



The Learning Centre

Essay Checklist

Introduction

- Clearly expresses the *topic*, *focus* and *scope* of your essay.
- Engages reader* by using an interesting analogy, startling statistic, intriguing quotation or other captivating technique.
- Thesis statement* clearly proposes the main argument or point of view of the essay.

Body Paragraphs

- Topic sentence* clearly states the central point in each paragraph.
- Clear *paragraph focus* -- one distinct point per paragraph.
- Develops paragraph* using specific examples, in-depth analysis, compare and contrast analogies, quotations, etc.
- Demonstrate *cohesion* and strong *connections* by:
 - Integrating transitional words and phrases.
 - Referring to the central thesis/argument or introducing the next point at the end of a few paragraphs.
- For *Research Essay*:
 - Paragraph points well supported with quotes and paraphrases from research.
 - All quotes, paraphrases, and summaries are correctly cited using APA, MLA or Chicago Style (per assignment).
 - Essay includes thoroughly documented *Works Cited* or *References* page using specified documentation style.

Conclusion

- Continues to engage and expand *critical thinking* already present in essay.
- Provides closure* while *broadening* to consider larger implications.
- Fresh and thought-provoking*, causing reader to think more deeply about issue.

Edit & Format

- Complete *spelling/grammar check* and review *common errors* in grammar & punctuation (run-on/comma splices, commas, apostrophes, etc.)
- Follow assignment requirements or use *MLA, APA, or Chicago Style* guidelines to check:
 - Formatting -- margins, headings, page numbers, cover page, etc.
 - Personal/course information --- on cover page or first page of essay.
 - In-text citations (quotes, paraphrases, summaries) and *Works Cited/References* page using MLA, APA or Chicago Style guides.