
ANALYSING A POLICY DOCUMENT



SLS WEBINAR PROGRAM

Student Learning Support

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia, on the land wherever you may be joining us from and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, and culture.

We pay our respects to all elders past and present.

We recognise those whose ongoing effort to protect and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures will leave a lasting legacy for all future Australians.



WEBINAR GOALS

During this webinar you will learn:

1. to recognise a policy document.
2. to understand the assessment POLICY ANALYSIS question.
3. to create a scaffold for your assessment which addresses the question.


WHAT IS A POLICY?

How do you know if a source is a policy document?

- Formal document
- Rules are binding
- Usually published by a public or government organisation
- May set out purpose, definitions, scope, responsibilities, methods or behaviours
- Strategy, planning, standards, requirements, code of conduct and agreement documents MAY be policy documents in disguise or overlap with much of the content.



WHERE CAN I FIND A POLICY?

- Your unit may have the Library Pathfinder links:
<https://libguides.navitas.com/pathfinders>
- You can find authentic government policies online. 
- Look at authentic social policy briefing papers.
- Analyse the content, structure and writing style to inform section headings & relevant content to provide when analysing the policy.

- <https://www.pmc.gov.au/domestic-policy>
- <https://treasury.gov.au/social-policy>
- <https://www.aasw.asn.au/social-policy-advocacy/position-papers-and-statements>
- <https://humanrights.gov.au/>
- <https://www.closingthegap.gov.au/>
- <https://www.acoss.org.au/briefings/>
- <https://www.acoss.org.au/policy-advisors/>
- <https://vcoss.org.au/>
- <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/mental-policy>
- https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1819/Quick_Guides/MentalHealth
- <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-drug-strategy-2017-2026>
- https://www.alp.org.au/media/1539/2018_alp_national_platform_constitution.pdf
- <https://www.alp.org.au/about/national-platform/>
- <https://www.liberal.org.au/party>
- <https://greens.org.au/policies>

FOLLOW THESE STEPS TO START A POLICY ASSESSMENT

- **Step One:** Understanding the assessment question
- **Step Two:** Narrow the scope of the paper - according to the marking criteria.
- **Step Three:** find the/a current policy on the issue **and** responses to the policy.
- **Step Four:** Research the issue and identify sources to use to evidence or support your writing
- **Step Five:** Develop a scaffold into heading sections for your paper.
- **Step six:** Write your first draft
- **Step Seven:** Edit and proofread.



STEP ONE: UNDERSTANDING YOUR ASSESSMENT QUESTION

In a policy analysis assessment, you **may be** required to ...

- **identify** a social issue
- **critically analyse** a policy that responds to an issue.
- **compare** different policies and decide which is the most effective.
- **compare** different political parties, and their policies on a particular issue.
- More info on unpacking the question here:
<https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/approaching-question-0>



STEP TWO: NARROW THE SCOPE

According to the assessment question and **marking criteria**, you may need to

- Choose a specific principle, such as poverty, inequality, social cohesion, social inclusion
- Choose a sub-area of the broad area
- Choose a specific geographical area
- Choose a specific level of government: Commonwealth, State, Local
- Choose a particular population group



STEP TWO: NARROW THE SCOPE

SWSP6143: Public Policy and Civil Society
Assessment 2

Assessment Details and Instructions

You are to write a report that compares two different 'policy approaches' to a contemporary social issue.

e.g. Drug policy that takes a harm minimisation approach versus
Drug policy that takes an abstinence approach

STEP THREE: FIND THE CURRENT POLICY ON THE ISSUE

To find current policies and responses to policies, you should..

