Essay writing for pgs

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The Learning Centre
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I READ YOUR ESSAY
Visit the Learning Centre

YES, I WENT TO THE WRITING CENTER

NOW I'M RIDICULOUSLY SUCCESSFUL
MY PROFESSOR SAID TO DOUBLE SPACE MY ESSAY
SO I'M PRESSING THE SPACEBAR TWICE AFTER EVERY WORD
Academic Skills Plus (General Education course 6 UoC)

- Are you looking for a general education course / elective?

- GENY0001, 0002, 0003

- Learn how to become a better student! Topics covered: academic writing style, giving presentations, critical thinking, writing good paragraphs, how to do research, and much more!

- Special themes: Alice in Wonderland (0003), Science Fiction (0002), Comedy (0001)

- See the UNSW Handbook or contact Dr Jamie Roberts (Jamie.roberts@unsw.edu.au) for more information...
Session outline

• Golden rule
• The philosophy behind academic work
• Basic marking criteria
• The research process
• Understanding how your brain works
• The introduction
• The paragraph/body
• The conclusion
• Integrating research
• Critical thinking
• Expression
Golden rule

- Think for yourself
  - Do you follow world events?
  - Do you have strong feelings about politics?
  - Do you question everything you hear?
  - Do you turn a critical eye upon yourself (do you think about principles and try to apply them in your life?)?
  - Do you recognise that things are rarely black and white?
  - Are you always trying to identify patterns in the way the world ‘works’?
  - Are you driven by a love of the truth, the good, the beautiful (or are you more concerned with fitting in)?
  - Do you like doing things your own way?
The philosophy behind academic work
Why do universities exist?

- To write good essays it’s important to understand why universities exist.

- **Question:** So, why do universities exist?
  
- **Answer:** To disseminate and create knowledge

- **Question:** What does this mean for you as a student?

- **Answer:** You need to act (write) like a knowledge creator:
  
  - Identify worthy problems
  
  - Demonstrate knowledge/understanding of your subject (explore complexity) (see next slide)

  - Ultimately present your own informed opinions
The ‘shape’ of a subject (the field)

- All subjects (and even essay topics) have a ‘shape’.
  The shape includes:
  - The different objects of study within the subject/topic
  - Different approaches to creating knowledge (methods)
  - Key debates / tensions (eg, essentialism v relativism, structure v agency)
  - Different ‘ideological’ positions
The ‘shape’ of Aus politics
Basic marking criteria

- **Question**: What should you be attempting to demonstrate in your essays (what are essays code for)?
  - That you can answer the question.
  - That you have knowledge of your topic (research).
  - That you can think critically (knowledge + ct = understanding).
  - That you can argue systematically (structure).
  - That you can express yourself clearly.
The research/writing process
Beyond the assignment itself

- Be interested
- Do your readings and go to class: the ‘five-fold’ exposure to key ideas approach.
  - Do readings before your lecture.
  - Sit up the front in the lecture, pay attention and take notes.
  - Revise your notes after the lecture – write down questions.
  - Revise readings and notes before your tutorial.
  - Get involved in your tutorial – ask questions.
- Find out how the marker wants you to do the assignment.
DUE TOMORROW?

DO TOMORROW.
2 am
Finishing essay

Hmm, yes, this is quite the literary masterpiece.

7 am
Rereading essay before print

This doesn’t make sense at all...
The research/writing process

- Understanding the research process:
  - Read the question
  - Formulate a preliminary response
  - Research with response in mind
  - Make notes
  - Generate a plan
  - Write
  - Set aside
  - Make use of a friend
  - Edit
  - Submit
Some myths about academic reading

1. You read academic texts as you would a novel

Fact:

• In a novel you can’t skip bits.
• In academic readings, key information is located in introductions and conclusions. Ask the following questions:
  • What problem is the reading addressing?
  • Why is it a significant problem?
  • What solution is being proposed?
  • How does this help me?
• Often academic readings are ‘modular’ and you can focus on particular modules.
The ‘skeleton’ of an academic argument. Note that once you understand the problem being addressed, you can read individual modules in isolation and they make sense.

Problem: Should voting be compulsory?

Solution: Voting should be compulsory in most instances

Section 1: A brief history of voting

Section 2: Arguments against compulsory voting

Section 3: Arguments for compulsory voting
Some myths about academic reading

2. If I skip something I will miss important information
Fact: Academic readings are not text books. The point is to find info that is useful for you. Skim or skip irrelevant material.

3. I have to read everything on the reading list
Fact: Reading lists are not text books. They are there to give you a sense of the shape and complexities of your subject.

4. Academic readings have one meaning
Fact: You will find different things depending on what you are looking for.

5. As long as the words pass through my brain it is good
Fact: If you don’t have a clear purpose before you read, the words will be less meaningful.
Some myths about academic reading

6. I need to remember what I have read
Fact: Memory occurs through multiple, deep exposures. Use your notes to remember. And writing your assignment (what I remember...)

7. I need to be a fast reader
Fact: Being a strategic reader is much more important.

8. I have to understand everything I read
Fact: If studying for an exam, perhaps. If producing an assignment, draw on what you do understand.

9. The more sources, the better my mark
Fact: Having lots of sources looks good, but marks also come from answering the question, structure and critical thinking.

10. First I read, then I write
Fact: Read throughout the writing process.
8 points to keep in mind in relation to assignment questions

1. Make sure you are answering the right question, copy the question correctly, and make sure you are following the instructions.

2. Answer the question, the whole question, and nothing but the question. Also check marking criteria.

WHEN YOU REALIZE

THAT YOUR ESSAY DOESN'T ANSWER WHAT THE PROMPT ASKS FOR
The question

- The three broad types of university questions:
  - Show knowledge
  - Eg: Describe the process of galvanising steel.
  - Explore complexity
  - Eg: Compare and contrast the various systems of local government revenue collection.
  - Make evaluations / present your own position
  - Eg: Compare and contrast the various systems of local government revenue collection and determine which one (if any) best protects local democracy.
8 points to keep in mind in relation to assignment questions

3. Read the question 50 times.

- **Question:** How might this question catch out a student?
  
  ‘With reference to Morgenthau, analyse what you believe to be the key principles of political realism.’
4. Be aware that teachers sometimes inadvertently produce ambiguous questions.

- **Question:** Why is the following question ambiguous?

  ‘The bush legend and multiculturalism have provided two highly influential ways of thinking about Australian national identity. However, these powerful concepts have also hindered our understanding of the complexity of Australian society. Discuss to what extent you agree or disagree with this statement.’
5. Use the language of the question in your response.

