



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<p><b>Account for</b></p> <p>Give reasons for; explain why something happens.</p>	<p><b>Explain</b></p> <p>Make clear why something happens; interpret and account for; give reasons for.</p>
<p><b>Analyse</b></p> <p>Break up into parts; Investigate.</p>	<p><b>Illustrate</b></p> <p>Make something clear and explicit; give examples.</p>
<p><b>Comment on</b></p> <p>Identify and write about the main issues.</p>	<p><b>Interpret</b></p> <p>Show the meaning and relevance of data or other material presented.</p>
<p><b>Compare</b></p> <p>Look for the similarities between two things. Show the relance/consequences of these similarities.</p>	<p><b>Justify</b></p> <p>Give evidence which supports an argument or idea; show why a decision or conclusions were made.</p>
<p><b>Critically evaluate</b></p> <p>Weigh arguments for and against something; assess the strength of the evidence on both sides.</p>	<p><b>Outline</b></p> <p>Give the main points/features/general principles; show the main structure; omit details and examples.</p>
<p><b>Discuss</b></p> <p>Investigate or examine by argument; give reasons for and against; examine the implications.</p>	<p><b>Summarise</b></p> <p>Draw out the main points only; omit details and examples.</p>
<p><b>Distinguish between</b></p> <p>Bring out the difference between.</p>	<p><b>To what extent</b></p> <p>Consider how far something is true or contributes to a final outcome; also consider what is untrue.</p>

### Additional sources of Information

Listed below are a number of useful sources that will enhance your writing ability.



#### Books

1. Exploring writing: Paragraphs and essays by John Langan *808.042 La*
2. How to write great essays: Write great essays every time by Lauren Starkey *808.042 St*
3. Insightful writing by David Sabrio and Mitchel Burchfield *808.042 Sa*
4. Writing paragraphs and essays: Integrating reading, writing and grammar skills by Joy Wingersky and Jan Boerner *808.042 Wi*

#### Internet Sites

1. <http://www.library.dmv.ac.uk/Support/Heat/index.php?pa>
2. <http://students.berkley.edu>
3. <http://students.acu.edu.au/49728>
4. <http://owll.massey.ac.nz/assignment-types/essay>
5. <http://unilearning.uow.edu.au.essay/4bi.html>
6. <http://web.anglia.ac.uk/onet>



#### Please Note:-

Although the internet provides many sources of very useful information, you cannot be certain that all of them are reliable.

Sources should therefore be evaluated to establish their reliability and credibility before they are used.

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The Barbados Community College Library

For further assistance contact:

Caroline Woodroffe-Holder, Librarian (Ag.)

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### Barbados Community College Library



### STRUCTURING AN A+ ACADEMIC ESSAY

**Hello Students,  
Welcome back to College for Semester II of the Academic Year 2013—2014.**

#### TAKE NOTE: -

Essays, seminar papers, research, don't have to be the monsters they appear to be. Have a look at the information provided here to help you prepare the best research papers possible.



Don't wait until the date for submission is a few hours away to realise you haven't started your paper. Remember, deadlines come quickly.

So the time to take action is now! Planning ahead is very effective.

#### Some tips for planning your essay

- ◆ Read the question carefully to understand what is required.
- ◆ Identify key instructions such as compare, contrast, discuss, describe.
- ◆ Look out for questions such as why, when, what, how.
- ◆ Check for the meaning of unusual words or phrases.
- ◆ Do some preliminary reading on the topic.
- ◆ Make brief notes while you are reading.

# STRUCTURING AN A\* ACADEMIC ESSAY

A well-structured essay should take the following format with these elements included:-

## 1. Introduction / Beginning

At this point of your essay your aim is to grab the attention of your reader, while informing him/her what will be covered in the essay.



A useful task at this stage would be to do a survey of the literature on the topic. This will

help you to conceptualise the view/stance you will take and formulate a strategy for the rest of the paper.

### Remember your primary goals!!!

- ◆ Set the scene;
- ◆ Arouse the attention of the reader;
- ◆ Give a clear statement of the focus of the essay (thesis statement);
- ◆ Identify the issues you will expand on;
- ◆ Say how each issue will be addressed and in what order;

### Some ways to achieve this!!!

- ◆ Use a relevant quotation from a reliable source.
- ◆ Give an example such as a specific incident or occasion.
- ◆ Define or explain key or unfamiliar terms .
- ◆ Make a comparison with something else.

A critical discussion on the main ideas supporting your position or response to the question is the next major section of your essay.

## 2. Body / Middle

Within the body of your essay are a series of connecting paragraphs that provide details on the main/ key points outlined in your introduction.



A well-written paragraph contains several related sentences that support the main idea (topic sentence) of that paragraph. This first sentence (topic sentence) allows the writer to explain the main idea to be developed in that particular paragraph.

### Some points to remember for each body paragraph

- ◆ Offer some kind of evidence e.g. make references to other scholarly work on the topic.
- ◆ Explain how/why the evidence proves your point and relates to your topic/thesis.
- ◆ For every assertion made, give proof and explanations.
- ◆ There must be smooth transition between paragraphs.
- ◆ Each paragraph is a single unit of thought on one specific idea—not two or three.
- ◆ Use a concluding sentence to close the paragraph or link to the next one.

### What each paragraph will tell your reader

- ◆ What the paragraph is about
- ◆ What is its main argument
- ◆ What is your evidence; what does it mean
- ◆ How it links to the essay title
- ◆ How it links to the topic in the next paragraph

Use your conclusion to summarise and integrate the issues/research but remember it is critical to show the link to your essay question. Implications and recommendations can form part of your conclusion.

## 3. Conclusion / End



By reiterating the main points discussed in your essay, the conclusion allows the writer to demonstrate how ideas were developed, indicate what the reader learned from reading the paper while taking the reader back to the focus outlined in the introduction.

### Usefulness of the conclusion

- ◆ It draws all your ideas together.
- ◆ Summarises the main themes.
- ◆ States your general conclusions.
- ◆ Establishes the significance/importance of the conclusions.
- ◆ Highlights any topics that need further discussion .
- ◆ Provides recommendations for future action.

### Writing a strong conclusion

- ◆ Do NOT introduce any new information
- ◆ Find a strong quotation that cleverly sums up your views
- ◆ A brief story or example can make your points more vivid
- ◆ End on an interesting, thought-provoking point