- check you class lecture/tutorial notes
- check Library Pathfinder
- check organisation websites which relate to group/issue at hand
- do a plain old Google Scholar or Google search for the key words in the question plus 'policy'
- use the 'Ask the library' chat box



STEP FOUR: RESEARCH THE ISSUE (BACKGROUNDING)

Questions:

- What is the issue?
- How does it present?
- What are causes and conditions of the issue?
- Who is affected by the issue?
- Why is the issue a problem?
- **What are the relevant policies?**

You may need:

- Knowledge of the relevant services and organisations.
- Responses from the relevant stakeholders.
- Knowledge of the issues identified by others.
- History of developments and debates.
- Knowledge about significant concepts in social justice debates, e.g., poverty, inequality, social citizenship



CONTENT

Provide a clear, concise and engaging account of:

- the issues under consideration
- the scope and dimensions of the issue
- the current policy situation
- the impact of policies on individuals, groups and communities
- recommendations for action



LOOK AT UNIT CONTENT

SWSP6143:
Public Policy and
Civil Society

► Open all ▼ Close all

Instructions: Clicking on the section name will show / hide the section.

- 1 ► Class recordings (& online Zoom access links)
- 2 ► Unit Assessment Information and Submission
- 3 ► Week 1 - Introducing Public Policy, Government, and Civil Society
- 4 ► Week 2 - Australian Political Structures
- 5 ► Week 3 - Political Ideology
- 6 ► Week 4 - Social Capital and Civic Participation
- 7 ► *Week 5 - The Policy Cycle and Policy Analysis*
Hidden from students
- 8 ► *Week 6 - Policy Analysis and Machinery of Government Changes*
Hidden from students
- 9 ► Week 7 - Break week



FINDING SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

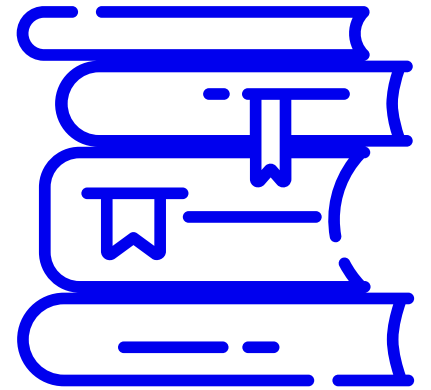
Find supporting evidence by

- searching for journal articles and textbooks that support your analysis of the issue and the policy in the library databases.
- using your course materials to guide you in your search
- using key journals in Library Pathfinder

To help you begin searching:

- Watch the short videos on the ACAP library website on how to search within the Library's online journal resources.

https://libguides.navitas.com/information_skills/videos_slides



STRUCTURE-NOTETAKING TEMPLATE

Start your research using the notetaking template in this document.

Areas for consideration	Research and notetaking template
Scope of the issue/policy approach <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define the scope of the paper (the parameters and focus)• Specify your population of concern• Identify the key issues and extent of the issues• Explain the currency and significance	
Current Policy Situation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the current policy situation• Identify at which level of government might this issue be addressed• Assess the impact/effectiveness of the current policy /Does the policy achieve its aims?• Strengths and limitations of the current policy	
Key Issues or Considerations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the key issues that have been raised in relation of the current policy situation• Justify why the policy need to change• State how these issues are related to social policy principles	
Conclusions and Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summarise the key points of your paper• Provide recommendations that are achievable and consistent with your analysis of the issues	