‘The bush legend and multiculturalism have provided two highly influential ways of thinking about Australian national identity. However, these powerful concepts have also hindered our understanding of the complexity of Australian society. Discuss to what extent you agree or disagree with this statement.’
6. If possible choose a question which allows you to demonstrate critical thinking. (All questions are not created equal)

- **Question:** Which question encourages a critical response and why?

  ‘With reference to the chapter by Paul Christopher, what principles determine just conduct in war, according to Grotius?’

  ‘Why is republican government essential in order to achieve perpetual peace. Do you think it is a guarantee of perpetual peace? Discuss with reference to Kant.’
assignment questions continued

7. Engage with the key concepts/tensions/debates implied by the question.
   - Ask yourself: why the question has been written?

Question: Why has the following question been written?

“To what extent does a leader determine the quality of her or his society?”

8. Don’t be afraid to take issue with the question.
   - Sometimes questions are intentionally naïve. Sometimes they are badly written.

Question: What might you object to in the following questions?

A: ‘“Problems of inequality do not affect the criminal justice system in the contemporary democratic order. In law, everyone is treated equally and has equal access to justice.” Discuss.’

B: ‘Does fantasy simply help us to escape from reality, or does it have a more complex function?’
The writing process: making notes from your research

- Question: how do you make notes?
The writing process: making notes

- It is not enough for the words to pass through your brain.
- **Question:** How do good notes help?
- **Answer:** Good notes:
  - provide you with an excellent record of what you have read and what you thought at the time you read it.
  - help you to clarify your thoughts about what you are reading and the question you are answering. (Only through writing do we discover what we think.)
  - make it very easy to quickly survey all of your research.
  - make the transition from research to writing much smoother.
  - help you to keep your ideas separate from the ideas presented in your sources.
Make notes
Make notes – New doc
Make notes – Bibliographical info

Bibliographical information
Bibliographical information

p29
Make notes – write out quotation

Bibliographical information

p29
Make notes – write out quotation

Bibliographical information

p29 [Quotation] Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah
Make notes – write your thoughts

Bibliographical information

p29 [Quotation] Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah

Make notes – make a heading

Bibliographical information

**Good point about blah**

p29 [Quotation] Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah

[Your ideas] Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah


Make notes – use different colours

Bibliographical information

**Good point about blah**

p29 [Quotation] Blah, blah,
blah, blah, blah, blah, blah

[Your ideas] Blah, blah, blah
blah, blah, blah, blah, blah
Make notes – use different colours

Bibliographical information

*Good point about blah*

p29 [Quotation] Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah

[Your ideas] Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah
Make notes – the finished doc.

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The rhythm of work

- Getting the most out of your brain
- Intense sessions + fallow periods
- A typical session:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>In the zone</th>
<th>Scattered</th>
<th>Problems encountered, brain becoming fuzzy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>working well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 hours</td>
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</table>
The rhythm of work

- Remember: keep coming back to achieve success
- Linking your sessions. Below = morning after the session on the previous slide:

- the wonder of fresh eyes
- Hammering out the details of the solution to the last encountered problem
- 1 hour
- 2 hours
- moving on, new problems identified, brain becoming fuzzy
- Time
Understanding how your brain works

Pragmatic time management

- Studying with the internet

![Graph showing time in and out of the zone with 1 hour and 2 hours marks.](image-url)
Understanding how your brain works

Pragmatic time management

- The slow descent. Multiple sessions over several days:
Emotions...

IS THIS ESSAY BETTER PROFESSOR

I MADE IT WITH MY TEARS
Introductions
Essay structure

- **Question:** What is the basic structure of an essay?

  - Introduction
  - Body
  - Conclusion
ONE DOES NOT SIMPLY

THINK OF AN OPENING SENTENCE FOR AN ESSAY.
The introduction

- **Question:** Why do we have introductions?
- **Question:** What basic questions should an introduction respond to?
- **Answer:** What problem are you going to address? Why is it important? How are you going to do it?
- **Question:** What are the stages in an introduction?
The introduction

• Orientation
  • AKA background or context.
  • You can simply introduce the key terms/concepts from the question.
  • You can expand upon the question and present it as a problem to be tackled.
  • It can be good to say why the issues you are addressing are significant.

• Thesis
  • This is your general response to the question (your main argument).
  • Remember to use the language of the question
  • Elaborate if necessary
  • Begin with: “This essay argues that...” or something similar.
  • A thesis might not always be appropriate.

• Outline
  • Introduce the stages your essay will move through to establish the thesis.
  • Use language like: “First... Second... Third...” or “To begin... Following this... Finally”
  • Ensure that there is an obvious relationship between outline and thesis.
The introduction

- Optional extras
  - Scope
    - Clarify what will be left out and what will be included (flag then narrow).
  - Definitions
    - Only define uncontested technical terms.
    - Don’t define complex terms/concepts that need a paragraph or more.
    - Avoid dictionary definitions of contested concepts (eg, freedom, power, childhood, desire, science fiction, management).
An model introduction

**Question:** The bush legend and multiculturalism have provided two highly influential ways of thinking about Australian national identity. However, these powerful concepts have also hindered our understanding of the complexity of Australian society. Discuss to what extent you agree or disagree with this statement.

[1] One of the most interesting points that can be made about Australian national identity is that there are in fact a number of identities competing to be the true Australian national identity. [2] Two of the key identities in this competition are the ‘bush legend’ and ‘multiculturalism’. [3] However, we should not think that either of these identities provides us with an accurate understanding of Australian society. [4] Indeed, this essay will argue that despite the fact that the concepts of the bush legend and multiculturalism do help us to understand key aspects of Australian society, to a considerable extent both concepts have hindered our understanding of the complexity of Australian society. [5] Speaking generally, although the concept of the bush legend helps us to understand what we might call ‘traditional’ Australian values, it encourages us to ignore the diversity of Australian society. [6] And while the concept of multiculturalism provides an account of some of the cosmopolitan values which underpin contemporary Australia, it can sometimes be used to gloss over problems present in Australian society. [7] This essay will explore these points, beginning with the bush legend before moving on to multiculturalism.
One of the most interesting points that can be made about Australian national identity is that there are in fact a number of identities competing to be the true Australian national identity. Two of the key identities in this competition are the ‘bush legend’ and ‘multiculturalism’. However, we should not think that either of these identities provides us with an accurate understanding of Australian society. Indeed, this essay will argue that despite the fact that the concepts of the bush legend and multiculturalism do help us to understand key aspects of Australian society, to a considerable extent both concepts have hindered our understanding of the complexity of Australian society. Speaking generally, although the concept of the bush legend helps us to understand what we might call ‘traditional’ Australian values, it encourages us to ignore the diversity of Australian society. And while the concept of multiculturalism provides an account of some of the cosmopolitan values which underpin contemporary Australia, it can sometimes be used to gloss over problems present in Australian society. This essay will explore these points, beginning with the bush legend before moving on to multiculturalism.

