

# How to write an Essay (for GitM)

By PAL Nauris



# Before we start

**PAL Tutors** are fellow students that are there to help with academic questions.

Join the [PAL Canvas](#).

Make sure to check out the recording of the previous PAL Essay Writing workshop!



# What will NOT be covered here

1. No convened content of GitM; academic writing only!
2. No Peerceptiv

# What to expect

I cannot give you answers... here's a bunch of questions instead!

This workshop is made from my experience and perspective. Take the word of TA's and lecturers as more senior to my advice.

These slides are intended as reference material to be used after the workshop, so they will be wordier than usual.

# How is GitM different?

## G5077: The Ghost in the Machine?

- Convenes both module content and essential academic writing foundations.
- Is very specific with requirements. Do not expect this level of hand-holding from other modules.
- Makes you think from the perspective of the marker.

# Outline of this Workshop

But first – Recap!

1. What is a Rubric
2. Technical content
3. Coherence of presentation of ideas
4. References and citations
5. Supporting the reader to navigate the essay
6. Thesis/argument
7. Writing quality

Wrapping up

# Recap

An essay consists of the three parts:

- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusion

P.S. Watch the recording of the  
*Essays: the basics* on PAL Canvas

## Title

### Introduction

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nam non massa urna. Maecenas viverra aliquet lorem vitae sollicitudin. Curabitur pretium lacus ante, ut pharetra justo fringilla ut. Vivamus accumsan fringilla ullamcorper. Maecenas fermentum lacus nec lacus ornare, vel luctus magna ultricies. Cras porttitor mauris in enim finibus, vel ultricies tellus commodo. Fusce vel porttitor elit.

### Topic One

Suspendisse potenti. Suspendisse at lorem orci. Vivamus bibendum, metus ac fermentum tempor, urna sapien scelerisque mauris, ut tincidunt odio lacus sed ex. Cras finibus mattis velit, ac malesuada lacus maximus vel. Vivamus cursus egestas enim, ut tempor sem mattis a. Nulla et viverra nibh, faucibus tincidunt lacus. Mauris vestibulum semper eros non efficitur. Aenean consectetur orci at leo imperdiet, sed ullamcorper mi euismod. Aenean nec purus aliquet velit vestibulum consequat. Nam pellentesque lacus in cursus bibendum. Sed congue libero nec imperdiet vestibulum. Aenean mattis libero sed tincidunt sagittis. Morbi volutpat nisi sed nibh elementum, quis ornare libero faucibus. Ut metus libero, aliquam sed aliquam sed, faucibus et turpis.

### Topic Two

Phasellus ornare cursus lectus in facilisis. Suspendisse ornare turpis quis metus sodales, sit amet laoreet metus mattis. Donec a felis nibh. Quisque quis metus non lorem ultrices consequat. Quisque luctus ultrices justo, sit amet congue diam interdum non. Proin volutpat sit amet ipsum et ornare. Curabitur sed diam dignissim velit bibendum commodo. Aenean suscipit turpis id suscipit posuere. Nullam a orci nec neque luctus cursus. In aliquam tellus in velit vestibulum, in lobortis diam malesuada. Phasellus accumsan euismod pretium. Suspendisse ornare nec nisi vitae auctor. Integer scelerisque condimentum felis, nec maximus nulla. Aliquam erat volutpat. Maecenas et elementum nisi.

### Topic Three

Vestibulum sed molestie nunc. Suspendisse porta risus vitae ex pulvinar aliquet. Proin at vehicula tortor. Duis placerat sit amet diam vel congue. Praesent ipsum elit, rhoncus at purus ut, fringilla congue est. Duis ac accumsan tortor, id vestibulum ante. Proin commodo interdum augue, nec dictum risus imperdiet non. Cras convallis sit amet massa non sagittis. Fusce eget tortor aliquam, tempus nibh gravida, convallis neque. Vestibulum efficitur facilisis vehicula. Phasellus non pulvinar diam, eget tristique massa. Sed ac laoreet metus.