STEP FIVE: DEVELOP A SCAFFOLD

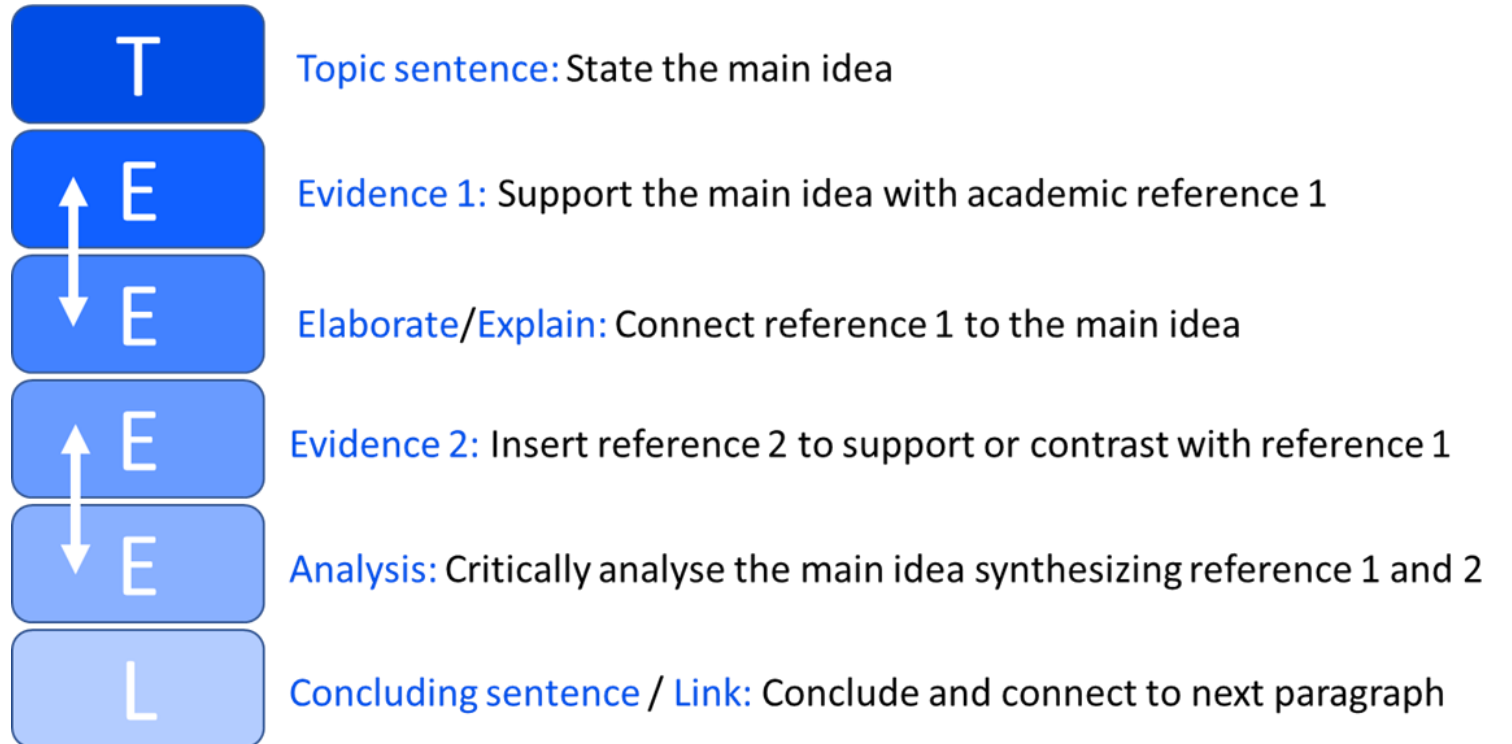
Section	Info for each section (dot points)	Word allocation
Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Background to topic• Thesis statement• Main points to be explored in the paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outline background & purpose of paper and topics to be addressed:• Signpost the main points to be discussed in my paper:• Thesis Statement: Usually the answer to the assignment question. (overall argument or point of view); basic conclusion. use supporting evidence	
Body paragraph/s <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topic sentence• Support/elaborate• Evidence/example• Link to theory• Link to next main idea	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topic sentence: (think of it like a heading so the reader knows what's coming). One topic per paragraph.• Supporting sentences: develop the topic and include explanation, examples, details, research quotations and reference. They can extend, elaborate, explain and justify what was stated in the topic sentence.• Concluding/linking sentence: reminds the reader what the main topic of the paragraph was about and may link to next paragraph.	
Conclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summary of main points• Restate thesis statement• Final comment	<p>Summarise main ideas/arguments/restate thesis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is your final position?	