Put yourselves in the marker’s shoes

• Analyse the following introductions.
  • Are the basic rules followed?
  • Work out what each sentence is saying, and how each sentence is related to the other sentences.
  • Evaluate whether the introduction is successful or not and give it a mark.
Example 1 – A student introduction

Question: To what extent does the quality of a society depend upon the quality of its leader(s)?

[1] A common subject for discussion is how societies function and the role of their leaders within them. [2] A key question is whether only the leaders are responsible for the functioning of their society or if the people also have a role to play. [3] This essay argues that the qualities of a leader have a strong influence on the quality of their society. [4] First, this essay will argue that if the leader has good morals this will be reflected in their society. [5] Second, it will argue that it is better for the society when a leader is loved by the people. [6] Third, in contrast to the previous points, it will be argued that, along with the leaders, people also have a responsibility in determining the quality of their society.
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1. **Orientation.** On the topic, although a little vague: “how societies function” is related to the question, but a better choice of words was possible.
2. **Orientation/transiion to thesis.** Question paraphrased. This is reasonable.
3. **Thesis clear, question answered.**
4. **First point does support thesis, but more could be said.** Eg “…the effect of a leader upon their society is demonstrated by the fact that if the leader has good morals…”
5. **Second point less obviously supports the thesis:** student is now dealing with what “ought” to be the case, not what “is” the case.
6. **Third point is a counter point.** While it is good to have a counterpoint, the word “responsibility” again relates to what *ought* to be the case, not what *is* the case, and thus the question is not being answered.

- **General assessment:** This introduction is well structured and answers the question. However it could have been expressed with greater precision. Related to this, as it stands it does not exhibit a high degree of critical thinking. **Mark: 6.5/10.**
Question: Discuss to what extent the bush legend remains a representative image of Australian society.

[1] This essay argues that the bush legend to a minimal extent remains a representative image of Australian society. [2] The evolution of Australian society over the years has resulted in the bush legend becoming a commodity. [3] Generally the bush legend image does not represent all facets of Australian society due to changes in multiculturalism, liberation of women, homosexuality and acceptance of non-nuclear family life so in reality many Australians cannot identify with the bush legend persona. [4] However there are still some areas that the bush legend is still relevant and used, such as media, advertising and politics. [5] The bush legend as a representative image of Australia is often romanticized through media and advertising and continues to be promoted for sociopolitical reasons.
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1. A reasonable thesis. Note that there is no orientation. Generally speaking this is not a devastating problem, however you will lose marks in this course!

2. A random sentence. Not a bad point, but out of place.

3. A reasonable sentence, but it is not clear whether it is an elaboration upon the thesis, or part of the outline (probably the former).

4. A reasonable sentence, but again, it is not clear whether it is an elaboration upon the thesis or part of the outline (again, probably the former).

5. A somewhat vague sentence. It builds imprecisely upon [4]. It is not clear what is meant by “sociopolitical reasons.”

• General assessment: The content is reasonable, but the organisation needs to be improved. Mark: 6/10
Example 3 – a student introduction

**Question:** Explain the meaning of humanitarian intervention and analyse the arguments both for and against its practice.

- **Question:** What do you notice about this question?
- **Answer:** It does not invite a thesis, but rather a descriptive response.

[1] Humanitarian intervention remains one of the most complex and contentious issues in international relations in the twenty-first century. [2] This is because it is based upon the belief of a common humanity, an idea which is diametrically opposed to the statist manner of thinking that has dominated the international system for the past three centuries. [3] The question of which of these two conflicting principles should prevail has generated a myriad of arguments both in favour of and against the practice of humanitarian intervention.
Example 3 – a student introduction

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1. Orientation.
2. Orientation/partial thesis?: a partial response is given to the second part of the question.
3. Patrial thesis?: question reworded, no position evident.

Example 4 – a student introduction

- **Question:** Explain the meaning of humanitarian intervention and analyse the arguments both for and against its practice.

[1] The starting point of the complex history of humanitarian intervention begins in 1555 with the Treaty of Augsburg and was later cemented with the better known Peace of Westphalia in 1648, where an international norm of non-intervention based on state sovereignty was conceptualised. [2] During this turbulent period the doctrine of sovereignty was not absolute. [3] Today, although statism is the accepted international system, sovereignty remains uncertain – conflicting elements of globalisation and the dominating power of certain states compete with the purported principles of the statist system. [4] It is in this context that humanitarian intervention takes place. [5] This essay deals with the arguments both in favour of and against the practice of humanitarian intervention, concluding that while there may be bureaucratic and inefficiency problems, humanitarian intervention is necessary within the current international system as its benefits of saving lives far outweigh its detriments. [6] This essay first details the meaning of humanitarian intervention. [7] Secondly it analyses its justification within both written and customary law. [8] Thirdly, it discusses whether an obligation exists to intervene, and finally, it outlines various bureaucratic problems which undermine its effectiveness.
Example 4 – a student introduction

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1. Orientation: brief history of HI presented through a discussion of the history of sovereignty.
2. Orientation: more comments about sovereignty.
3. Orientation: more comments about sovereignty.
4. Transition from orientation to thesis: focus drawn to HI.
5. Thesis: HI is necessary. Note that the thesis is unbalanced: a benefit is mentioned, but not a detriment. Note that the thesis feels a bit like an afterthought. This is not ideal.
6. [and 7 and 8] Outline. Intelligent points. [7] and [8] could be better differentiated; there is some overlap between them. Perhaps some additional counterpoints are missing.

General assessment: A strong introduction for an undergraduate essay. Yet: the significance of the orientation could be clearer, the thesis could be more precisely stated, and the points in the outline could be better delineated. Mark: 8/10.
• Example 5 is taken from an academic article: Okin’s 1977 “Philosopher Queens and Private Wives”

• Note the absence of a question.
Plato's ideas about women have attracted considerable attention in the last five years. This is not surprising, since his proposals for the education and role of the female guardians in Book V of the *Republic* are more revolutionary than those of any other major political philosopher, not excluding John Stuart Mill. However, Plato on the subject of women appears at first to present his reader with an unresolvable enigma, especially when his other dialogues are taken into account. One might well ask how the same, generally consistent philosopher can assert, on the one hand, that the female sex was created from the souls of the most wicked and irrational men and can argue, on the other hand, that if young girls and boys were trained identically, their abilities as adults would be practically the same. How can the claim that women are "by nature" twice as bad as men be reconciled with the radical idea that they should be included among the exalted philosophic rulers of the ideal state?