### Conclusion

Suspendisse porttitor tincidunt tortor eget fermentum. Nam aliquam congue egestas. Integer ornare turpis felis, id fringilla erat lobortis sed. Etiam pharetra in diam et mollis. Cras in leo id odio maximus ullamcorper a a urna. Ut sit amet elit placerat, hendrerit leo id, hendrerit lectus. Nam congue ligula felis, in aliquet felis semper sed. Fusce efficitur volutpat convallis. Nam malesuada tincidunt pulvinar. Duis vulputate leo lorem, at venenatis lacus condimentum et. Duis elit dui, ultrices id consequat ut, scelerisque eu diam. Duis consectetur scelerisque dui, porta dictum lorem condimentum sit amet.

# Recap: No one likes a wall of text

- Writing conventions (not just academic) exist for a reason.
- Think about how you present ideas, not just what you present.
- Your task is to get the information from your head to someone else's with minimum loss of information.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nam non massa urna. Maecenas viverra aliquet lorem vitae sollicitudin. Curabitur pretium lacus ante, ut pharetra justo fringilla ut. Vivamus accumsan fringilla ullamcorper. Maecenas fermentum lacus nec lacus ornare, vel luctus magna ultricies. Cras porttitor mauris in enim finibus, vel ultricies tellus commodo. Fusce vel porttitor elit. Suspendisse potenti. Suspendisse at lorem orci. Vivamus bibendum, metus ac fermentum tempor, urna sapien scelerisque mauris, ut tincidunt odio lacus sed ex. Cras finibus mattis velit, ac malesuada lacus maximus vel. Vivamus cursus egestas enim, ut tempor sem mattis a. Nulla et viverra nibh, faucibus tincidunt lacus. Mauris vestibulum semper eros non efficitur. Aenean consectetur orci at leo imperdiet, sed ullamcorper mi euismod. Aenean nec purus aliquet velit vestibulum consequat. Nam pellentesque lacus in cursus bibendum. Sed congue libero nec imperdiet vestibulum. Aenean mattis libero sed tincidunt sagittis. Morbi volutpat nisi sed nibh elementum, quis ornare libero faucibus. Ut metus libero, aliquam sed aliquam sed, faucibus et turpis. Phasellus ornare cursus lectus in facilisis. Suspendisse ornare turpis quis metus sodales, sit amet laoreet metus mattis. Donec a felis nibh. Quisque quis metus non lorem ultrices consequat. Quisque luctus ultrices justo, sit amet congue diam interdum non. Proin volutpat sit amet ipsum et ornare. Curabitur sed diam dignissim velit bibendum commodo. Aenean suscipit turpis id suscipit posuere. Nullam a orci nec neque luctus cursus. In aliquam tellus in velit vestibulum, in lobortis diam malesuada. Phasellus accumsan euismod pretium. Suspendisse ornare nec nisl vitae auctor. Integer scelerisque condimentum felis, nec maximus nulla. Aliquam erat volutpat. Maecenas et elementum nisl. Vestibulum sed molestie nunc. Suspendisse porta risus vitae ex pulvinar aliquet. Proin at vehicula tortor. Duis placerat sit amet diam vel congue. Praesent ipsum elit, rhoncus at purus ut, fringilla congue est. Duis ac accumsan tortor, id vestibulum ante. Proin commodo interdum augue, nec dictum risus imperdiet non. Cras convallis sit amet massa non sagittis. Fusce eget tortor aliquam, tempus nibh gravida, convallis neque. Vestibulum efficitur facilisis vehicula. Phasellus non pulvinar diam, eget tristique massa. Sed ac laoreet metus. Suspendisse porttitor tincidunt tortor eget fermentum. Nam aliquam congue egestas. Integer ornare turpis felis, id fringilla erat lobortis sed. Etiam pharetra in diam et mollis. Cras in leo id odio maximus ullamcorper a a urna. Ut sit amet elit placerat, hendrerit leo id, hendrerit lectus. Nam congue ligula felis, in aliquet felis semper sed. Fusce efficitur volutpat convallis. Nam malesuada tincidunt pulvinar. Duis vulputate leo lorem, at venenatis lacus condimentum et. Duis elit dui, ultrices id consequat ut, scelerisque eu diam. Duis consectetur scelerisque dui, porta dictum lorem condimentum sit amet.



# Recap: Introduction

The first paragraph of your essay. It is the first impression your readers receive and explain the main point of your paper. Your introduction contains your thesis statement.