- Check your class space for a scaffold Check the forums in Class Space
- Create your own.
- Contact SLS for support.
- Transfer your notes into the scaffold.
- You can download a blank scaffold template from the link below:

<https://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/preparing-plan-writing-or-presenting-0>

STEP SIX: WRITE YOUR FIRST DRAFT

Structured body paragraph formula



Note: The arrows indicate that the order can switch.

STRENGTHS/LIMITATIONS OF A POLICY

Strength	Limitation
Another significant aspect of this healthcare policy is that it has already seen a sharp decrease in deaths in the area of....	One of the limitations with this healthcare policy is that it fails to address fragmentation arising from the conflicts between Commonwealth and state funded services.
The key strength of this aboriginal education policy is that there have been more Aboriginal study programs available than ever before.	One criticism of much of the literature on this Aboriginal education policy is that it fails to consider certain cultural rules that govern...
A reasonable approach to tackle this issue could be to measure such outcomes, which will then guide government decision making and ultimately improve mental health services.	A serious weakness with Australia's mental health policy , however, is that it lacks real accountability and relies largely on limited mental health service systems data.

SENTENCE STARTERS

Expressing similarities

There are a number of similarities between X and Y.

Introducing differences

X is different to Y in a number of respects.

Moving from one section to the next, indicating addition or contrast

Another significant aspect of X is ...

Introducing general criticism

Non-government agencies are also critical of the new policies.

Expressing a causal relationship tentatively

X may have been an important factor in ...

Introducing questions, problems and limitations

A major criticism of X is that

Being cautious when discussing implications or recommendations

One possible implication of this is that

POLICY ANALYSIS- PARAGRAPH EXAMPLE

Empowering Indigenous Communities to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

For many Indigenous families, the fear and distrust of family services has significant impacts on parenting, safety for children, and opportunities to receive help. According to Blacklock (2014), this sense of distrust stems from the past policies of removing children, which have had a profound and enduring effect on the emotional and social well-being of generations of Aboriginal people. In recognition of this harm and suffering, Aboriginal community leaders developed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle in the 1980s (SNAICC, 2013). This document upholds the rights of the child's family and community to have some control and influence over decisions about their children. It also prioritises options that should be explored when an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child is placed in care. The document has been adopted in legislation or policy in all Australian states and territories. However, recent reviews estimate it has been fully applied in only 15% of child protection cases involving Aboriginal children (Australian Centre for Child Protection [ACCP], 2013). Research has shown that where families have greater involvement in decision making in child protection, there is greater trust and less adversarial relationships between families and child protection services (Berzin et al., 2008; Rodgers & Cahn, 2010). As a result, more concerted efforts to apply the principle can lead to better welfare outcomes for Aboriginal children.

POLICY ANALYSIS- PARAGRAPH EXAMPLE 1

Empowering Indigenous Communities to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect

For many Indigenous families, the fear and distrust of family services has significant impacts on parenting, safety for children, and opportunities to receive help. According to Blacklock (2014), this sense of distrust stems from the past policies of removing children, which have had a profound and enduring effect on the emotional and social well-being of generations of Aboriginal people. In recognition of this harm and suffering, Aboriginal community leaders developed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle in the 1980s (SNAICC, 2013). This document upholds the rights of the child's family and community to have some control and influence over decisions about their children. It also prioritises options that should be explored when an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child is placed in care. The document has been adopted in legislation or policy in all Australian states and territories. *(Continued..)*

Can you spot the following?

1. A concise heading?
2. Topic sentence?
3. Link to evidence/literature?
4. What is the purpose of the policy?

POLICY ANALYSIS- PARAGRAPH EXAMPLE 1

Empowering Indigenous communities to prevent child abuse and neglect

Heading

For many Indigenous families, the fear and distrust of family services has significant impacts on parenting, safety for children, and opportunities to receive help. According to Blacklock (2014), this sense of distrust stems from the past

Topic sentence

policies of removing children, which have had a profound and enduring effect on the emotional and social well-being of generations of Aboriginal people. In

Link to literature

recognition of this harm and suffering, Aboriginal community leaders developed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle in the 1980s (SNAICC, 2013). This document upholds the rights of the child's family and community to have some control and influence over decisions about their children.