While I cannot here discuss all the relevant dialogues, the following paper attempts, through analysis of Plato’s arguments about private property and the family in relation to the *polis*, to explain why he appears so inconsistent about the nature and the proper role of women. I contend that when one compares the arguments and proposals of the *Republic* with those of the *Laws*, it becomes clear that the absence or presence of the private family determines whether Plato advocates putting into practice his increasingly radical beliefs about the potential of women. Only by examining the proposals of *Republic* V in the context of the overall aims and structure of the ideal society, and by doing likewise with the contrasting proposals regarding women in the *Laws*, will we find the differences intelligible.
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Relationship between the introduction and the body

• **Question:** When should the introduction be written?

• **Answer:**
  
  • Draft a plan (including a thesis and outline).
    • Note that a plan is similar to an introduction.
  
  • Revisit your plan once you have put together a reasonable draft. Revise both plan and draft. In the process convert your plan into an introduction.
  
  • Once your draft has been edited several times ensure that your introduction fits perfectly with it.
  
  • NB: Introductions are great self-checking mechanisms.
  
  • **Generally speaking:** Pay attention to the **dialectical relationship** in the drafting process between your introduction (plan) and the body of your essay.
Paragraphs
The body of the essay: essential points

- Content of paragraph is relevant to the question and thesis
- Topic and concluding sentences (the latter when appropriate) that are consistent with the content of the paragraph
- 1 point per paragraph
  - You may have 1 main point and a number of sub points
- No unnecessary repetition within or between paragraphs
- A logical flow within the paragraph (use transition signals)
- Good relationship and linking between paragraphs (signposting)
- Be careful when using quotations/paraphrases/summaries in topic and concluding sentences (don’t lose your voice)
- A good balance between your own voice and the voices of others
- Good engagement with the ideas of others (reporting verbs and analysis)
Transition signals

- **Question**: What is a transition signal?
  - It was raining, she went to the beach.
Transition signals

• **Question:** What is a transition signal?
  • It was raining, *therefore* she went to the beach.
Transition signals

• **Question:** What is a transition signal?
  • It was raining, **however** she went to the beach.

• **Question:** How many can you think of?
  • However, on the other hand, while, although
  • Therefore, thus, hence
  • In conclusion, in sum, altogether, finally
  • First, second, third
  • To begin, next, following this, finally
  • In addition, moreover, furthermore
  • Indeed, in fact
  • For example
  • Specifically, in more detail
Identify the transition signals

[1] As this thesis is not concerned with the narrow perspective I could have chosen to include any number of works. [2] I therefore need to explain why the above works were selected. [3] First, I wanted to present my own position both efficiently and thoroughly and I felt that the above combination of works would best facilitate this. [4] By ‘efficiently’ I mean that I wanted to develop my position using as few words as possible. [5] From this point of view each discussion of each work can be thought of as being a piece in the jigsaw puzzle of my overall position. [6] By ‘thoroughly’ I mean that I wanted to buttress each of my points several times. [7] From this point of view each discussion of each work is not entirely distinct from every other discussion. [8] Clearly ‘efficiently’ and ‘thoroughly’ are in conflict. [9] Unfortunately, this conflict cannot be avoided or resolved because this thesis is concerned with developing a world view rather than defending a specific argument. [10] Altogether I have attempted to strike a balance between ‘efficiently’ and ‘thoroughly’: each chapter and section introduces some new ideas and at the same time reinforces the arguments that have gone before.
Identify the transition signals

[1] As this thesis is not concerned with the narrow perspective I could have chosen to include any number of works. [2] I therefore need to explain why the above works were selected. [3] First, I wanted to present my own position both efficiently and thoroughly and I felt that the above combination of works would best facilitate this. [4] By ‘efficiently’ I mean that I wanted to develop my position using as few words as possible. [5] From this point of view each discussion of each work can be thought of as being a piece in the jigsaw puzzle of my overall position. [6] By ‘thoroughly’ I mean that I wanted to buttress each of my points several times. [7] From this point of view each discussion of each work is not entirely distinct from every other discussion. [8] Clearly ‘efficiently’ and ‘thoroughly’ are in conflict. [9] Unfortunately, this conflict cannot be avoided or resolved because this thesis is concerned with developing a world view rather than defending a specific argument. [10] Altogether I have attempted to strike a balance between ‘efficiently’ and ‘thoroughly’: each chapter and section introduces some new ideas and at the same time reinforces the arguments that have gone before.
Signposting

- **Remember:** Academic writing is a structured activity.
- Because of this, when writing we are always doing two things:
  1. Making points
  2. Relating points

- **Question:** What are all the instances of signposting?
  - Introductions and conclusions
  - Topic and concluding sentences
  - Transition signals
  - General linking (eg: ‘a similar point was made earlier in the context of...’)
  - Reporting verbs and phrases (eg: ‘Hoang argues that’)

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[79x472]Signposting

[49x434]—

[71x434]Remember:	Academic	writing	is	a	structured	activity.

[49x398]—

[71x398]Because	of	this,	when	writing	we	are	always
doi	ng	two	things:

[74x368]1.

[110x368]Making	points

[74x336]2.

[110x336]Relating	points

[70x269]—

[92x269]QuesCon:	What	are	all	the	instances	of	signposting?

[70x236]—

[92x236]IntroducCons	and	conclusions

[70x203]—

[92x203]Topic	and	concluding	sentences

[70x170]—

[92x170]TransiCon	signals

[70x137]—

[92x137]General	linking	(eg:	’a	similar	point	was	made	earlier	in	the	context	of...’)

[70x104]—

[92x104]ReporCng	verbs	and	phrases	(eg:	‘Hoang	argues	that’)
Put yourselves in the marker’s shoes

- Analyse the following paragraphs.
  - Are the basic rules of paragraph construction followed?
  - Work out what each sentence is saying, and how each sentence is related to the other sentences.
  - Identify transition signals.
  - Evaluate whether the paragraph is successful or not.
Example 1 – From a primary school history book.

[1] According to the reports of Captain James Cook and Sir Joseph Banks, Botany Bay offered many advantages. [2] These included a coastal area with a sheltered port, friendly natives, a pleasant climate, fertile soil, food sources including wild fruits, vegetables, birds and fish, and an environment in which the convicts could be self sufficient in a year. [3] It was also attractive due to its great distance from Britain and the fact that the convicts would have no means of escape. [4] Finally, it was a strategic stronghold in the East and it promised to be an important naval store of flax, hemp and timber.
Example 1 Function of each sentence

[1] According to the reports of Captain James Cook and Sir Joseph Banks, Botany Bay offered many advantages. [2] These included a coastal area with a sheltered port, friendly natives, a pleasant climate, fertile soil, food sources including wild fruits, vegetables, birds and fish, and an environment in which the convicts could be self sufficient in a year. [3] It was also attractive due to its great distance from Britain and the fact that the convicts would have no means of escape. [4] Finally, it was a strategic stronghold in the East and it promised to be an important naval store of flax, hemp and timber.