## Title

### Introduction

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nam non massa urna. Maecenas viverra aliquet lorem vitae sollicitudin. Curabitur pretium lacus ante, ut pharetra justo fringilla ut. Vivamus accumsan fringilla ullamcorper. Maecenas fermentum lacus nec lacus ornare, vel luctus magna ultricies. Cras porttitor mauris in enim finibus, vel ultricies tellus commodo. Fusce vel porttitor elit.

### Topic One

Suspendisse potenti. Suspendisse at lorem orci. Vivamus bibendum, metus ac fermentum tempor, urna sapien scelerisque mauris, ut tincidunt odio lacus sed ex. Cras finibus mattis velit, ac malesuada lacus maximus vel. Vivamus cursus egestas enim, ut tempor sem mattis a. Nulla et viverra nibh, faucibus tincidunt lacus. Mauris vestibulum semper eros non efficitur. Aenean consectetur orci at leo imperdiet, sed ullamcorper mi euismod. Aenean nec purus aliquet velit vestibulum consequat. Nam pellentesque lacus in cursus bibendum. Sed congue libero nec imperdiet vestibulum. Aenean mattis libero sed tincidunt sagittis. Morbi volutpat nisi sed nibh elementum, quis ornare libero faucibus. Ut metus libero, aliquam sed aliquam sed, faucibus et turpis.

### Topic Two

Phasellus ornare cursus lectus in facilisis. Suspendisse ornare turpis quis metus sodales, sit amet laoreet metus mattis. Donec a felis nibh. Quisque quis metus non lorem ultrices consequat. Quisque luctus ultrices justo, sit amet congue diam interdum non. Proin volutpat sit amet ipsum et ornare. Curabitur sed diam dignissim velit bibendum commodo. Aenean suscipit turpis id suscipit posuere. Nullam a orci nec neque luctus cursus. In aliquam tellus in velit vestibulum, in lobortis diam malesuada. Phasellus accumsan euismod pretium. Suspendisse ornare nec nisi vitae auctor. Integer scelerisque condimentum felis, nec maximus nulla. Aliquam erat volutpat. Maecenas et elementum nisi.

### Topic Three

Vestibulum sed molestie nunc. Suspendisse porta risus vitae ex pulvinar aliquet. Proin at vehicula tortor. Duis placerat sit amet diam vel congue. Praesent ipsum elit, rhoncus at purus ut, fringilla congue est. Duis ac accumsan tortor, id vestibulum ante. Proin commodo interdum augue, nec dictum risus imperdiet non. Cras convallis sit amet massa non sagittis. Fusce eget tortor aliquam, tempus nibh gravida, convallis neque. Vestibulum efficitur facilisis vehicula. Phasellus non pulvinar diam, eget tristique massa. Sed ac laoreet metus.

### Conclusion

Suspendisse porttitor tincidunt tortor eget fermentum. Nam aliquam congue egestas. Integer ornare turpis felis, id fringilla erat lobortis sed. Etiam pharetra in diam et mollis. Cras in leo id odio maximus ullamcorper a a urna. Ut sit amet elit placerat, hendrerit leo id, hendrerit lectus. Nam congue ligula felis, in aliquet felis semper sed. Fusce efficitur volutpat convallis. Nam malesuada tincidunt pulvinar. Duis vulputate leo lorem, at venenatis lacus condimentum et. Duis elit dui, ultrices id consequat ut, scelerisque eu diam. Duis consectetur scelerisque dui, porta dictum lorem condimentum sit amet.

# Recap: Body

The paragraphs in between your introduction and conclusion. The body of your paper supports the main point of your paper.

The sentence at the beginning of each body paragraph is the topic sentence. It explains the main point that paragraph is going to make.

## Title

### Introduction

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nam non massa urna. Maecenas viverra aliquet lorem vitae sollicitudin. Curabitur pretium lacus ante, ut pharetra justo fringilla ut. Vivamus accumsan fringilla ullamcorper. Maecenas fermentum lacus nec lacus ornare, vel luctus magna ultricies. Cras porttitor mauris in enim finibus, vel ultricies tellus commodo. Fusce vel porttitor elit.