Purpose of the policy

It also prioritises options that should be explored when an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child is placed in care. The document has been adopted in legislation or policy in all Australian states and territories.

POLICY ANALYSIS-PARAGRAPH EXAMPLE 1

(Continued...) However, recent reviews estimate it has been fully applied in only 15% of child protection cases involving Aboriginal children (Australian Centre for Child Protection [ACCP], 2013). Research has shown that where families have greater involvement in decision making in child protection, there is greater trust and less adversarial relationships between families and child protection services (Berzin et al., 2008; Rodgers & Cahn, 2010). As a result, more concerted efforts to apply the policy can lead to better welfare outcomes for Aboriginal children.

Can you spot the following?

5. More links to literature?
6. Critical analysis?
Strengths and Limitations?
7. Concluding sentence/ link to next main idea

POLICY ANALYSIS- PARAGRAPH EXAMPLE 1

However, recent reviews estimate it has been fully applied in only 15% of child protection cases involving Aboriginal children (ACCP, 2013). Research has shown that where families have greater involvement in decision making in child protection, there is greater trust and less adversarial relationships between families and child protection services (Berzin et al., 2008; Rodgers & Cahn, 2010). As a result, more concerted efforts to apply the policy would lead to better welfare outcomes for Aboriginal children.

2nd link to lit.
& critical
analysis

Concluding
sentence/
link to next
main idea

POLICY ANALYSIS- PARAGRAPH EXAMPLE

Empowering Indigenous communities to prevent child abuse and neglect

Heading

For many Indigenous families, the fear and distrust of family services has significant impacts on parenting, safety for children and opportunities to receive help. According to Blacklock (2014), this sense of distrust stems from the past policies of removing children, which have had a profound and enduring effect on the emotional and social well-being of generations of Aboriginal people. In recognition of this harm and suffering, Aboriginal community leaders developed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle in the 1980s (SNAICC, 2013). This document upholds the rights of the child's family and community to have some control and influence over decisions about their children. It also prioritises options that should be explored when an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child is placed in care. The document has been adopted in legislation or policy in all Australian states and territories. However, recent reviews estimate it has been fully applied in only 15% of child protection cases involving Aboriginal children (ACCP, 2013). Research has shown that where families have greater involvement in decision making in child protection, there is greater trust and less adversarial relationships between families and child protection services (Berzin et al., 2008; Rodgers & Cahn, 2010). As a result, more concerted efforts to apply the policy would lead to better welfare outcomes for Aboriginal children.