1. Topic sentence: Cook and Banks believed Botany Bay had many advantages.
2. Elaboration of advantages
3. Further elaboration of advantages
4. Final elaboration of advantages

General assessment: This paragraph is fine given where it was taken from.
Example 1 Transition Signals

[1] According to the reports of Captain James Cook and Sir Joseph Banks, Botany Bay offered many advantages. [2] These included a coastal area with a sheltered port, friendly natives, a pleasant climate, fertile soil, food sources including wild fruits, vegetables, birds and fish, and an environment in which the convicts could be self sufficient in a year. [3] It was also attractive due to its great distance from Britain and the fact that the convicts would have no means of escape. [4] Finally, it was a strategic stronghold in the East and it promised to be an important naval store of flax, hemp and timber.

- **Question:** Why does this paragraph not have a concluding sentence?
- **Answer:** This paragraph does not make an argument which needs to be summarised, it simply provides information.
Question: What are the characteristics of a good society?

Thesis: This essay argues that the central characteristic of a good society is being a democracy.

[1] The first key point that defines a democracy is all the people choosing their rulers. [2] It is important that everyone takes a part in this process. [3] If some groups are deprived of their right to vote, the elected governors will not be chosen by the whole population, but instead by part of it. [4] Even if part of the population is better educated or prepared than the rest, they should not determine the direction of their society. [5] Aristotle argued that “the multitude ought to be supreme rather than the few best” (2012, p. 64). [6] Furthermore, the portion of society commonly considered better educated or prepared is usually the richest portion. [7] The majority is always formed by the lower-middle class of workers, and they need democracy precisely to elect rulers that make laws to reduce the social injustices. [8] Clearly having all people choose their rulers is important for the well being of the general population and with this, for developing and maintaining a good society.
Example 2

[1] The first key point that defines a democracy is all the people choosing their rulers. [2] It is important that everyone takes a part in this process. [3] If some groups are deprived of their right to vote, the elected governors will not be chosen by the whole population, but instead by part of it. [4] Even if part of the population is better educated or prepared than the rest, they should not determine the direction of their society. [5] Aristotle argued that “the multitude ought to be supreme rather than the few best” (2012, p. 64). [6] Furthermore, the portion of society commonly considered better educated or prepared is usually the richest portion. [7] The majority is always formed by the lower-middle class of workers, and they need democracy precisely to elect rulers that make laws to reduce the social injustices. [8] Clearly having all people choose their rulers is important for the well being of the general population and with this, for developing and maintaining a good society.

1. Topic sentence (reasonable)
2. Transition to argument
3. Unnecessary padding
4. Specific argument, follows from [2]
5. Evidence, but not well integrated – note lack of engagement
6. Building on argument in [4]. “Furthermore” incorrect
7. The point of the argument that the student has been building – this is the highlight of the paragraph
8. Concluding sentence. Could be better integrated

Example 2 Transition Signals

[1] The first key point that defines a democracy is all the people choosing their rulers. [2] It is important that everyone takes a part in this process. [3] If some groups are deprived of their right to vote, the elected governors will not be chosen by the whole population, but instead by part of it. [4] Even if part of the population is better educated or prepared than the rest, they should not determine the direction of their society. [5] Aristotle argued that “the multitude ought to be supreme rather than the few best” (2012, p. 64). [6] Furthermore, the portion of society commonly considered better educated or prepared is usually the richest portion. [7] The majority is always formed by the lower-middle class of workers, and they need democracy precisely to elect rulers that make laws to reduce the social injustices. [8] Clearly having all people choose their rulers is important for the well being of the general population and with this, for developing and maintaining a good society.
Improved version

- General nature of improvement: argument made earlier in paragraph and flow between aspects of argument improved (see next slide).

- [1] The first key point that defines a democracy is all the people choosing their rulers. [2] It is important that everyone takes a part in this process. * [3] Even if part of the population is ostensibly better educated or prepared than the rest, they should not determine the direction of their society. [4] This is because this educated part of the population is often a wealthy minority and it is possible that they will exploit the lower and middle class workers who constitute the majority. [5] These workers thus need democracy precisely to elect rulers who make laws to reduce social injustices. [6] Aristotle supports this position when he argues that “the multitude ought to be supreme rather than the few best” (2012, p. 64). * [7] Clearly having all people choose their rulers is important for the well being of the general population and with this, for developing and maintaining a good society.

- * Sentence removed

- [3] “ostensibly” added to prepare the reader for the argument in the following sentence


- [6] Quotation better integrated (note that quotation is still quite general in nature and thus better supporting research could be found).

- * Sentences removed
The first key point that defines a democracy is all the people choosing their rulers. It is important that everyone takes a part in this process. Even if part of the population is ostensibly better educated or prepared than the rest, they should not determine the direction of their society. This is because this educated part of the population is often a wealthy minority and it is possible that they will exploit the lower and middle class workers who constitute the majority. These workers thus need democracy precisely to elect rulers who make laws to reduce social injustices. Aristotle supports this position when he argues that “the multitude ought to be supreme rather than the few best” (2012, p. 64). Clearly having all people choose their rulers is important for the well being of the general population and with this, for developing and maintaining a good society.
Question: How will Japan’s political ‘normalisation’ affect the regional security landscape?

Student’s thesis: This essay argues that the political normalisation of Japan will have a stabilising effect for East Asia.

[1] One key area of concern, however, is the deployment of the Japanese Self Defense Force (SDF) to support the United States in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. [2] Taking part in these highly contentious uses of force suggests that Japan may be willing to act outside of the normative and legal frameworks of the United Nations system it claims to support. [3] Bisley (2008: 80) is concerned about the regional impacts of a Japan that is willing to be involved in “risky and legally fraught endeavours” such as the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. [4] Midford (2004: 125) counters such concerns by arguing that the new role afforded to the SDF “suggested little more than increased Japanese non-lethal logistical support for the US forces in areas well removed from combat”. [5] It is thus apparent that the involvement of Japan in the US campaign against terrorism is an example of alliance-building, not re-militarisation. [6] This evidence supports the conclusion that the expansion of the Japanese military capacity continues to be informed by defensive, pacifist ideologies. [7] Thus it can be seen that Japan’s political normalisation, of which the expansion of its military capacity is a part, will not destabilise the East Asian region as some critics have suggested.
Example 3

[1] One key area of concern, however, is the deployment of the Japanese Self Defense Force (SDF) to support the United States in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. [2] Taking part in these highly contentious uses of force suggests that Japan may be willing to act outside the normative and legal frameworks of the United Nations system it claims to support. [3] Bisley (2008: 80) is concerned about the regional impacts of a Japan that is willing to be involved in “risky and legally fraught endeavours” such as the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. [4] Midford (2004: 125) counters such concerns by arguing that the new role afforded to the SDF “suggested little more than increased Japanese non-lethal logistical support for the US forces in areas well removed from combat”. [5] It is thus apparent that the involvement of Japan in the US campaign against terrorism is an example of alliance-building, not re-militarisation. [6] This evidence supports the conclusion that the expansion of the Japanese military capacity continues to be informed by defensive, pacifist ideologies. [7] Thus it can be seen that Japan’s political normalisation, of which the expansion of its military capacity is a part, will not destabilise the East Asian region as some critics have suggested.