### Topic One

Suspendisse potenti. Suspendisse at lorem orci. Vivamus bibendum, metus ac fermentum tempor, urna sapien scelerisque mauris, ut tincidunt odio lacus sed ex. Cras finibus mattis velit, ac malesuada lacus maximus vel. Vivamus cursus egestas enim, ut tempor sem mattis a. Nulla et viverra nibh, faucibus tincidunt lacus. Mauris vestibulum semper eros non efficitur. Aenean consectetur orci at leo imperdiet, sed ullamcorper mi euismod. Aenean nec purus aliquet velit vestibulum consequat. Nam pellentesque lacus in cursus bibendum. Sed congue libero nec imperdiet vestibulum. Aenean mattis libero sed tincidunt sagittis. Morbi volutpat nisi sed nibh elementum, quis ornare libero faucibus. Ut metus libero, aliquam sed aliquam sed, faucibus et turpis.

### Topic Two

Phasellus ornare cursus lectus in facilisis. Suspendisse ornare turpis quis metus sodales, sit amet laoreet metus mattis. Donec a felis nibh. Quisque quis metus non lorem ultrices consequat. Quisque luctus ultrices justo, sit amet congue diam interdum non. Proin volutpat sit amet ipsum et ornare. Curabitur sed diam dignissim velit bibendum commodo. Aenean suscipit turpis id suscipit posuere. Nullam a orci nec neque luctus cursus. In aliquam tellus in velit vestibulum, in lobortis diam malesuada. Phasellus accumsan euismod pretium. Suspendisse ornare nec nisi vitae auctor. Integer scelerisque condimentum felis, nec maximus nulla. Aliquam erat volutpat. Maecenas et elementum nisi.

### Topic Three

Vestibulum sed molestie nunc. Suspendisse porta risus vitae ex pulvinar aliquet. Proin at vehicula tortor. Duis placerat sit amet diam vel congue. Praesent ipsum elit, rhoncus at purus ut, fringilla congue est. Duis ac accumsan tortor, id vestibulum ante. Proin commodo interdum augue, nec dictum risus imperdiet non. Cras convallis sit amet massa non sagittis. Fusce eget tortor aliquam, tempus nibh gravida, convallis neque. Vestibulum efficitur facilisis vehicula. Phasellus non pulvinar diam, eget tristique massa. Sed ac laoreet metus.

### Conclusion

Suspendisse porttitor tincidunt tortor eget fermentum. Nam aliquam congue egestas. Integer ornare turpis felis, id fringilla erat lobortis sed. Etiam pharetra in diam et mollis. Cras in leo id odio maximus ullamcorper a a urna. Ut sit amet elit placerat, hendrerit leo id, hendrerit lectus. Nam congue ligula felis, in aliquet felis semper sed. Fusce efficitur volutpat convallis. Nam malesuada tincidunt pulvinar. Duis vulputate leo lorem, at venenatis lacus condimentum et. Duis elit dui, ultrices id consequat ut, scelerisque eu diam. Duis consectetur scelerisque dui, porta dictum lorem condimentum sit amet.

# Recap: Conclusion

The last paragraph of your paper. It closes the paper and leaves the reader satisfied with what they just read. Summarizes your paper in an effective way.

## Title

### Introduction

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nam non massa urna. Maecenas viverra aliquet lorem vitae sollicitudin. Curabitur pretium lacus ante, ut pharetra justo fringilla ut. Vivamus accumsan fringilla ullamcorper. Maecenas fermentum lacus nec lacus ornare, vel luctus magna ultricies. Cras porttitor mauris in enim finibus, vel ultricies tellus commodo. Fusce vel porttitor elit.

### Topic One

Suspendisse potenti. Suspendisse at lorem orci. Vivamus bibendum, metus ac fermentum tempor, urna sapien scelerisque mauris, ut tincidunt odio lacus sed ex. Cras finibus mattis velit, ac malesuada lacus maximus vel. Vivamus cursus egestas enim, ut tempor sem mattis a. Nulla et viverra nibh, faucibus tincidunt lacus. Mauris vestibulum semper eros non efficitur. Aenean consectetur orci at leo imperdiet, sed ullamcorper mi euismod. Aenean nec purus aliquet velit vestibulum consequat. Nam pellentesque lacus in cursus bibendum. Sed congue libero nec imperdiet vestibulum. Aenean mattis libero sed tincidunt sagittis. Morbi volutpat nisi sed nibh elementum, quis ornare libero faucibus. Ut metus libero, aliquam sed aliquam sed, faucibus et turpis.