Topic
sentence

Link to
literature

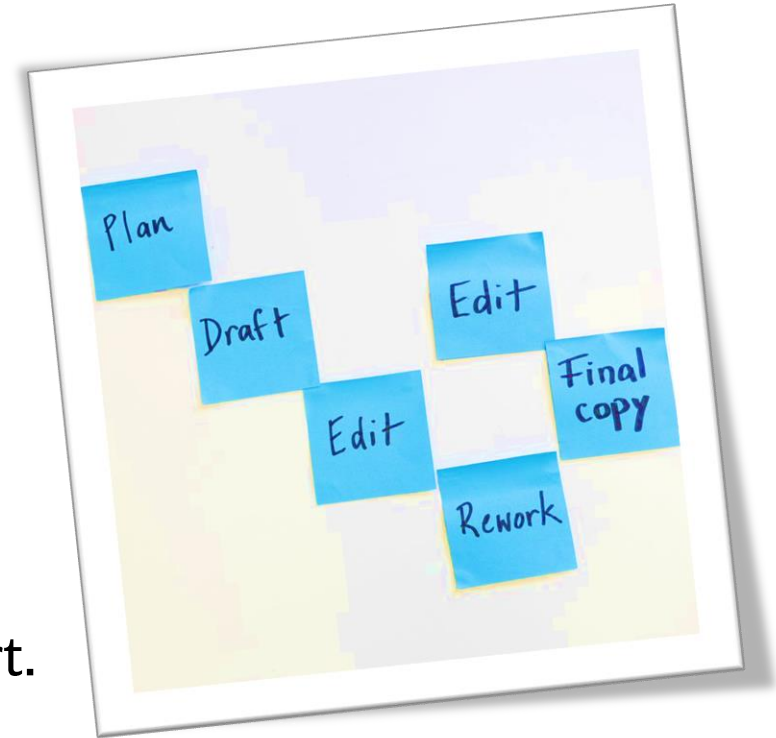
Elaborate on &
give example of
policy

2nd link to lit.
& critical
analysis

Concluding
sentence/
link to next
main idea

STEP SEVEN: EDIT AND PROOFREAD

- Leave time to edit and proofread your assessment!
- Proofread for spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Check presentation requirements specified in the unit outline.
- Check your in-text references and reference list.
- Upload your assessment to Turnitin & check the Turnitin report.
- Use Smarthinking where available!
- If in your first two trimesters, get draft feedback from SLS.
- Write your final draft and submit.



COMMON FEEDBACK COMMENTS ON ERRORS

Academic integrity-plagiarism i.e., Lack of citation, citing incorrectly

Paraphrase source information!
Use the ACAP Library APA7 Guide!

Use of informal language

Using a personal opinion instead of impersonal point of view.

Proofread &
Use grammar & spell checker!

Not enough critical analysis of the policy, with little focus on strengths and limitations

Use the marking criteria as a checklist!

Too many ideas in one paragraph.

Including new ideas in conclusion section

Follow the Introduction, TEEL paragraph and conclusion formulas!

FURTHER RESOURCES TO CONSIDER

Bias-free Language:

<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language>

Code of ethics of your discipline

<https://www.aasw.asn.au/practitioner-resources/code-of-ethics>

<https://pacfa.org.au/Portal/Prac-Res/Code-of-Ethics.aspx>

Human rights commission

<https://humanrights.gov.au/>

Analysis & Policy Observatory:

<https://apo.org.au/>



WHO CAN HELP ME?

Questions about my assignment and class content	Questions and advice about how to develop study skills and improve my academic writing	Timetable, Attendance, Enrolment, Course Planning, Extension, Special Consideration, Accessibility, Counsellor	Class Space, Login, Email, Office 365	Fees
Your educator	Your local SLS advisor	The Student Engagement Team	IT support	Fees & Loans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q/A Discussion forum Direct message In the class space Email educator 	Click here to find your local SLS contact details	Email: studentcentral@acap.edu.au Phone: 1800 061 199 Online Chat Service: via student portal or ACAP website	Email: helpdesk@acap.edu.au	feesandloans@acap.edu.au

STUDENT LEARNING SUPPORT WEBSITE



Study Skills



Referencing and Academic Integrity



Assignment Types



Enhance Your Writing



Preparing Your Assessments



Presentation Skills



Making The Technology Work For You



Being a Critical and Reflective Thinker



Essential Skills For Your VET Diploma Studies



Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS)



Test and Exam Skills



English Language Support

<http://sls.navitas-professional.edu.au/>

CONTACT

Reach out to Student Learning Support (SLS)

Sydney students

SLSSydney@acap.edu.au

Byron Bay students

SLSByronbay@acap.edu.au

Brisbane students

SLSBrisbane@acap.edu.au

Melbourne students

SLSMelbourne@acap.edu.au

Adelaide students

SLSAdelaide@acap.edu.au

Perth students

SLSPerth@acap.edu.au

Online Campus (email contact for MBA and
Graduate Certificate of Coaching students)

SLSOnline@acap.edu.au

HOW DID WE DO?

Tomorrow you will be sent an email with a **survey link** and a link to these slides.

We would appreciate your feedback on this webinar to help us improve our service.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SLSWebinarSurvey>

Thank You!



THANK YOU

CONTACT:

Student Learning Support