1. A possible objection to the student’s argument is introduced. Note link with previous point.
2. The objection is expanded upon to indicate obliquely how it is relevant to the question/thesis.
3. Evidence is introduced to show that this concern is substantial.
4. A counter-point is introduced.
5. Significance of counterpoint explained.
6. Significance of counterpoint placed in a more general context (Japan’s continued pacifism).
7. Concluding sentence clearly relates what has been argued to the question and the thesis.

General assessment: While a bit of editing is possible, this is a strong undergraduate paragraph. 8.5/10.
One key area of concern, however, is the deployment of the Japanese Self Defense Force (SDF) to support the United States in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Taking part in these highly contentious uses of force suggests that Japan may be willing to act outside of the normative and legal frameworks of the United Nations system it claims to support. Bisley (2008: 80) is concerned about the regional impacts of a Japan that is willing to be involved in “risky and legally fraught endeavours” such as the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. Midford (2004: 125) counters such concerns by arguing that the new role afforded to the SDF “suggested little more than increased Japanese non-lethal logistical support for the US forces in areas well removed from combat”. It is thus apparent that the involvement of Japan in the US campaign against terrorism is an example of alliance-building, not re-militarisation. This evidence supports the conclusion that the expansion of the Japanese military capacity continues to be informed by defensive, pacifist ideologies. Thus it can be seen that Japan’s political normalisation, of which the expansion of its military capacity is a part, will not destabilise the East Asian region as some critics have suggested.
Question: Explain the meaning of humanitarian intervention and analyse the arguments both for and against its practice.

Thesis: No thesis articulated.

[1] Those against the practice of humanitarian intervention highlight how the concept runs counter to the international commitment to refrain from the use of force and also despite its apparent peaceful nature more than often the notion of humanitarian intervention almost always means the use of armed forces. [2] It is argued that humanitarian intervention in fact ends up doing what its proponents say they are out to prevent (Bello, 2006). [3] For example critics argue that humanitarian intervention does not promote human rights values but instead enforces them. [4] The idea of the concept should not be misunderstood as referring only to the use of force and its essence is supposedly in its response as one that utilises all prevention and protection measures available in a timely and decisive manner. [5] Those against humanitarian intervention aren’t opposed to saving lives but rather concentrate on its illegitimacy and the debatable motives of intervening states, as intervention is never purely humanitarian as critics believe.
Example 4: editing

• **NB:** In lower quality essays, first of all the marker has to work out what each sentence means before they can even determine if the sentences in the paragraph form a reasonable argument.

• [1] Those against the practice of humanitarian intervention highlight how the concept runs counter to the international commitment to refrain from the use of force and also despite its apparent peaceful nature more than often the notion of humanitarian intervention almost always means the use of armed forces.
Example 4: editing

- **NB:** In lower quality essays, first of all the marker has to work out what each sentence means before they can even determine if the sentences in the paragraph form a reasonable argument.

- [1] Those against the practice of humanitarian intervention highlight how the concept runs counter to the international commitment to refrain from the use of force and also despite its apparent peaceful nature more than often the notion of humanitarian intervention almost always means the use of armed forces.
  - “also despite” = bad parallelism.
  - “more than often” not needed when “almost always” is present in the sentence.
  - “the notion” seems redundant.

- [1] Those against the practice of humanitarian intervention highlight how the concept runs counter to the international commitment to refrain from the use of force and also argue that despite its apparent peaceful nature humanitarian intervention almost always means the use of armed forces.
Example 4 editing

• [2] It is argued that humanitarian intervention in fact ends up doing what its proponents say they are out to prevent (Bello, 2006).
It is argued that humanitarian intervention in fact ends up doing what its proponents say they wish to prevent (Bello, 2006).

“are out” is informal.

It is argued that humanitarian intervention in fact ends up doing what its proponents say they wish to prevent (Bello, 2006).
Example 4 editing

- Sentence [3] is reasonable, although “for example” could be replaced by “specifically.”
- [4] The idea of the concept should not be misunderstood as referring only to the use of force and its essence is supposedly in its response as one that utilises all prevention and protection measures available in a timely and decisive manner.
Example 4 editing

- Sentence [3] is reasonable, although “for example” could be replaced by “specifically.”

- [4] The idea of the concept should not be misunderstood as referring only to the use of force and its essence is supposedly in its response as one that utilises all prevention and protection measures available in a timely and decisive manner.
  - “The idea of the” is too wordy. Remove.
  - “and” = confusing transition. Use a better transition signal.
  - “is supposedly in its response as one that utilises” is clumsy.
  - A transition signal at the start of the sentence would be useful.

- [4] However, the concept should not be misunderstood as referring only to the use of force, as its essence supposedly lies in the fact that when interventions occur, they utilise all prevention and protection measures available in a timely and decisive manner.
  - NB: the last part of the sentence sounds plagiarised.
Example 4 editing

- Sentence [5] is reasonable.
[1] Those against the practice of humanitarian intervention highlight how the concept runs counter to the international commitment to refrain from the use of force and also argue that despite its apparent peaceful nature humanitarian intervention almost always means the use of armed forces. [2] It is argued that humanitarian intervention in fact ends up doing what its proponents say they wish to prevent (Bello, 2006). [3] Specifically critics argue that humanitarian intervention does not promote human rights values but instead enforces them. [4] However, the concept should not be misunderstood as referring only to the use of force, as its essence supposedly lies in the fact that when interventions occur, they utilise all prevention and protection measures available in a timely and decisive manner. [5] Those against humanitarian intervention aren’t opposed to saving lives but rather concentrate on its illegitimacy and the debatable motives of intervening states, as intervention is never purely humanitarian as critics believe.
Those against the practice of humanitarian intervention highlight how the concept runs counter to the international commitment to refrain from the use of force and also argue that despite its apparent peaceful nature humanitarian intervention almost always means the use of armed forces. It is argued that humanitarian intervention in fact ends up doing what its proponents say they wish to prevent (Bello, 2006).

