

Essay Planning

What is an Essay Plan?



Your essay plan is where you start to give your essay structure in it you should detail any points which must be included in the final written piece. Your plan gives you the opportunity to note what information and research is going to be presented and in which part of the essay it will appear. This allows you to write your essay freely without having to stop to look up further information. A good Essay plan will enable you to fully complete your essay from your notes within the plan. This may include

- Your main point or argument on what the essay is about
- Your thoughts and ideas that you want to include
- The structure of the essay

10 Steps to a great Plan

Start off by completing the first 6 Steps as soon as you get your Essay Question—that way the information will be fresh in your mind:

1. Study the Essay Question and make sure you understand it
2. Write the Question out in full
3. Spend some time brainstorming the subject area—make use of mind maps, bullet points or post-it notes
4. Write down your thoughts on the question subject—its scope and different aspects you will cover
5. List key words or phrases that you think need to be included
6. If you feel unsure what to include speak to your teacher to make sure you're on the right track

Once you have completed the first 6 steps and you are ready to proceed, continue to expand and develop your ideas in more depth:

7. Re-read course materials, handouts and class notes to identify what will be relevant to the essay
8. Write down where you will find all of the necessary information for each of the points on your plan you want to make in your essay (class notes, handouts etc) and identify where you feel that some additional research is necessary
9. Note down all the sources of further information you will use (books, journals, on-line content, media sources).
10. Once your plan is complete, stop and think about the proportions—how many words in total do you need to write and then consider how many words you want to allocate to each section of your essay. The majority of your words should be in the 'main body.'

Top Tip!

! Don't let your plan become too complicated—stick to the main points and keep it relevant to the question

