**Essay planner**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | plan and prepare |
| **step 1** | * [Analyse the assignment task](https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/approaching-question-0) 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](https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/preparing-plan-writing-or-presenting-0). |
|
|  | research and take notes |
| **step 2** | This is often the most time-consuming stage of completing your essay.   * Search for relevant sources via the [Library](http://libguides.navitas.com/information_skills/online). See the [Library guides.](http://libguides.navitas.com/criminology) * 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](https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/reading-and-note-taking) and [take effective notes](https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/note-taking-2) . Take notes under headings related to the essay question. |
|
|  | Review your plan and write your first draft |
| **step 3** | * Review your mind map; has your position changed? If so, this is ok. Sometimes after conducting research we may discover new information. Update your plan if needed. * Decide what points you will make to support your position using the scaffold below to help [plan your body paragraphs.](https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/paragraphing-0)   + 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 reasons why they are wrong.   + Check your final plan against the question to make sure all your paragraphs are on topic and support your position.   + Use your scaffold notes to write your first draft. * Use [academic writing](https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/academic-writing-0) and include [paragraphs](https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/paragraphing-0) that include topic sentences and supporting evidence to write your essay one paragraph at time. |
|
|  | revise and re-draft |
| **step 4** | * Look at our guides on creating [Paragraphs that Pop](https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/paragraphs-pop-webinar) and [Sensational Sentences](https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/sensational-sentences-webinar). * Check the [referencing guide](http://libguides.navitas.com/harvard)to make sure you have referenced everything correctly. * Make sure your [essay flows and has cohesion](https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/cohesion-linking-ideas-1). * Format the assignment correctly. Refer to the [presentation checklist.](https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/effective-speechmaking-and-presentations-2) |
|
|  | proofread and submit |
| **step 5** | * Look at our guide on [proofreading](https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/editing-and-proofreading-0) . * Submit your essay to [Smarthinking](http://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/smarthinking) or [Grammarly](https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/grammarly) at least 48 hours prior to the submission deadline for feedback on your structure, spelling and grammar. * Submit your essay. |
|

**Essay Scaffold**

| **Paragraph Elements**  **(Each paragraph should contain bulleted elements listed)** | **Enter notes for each paragraph (dot points)** | **Word Allocation** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Introduction**   * Introductory sentence * Background to topic * Thesis statement * Main points to be explored in the paper (essay outline) |  | (5-10% of word count) |
| **Body paragraph 1**   * Topic sentence (in your own words, not a quote or paraphrase) * Support with academic reference (x 2 minimum) * Link to theory * Elaborate point / Analysis * Example (if relevant) * Concluding sentence * Link to main idea of next paragraph (if possible)   (Avoid finishing paragraphs with a reference) |  |  |
| **Body paragraph 2**   * Topic sentence (in your own words, not a quote or paraphrase) * Support with academic reference (x 2 minimum) * Link to theory * Elaborate point / Analysis * Example (if relevant) * Concluding sentence * Link to main idea of next paragraph (if possible)   (Avoid finishing paragraphs with a reference) |  |  |
| **Body paragraph 3**   * Topic sentence (in your own words, not a quote or paraphrase) * Support with academic reference (x 2 minimum) * Link to theory * Elaborate point / Analysis * Example (if relevant) * Concluding sentence * Link to main idea of next paragraph (if possible)   (Avoid finishing paragraphs with a reference) |  |  |
| **Body paragraph 4**   * Topic sentence (in your own words, not a quote or paraphrase) * Support with academic reference (x 2 minimum) * Link to theory * Elaborate point / Analysis * Example (if relevant) * Concluding sentence * Link to main idea of next paragraph (if possible)   (Avoid finishing paragraphs with a reference) |  |  |
| **Body paragraph 5**   * Topic sentence (in your own words, not a quote or paraphrase) * Support with academic reference (x 2 minimum) * Link to theory * Elaborate point / Analysis * Example (if relevant) * Concluding sentence * Link to main idea of next paragraph (if possible)   (Avoid finishing paragraphs with a reference) |  |  |
| **Repeat above structure for as many Body paragraphs needed, depending on the word count and the marking criteria.** | | |
| **Conclusion**   * Summary of main points * Restate thesis statement * **Ensure you have answered the assignment question** * Final comment (always end with your own words, not a quote or paraphrase) |  | (5-10% of word count) |