Specifically critics argue that humanitarian intervention does not promote human rights values but instead enforces them. However, the concept should not be misunderstood as referring only to the use of force, as its essence supposedly lies in the fact that when interventions occur, they utilise all prevention and protection measures available in a timely and decisive manner. Those against humanitarian intervention aren’t opposed to saving lives but rather concentrate on its illegitimacy and the debatable motives of intervening states, as intervention is never purely humanitarian as critics believe.

1. Two reasons are introduced why humanitarian intervention is problematic: a) it runs counter to international law, b) it is not as peaceful as it sounds. As a marker, I now expect that these points will be expanded upon. Point a) sounds plagiarised.

2. This sentence expands upon point b). I would expect a) to be expanded upon first.

3. Further expansion of b). The student’s argument is only implied: specifically, the student is implying that ‘enforcing’ human rights values is a bad thing. This is not a given.

4. Counter argument to b): care is taken in humanitarian intervention to minimise the negative impact. Most of the sentence is plagiarised.

5. Concluding sentence. Point a) from the topic sentence is reaffirmed (although no arguments have been presented to support it). Point c) introduced: intervening states can have dubious motives.

General assessment: This paragraph is poor because it covers three separate points and does so in a haphazard manner (there is some logic in the middle sentences). There should be one paragraph for each of the three points. There is also a fair amount of plagiarism. Mark: 4/10 (because of the plagiarism it’s hard to know what mark to give)
Those against the practice of humanitarian intervention highlight how the concept runs counter to the international commitment to refrain from the use of force and also argue that despite its apparent peaceful nature humanitarian intervention almost always means the use of armed forces. It is argued that humanitarian intervention in fact ends up doing what its proponents say they wish to prevent (Bello, 2006). Specifically critics argue that humanitarian intervention does not promote human rights values but instead enforces them. The concept should not be misunderstood as referring only to the use of force, as its essence supposedly lies in the fact that when interventions occur, they utilise all prevention and protection measures available in a timely and decisive manner. Those against humanitarian intervention aren’t opposed to saving lives but rather concentrate on its illegitimacy and the debatable motives of intervening states, as intervention is never purely humanitarian as critics believe.
The conclusion
Conclusion... briefly

• **Question**: Why do conclusions exist in essays?

• **Answer**: To remind the reader of what has been argued.

• **Question**: How does the function of a conclusion differ in essays compared with experimental reports / studies (scientific reports).

• **Answer**:
  
  • In a scientific report the structure mimics the problem solving process. In this context the conclusion is weighty. It provides, for the first time, the overall solution to the problem/question.
  
  • In contrast, an essay often presents the outcome of the problem solving process in the introduction (the thesis) then proceeds to defend this. The conclusion is thus less weighty.
Conclusion... briefly

- **Question:** What is the difference between an essay conclusion and introduction?

- **Answer:**
  - In intro the question/problem identification and the thesis are the heroes.
  - In conclusion the summary is the hero.
Conclusion: what to include

What you should do in your conclusion:

1. Remind the reader of the question/problem in the first sentence. Or do something similarly general.

2. Summarise your main points.


- Consider using ‘concluding language’
  - ‘This essay has demonstrated that...’
  - ‘We have also seen that...’
Conclusions: What to avoid

1. Do not include new information.

2. Don’t worry about summarising less important aspects of your essay. Focus on the key arguments.
   - Avoid the bloodless conclusion.

Essay question

Examine the case of “Isabella”, a woman who has been diagnosed with Adjustment Disorder with Anxiety, and prescribed Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction. Evaluate her diagnosis and prescribed treatment. If appropriate, suggest a new diagnosis and treatment.

Conclusion

[1] This essay has analysed the case of “Isabella”, a woman who had been diagnosed with Adjustment Disorder with Anxiety, and prescribed Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction. [2] First, the essential details of Isabella’s case were examined. [3] Second, her diagnosis and prescription were evaluated. [4] A new diagnosis was proposed and justified. [5] Lastly, several treatment options including the originally-prescribed Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction were discussed.
Conclusions: What to avoid


4. Avoid banal final sentences.
   - ‘But this is just one opinion. There are many more.’
   - ‘Maybe the world will never be perfect, but at least we can try to make it better.’
Good conclusion example – from a student essay

**Question:** Discuss to what extent the bush legend remains a representative image of Australian society.

[1] This essay has demonstrated that the social landscape of contemporary Australia is markedly different from that of the nineteenth century, when the bush legend was conceived. [2] It has been noted that the nation has seen steady immigration from a wide range of countries to create a very multicultural society, quite different from the predominantly Anglo-Irish one of the past. [3] It was also discussed that today the majority of Australians live in cities and rely on technology to facilitate their lifestyles, with only a minority of the population carrying on the traditional rural lifestyle. [4] Furthermore, we have seen that the rights of women have progressed towards equality with men since the nineteenth century, and also that the attitude towards and acceptance of homosexuals has improved significantly since the bush legend era when homosexuality was illegal and did not form part of the legend. [5] Even though the “Aussie Battler” character maintains a legacy of the bush legend past, it is clear that most demographic sectors of Australia share little connection with the bush legend. [6] Therefore it can be said that the bush legend only remains a representative image of Australian society to a small extent.
**Question:** Discuss to what extent the bush legend remains a representative image of Australian society.

[1] This essay has demonstrated that the social landscape of contemporary Australia is markedly different from that of the nineteenth century, when the bush legend was conceived. [2] It has been noted that the nation has seen steady immigration from a wide range of countries to create a very multicultural society, quite different from the predominantly Anglo-Irish one of the past. [3] It was also discussed that today the majority of Australians live in cities and rely on technology to facilitate their lifestyles, with only a minority of the population carrying on the traditional rural lifestyle. [4] Furthermore, we have seen that the rights of women have progressed towards equality with men since the nineteenth century, and also that the attitude towards and acceptance of homosexuals has improved significantly since the bush legend era when homosexuality was illegal and did not form part of the legend. [5] Even though the “Aussie Battler” character maintains a legacy of the bush legend past, it is clear that most demographic sectors of Australia share little connection with the bush legend. [6] Therefore it can be said that the bush legend only remains a representative image of Australian society to a small extent.

1 – Introductory sentence. Similar to the thesis (see last sentence).
2 to 4 – Arguments from the strong perspective summarised
5 – Argument from the weak perspective summarised
6 – Restatement of thesis
Integrating the ideas of others
BLOCKQUOTE TAKES UP HALF OF RESEARCH PAPER

"BUT IT REALLY SUPPORTED MY CLAIM!"
Ways of engaging with others’ work

- **Question:** What are the ways you can engage with others’ ideas (what can you do with others’ ideas)?

