5

#### PROOFREAD AND SUBMIT

- Look at our guide on [proofreading](#)
- Submit your essay to [Smarthinking](#) or [Grammarly](#) at least 48 hours prior to the submission deadline for feedback on your structure, spelling and grammar.
- Submit your essay

## Essay Structure

## Example Plan

1. Background to the topic	The war on drugs represents a zero-tolerance approach with a focus on eradicating the manufacturing, supply and use of illicit substances through criminal punishment and incarceration. Billions of dollars of resources and tax payer's money have been spent trying to win the war on drugs with little to no effect on reduction of use or supply. This costly approach has failed to reduce the rate of drug use, the availability of drugs and the burden on the prison system. Increased harm reduction and decriminalisation strategies are more effective approaches for dealing with illicit drugs within society and should be adopted.
<b>Main Point 1:</b>  OR if needed: The background/context	<b>The war on drugs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Brief explanation and context</li><li>• Facts to support</li></ul>
<b>Main Point 2:</b> Topic sentence <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain/Evidence</li><li>• Link</li></ul>	<b>The war on drugs has failed to reduce the rate of drug use</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evidence/examples to support</li></ul>
<b>Main Point 3:</b> Topic sentence <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain/Evidence</li><li>• Link</li></ul>	<b>The war on drugs has failed to reduce the availability of drugs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evidence/ examples to support</li></ul>
<b>Main point 4:</b> Topic sentence <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain/Evidence</li><li>• Link</li></ul>	<b>The war on drugs has failed to reduce the burden on the prison system</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evidence/examples to support</li></ul>
<b>Main Point 5:</b> Topic sentence <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain/Evidence</li><li>• Link</li></ul>	<b>Increased harm reduction and decriminalisation strategies are more effective methods to combat drug use and addiction.</b>  Evidence/examples to support
<b>Conclusion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summarise main ideas / argument</li><li>• Do not introduce any new ideas/ facts</li></ul>	<b>Conclusion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summarise main ideas / argument</li><li>• Do not introduce any new ideas/ facts</li></ul>