### Topic Two

Phasellus ornare cursus lectus in facilisis. Suspendisse ornare turpis quis metus sodales, sit amet laoreet metus mattis. Donec a felis nibh. Quisque quis metus non lorem ultrices consequat. Quisque luctus ultrices justo, sit amet congue diam interdum non. Proin volutpat sit amet ipsum et ornare. Curabitur sed diam dignissim velit bibendum commodo. Aenean suscipit turpis id suscipit posuere. Nullam a orci nec neque luctus cursus. In aliquam tellus in velit vestibulum, in lobortis diam malesuada. Phasellus accumsan euismod pretium. Suspendisse ornare nec nisi vitae auctor. Integer scelerisque condimentum felis, nec maximus nulla. Aliquam erat volutpat. Maecenas et elementum nisi.

### Topic Three

Vestibulum sed molestie nunc. Suspendisse porta risus vitae ex pulvinar aliquet. Proin at vehicula tortor. Duis placerat sit amet diam vel congue. Praesent ipsum elit, rhoncus at purus ut, fringilla congue est. Duis ac accumsan tortor, id vestibulum ante. Proin commodo interdum augue, nec dictum risus imperdiet non. Cras convallis sit amet massa non sagittis. Fusce eget tortor aliquam, tempus nibh gravida, convallis neque. Vestibulum efficitur facilisis vehicula. Phasellus non pulvinar diam, eget tristique massa. Sed ac laoreet metus.

### Conclusion

Suspendisse porttitor tincidunt tortor eget fermentum. Nam aliquam congue egestas. Integer ornare turpis felis, id fringilla erat lobortis sed. Etiam pharetra in diam et mollis. Cras in leo id odio maximus ullamcorper a a urna. Ut sit amet elit placerat, hendrerit leo id, hendrerit lectus. Nam congue ligula felis, in aliquet felis semper sed. Fusce efficitur volutpat convallis. Nam malesuada tincidunt pulvinar. Duis vulputate leo lorem, at venenatis lacus condimentum et. Duis elit dui, ultrices id consequat ut, scelerisque eu diam. Duis consectetur scelerisque dui, porta dictum lorem condimentum sit amet.

# 1. What is a Rubric

- A great tool for grading criteria for assignments.
- A rubric defines in writing what is expected of the student to get a particular grade on an assignment.
- A scoring tool that lists the criteria for a piece of work or "what counts".
- A rubric describes levels of quality for each of the criteria.



# 2. Technical content

## Terminology

- Was any terminology used at all?
- Are the terms relevant to the topics covered?
- Were the terms used accurately?
- Were the terms used throughout the essay?

## Coverage of concepts

- Did the essay include a good range of concepts and ideas?
- Did the essay include statements of principles, explanations of concepts and specific examples?

# 3. Coherence of presentation of ideas

## Within paragraph coherence

- Are the sentences interchangeable? Does their order matter?
- Is there a meaningful flow within the paragraph?
- Are there more than one concept covered? How well is it conveyed?

## Overall coherence among paragraphs

- Are the paragraphs interchangeable? Does their order matter?
- Is there a meaningful flow between the paragraphs?
- Is there a good range of concepts and ideas covered? How well are they conveyed?

# 4. References and citations

## Use of references and citations

- Does each main idea have a citation and each citation a reference?

## Use of standard referencing scheme

- Does the essay use ONE standard reference system?
- Is it used throughout?
- Is it consistently applied?

# 5. Supporting the reader to navigate the essay

## Abstract

- Does the essay include an abstract following the title?
- Does the abstract say in about 4 sentences what the main content of the essay concerns, including its main points and conclusion?
- Is the abstract just a repeat of the introduction?