1. Using others’ work to demonstrate knowledge
2. Using others’ work to support a claim
3. Breaking others’ work into parts
   - Usually first step in analysis, prior to 4-8.
4. Comparing others’ work
5. Contrasting others’ work
6. Evaluating others’ work
7. Building on others’ work
   - Use others’ work as a starting point. Beginning with others establishes a context and builds credibility.
8. Synthesising others’ work
   - Combining the best bits.
Critical thinking
Critical thinking

- **Question**: What is critical thinking?
- **Question**: What does critical thinking feel like?
  - **Answer**:
    - Sometimes exciting, like you are getting the heart of something.
    - Sometimes it hurts because your brain is assimilating new material.
    - Sometimes risky, because you are going against doctrine.
- **Question**: Can you think of instances when you have thought critically? (Your glory stories!)
- **Question**: Can you become a critical thinker?
The general characteristics of CT (note overlap with what has been taught already):

1. **Being knowledgeable**
2. **Having understanding** of your subject: tensions, debates, history
   - Don’t just describe: analyse, compare, contrast, synthesise, evaluate
   [activities to come]
3. **Recognising and working with patterns**
   - In university we are in the business of understanding the patterns of the universe. A theory is a description of a pattern. [activities to come]
4. **Being sceptical**
   - Be sceptical of others’ work and your own
The general characteristics of CT

5. Being logical (using reasoning) [activities to come]
   - Illogical: Samia plays ultimate frisbee. Samia is great. Therefore all ultimate frisbee players are great.
   - Logical: Samia plays ultimate frisbee. All ultimate frisbee players are great. Therefore Samia is great.

6. Using evidence to support/develop arguments

7. Being systematic (having a good structure)

8. Being efficient

9. Being consistent

10. Being flexible
Critical thinking involves:

11. Being independent

- Eg: Identifying and solving worthy problems, finding interesting sources, making your voice heard

- **Question:** How you can make your voice heard:
  - In introductions: identify question/problem + significance.
  - In introductions: have a clear and nuanced thesis.
  - Topic sentences: linking + topic introduction.
  - Concluding sentences: clarify how your point supports your general argument and ultimately helps you to answer the question.
  - Transition signals.
  - Reporting verbs and phrases (differentiating between your voice and others’ voices).
  - When you analyse, compare, contrast, evaluate and synthesise others’ work.
  - When you show caution when making a claim.
Critical thinking involves:

12. **Being self-aware**
   - Question and justify your own approaches

13. **Being principled**
   - **Question:** What do you think of the idea that critical thinking is a moral activity?
Inhibitors of critical thinking at uni

- **Question**: what inhibits you from thinking critically?
  - Not having an interest in what you write about
  - Skipping lectures, not doing any reading, and having no idea about the issues / concepts that are relevant to your assignment
  - Cultural conditioning (assuming that what is normal is right and natural)
  - Relying on stereotypes or black and white thinking
  - Unquestioned reliance on authority
  - Not wanting to ‘rock the boat’ (being frightened about challenging authority)
Critical thinking: nuance, evidence, qualification

- Consider the claim, “Australia is the best country in the world.” Your job is to add to this statement to make it more critical.
- Start by mapping your ideas on a continuum.

- NB: Not “Australia is a good country.”
“Australia is the best country in the world”

- Health care: Yes
- Human development index: Yes
- Stable democracy: Yes
- Rule of law: Yes
- Centrist tendencies: No
- GDP per capita: Yes
- Income disparity: No
- Popular place for immigration: Yes
- Global power: Yes
- Public transport (UMI): Yes
- Influence in global culture: Yes
- Beautiful environment: Yes
- CO2 emissions per capita: No
- Life expectancy gap between mainstream and indigenous populations: No
- For whom the bell tolls index: No
- Sporting prowess: Yes
Grammar and academic expression
COMIC REWRITE CONTEST

...And me and Steve weren't anywhere near the school at the time...

Don't you mean Steve and I?

What's up?

I'm allergic to grammatical errors

Your coughing up blood! I didn't know allergies could cause such a bad effect!

Are their others like you? Looks like it's getting worse!

How pacific do these errors have to be?

For the love of God stop!

Cyanide and Happiness © Explosm.net
Academic expression

- **Question:** What do we mean when we say that academic writing is formal?

- **Answer:** We mean that it is clear, accurate, efficient, and for the most part emotionally neutral.

- **Full word forms**
  - **Do not write:** It’s, don’t, shouldn’t, quote, ad, e.g., i.e., etc.
  - **Write:** It is, do not, should not, quotation, advertisement, for example, that is, etcetera.

- **Tentative language**
  - **Write:** It could be argued that, perhaps, these findings suggest that, to some extent, it would seem that, somewhat
Academic expression

- **Clichés**
  - Do not write: Going forward, at the end of the day, strategic plan

- **Sensational / melodramatic / journalistic language**
  - Do not write: It was absolutely shocking that Berlusconi, who is a terrible crook and a disgusting womaniser, is yet again running for election.
  - Write: It is surprising that Berlusconi, whose political career and private life have been very controversial, is yet again running for election.
• **Colloquial language**

  • **Do not write:** All in all, the government’s been pretty hopeless when it comes to sorting out the pokies.
  
  • **Write:** In sum, the government’s regulation of the poker-machine industry has been inadequate.

• **Rhetorical questions**

  • **Do not write:** We have to ask ourselves: do we really care about people from other countries?
  
  • **Write:** It could be argued that people from one state do not care about people from other states.
What not to do when you write

Avoid tautologies (and redundancies)

- **Question:** What is a tautology?
  - **NB:** Both weak and strong suffer from tautologies
- **Question:** What do you think about the following?

**Entry level tautologies**

- An accepted social norm
- The next step moving forward
- Everyone noticed that education is not the same as before and it has changed a lot.
What not to do when you write

**Mid-level tautologies**

- **Question:** How many tautologies can you spot?
- **Question:** Are there any other problems?
- Children were encouraged to explore, play, be independent and discover things for themselves.
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Triple! Triple! Double Double Double
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**Double**

**Triple!**

**Redundant**

**Cliché**
What not to do when you write

**High level tautologies** (prize winner for 2013)

- These scribbles are a personal esoteric symbolism, unintelligible to others because they are a form of shorthand hieroglyphic, which produces spontaneous, fluid and abstract solutions, decipherable only to their creator.

*Nonariffic!*
What not to do when you write

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Nonariffic!
Visit the learning centre

- The lower ground floor of the Chancellery building
- For students of all academic abilities
  - Online resources
  - Workshops
  - Individual consultations
  - Conversation classes
  - General education subjects (GENY)