## Section headings

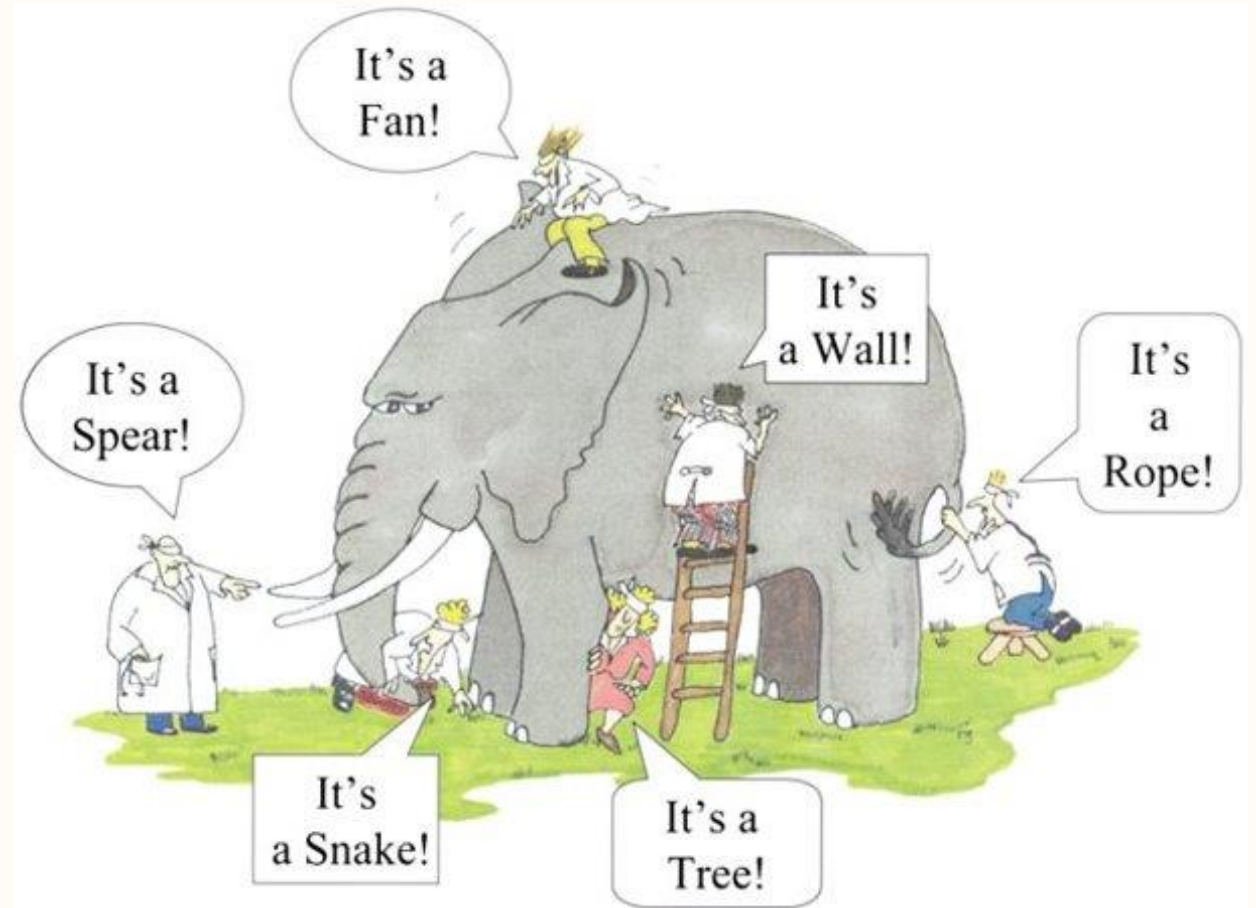
- Does the essay include sections with headers?
- Are the headers meaningful and relevant?
- If there are multiple sections and sub-sections are they numbered?
- Are the headings and numbering consistent and logical?



# 5. Supporting the reader to navigate the essay

## Sign posting

- Does each section end with a statement that indicates the section is over by picking out its key point and flags that a new one is coming up?
- Do the statements make some connection between the content of the current section and the next?
- Alternatively, does each new section briefly explain how it builds on the previous section?



# 6. Thesis/argument

## Thesis/argument structure

- How specific is the thesis argument?
- Does the essay systematically build up ideas that all contribute to the argument in a coherent manner?
- Or is it just a loose collection of unrelated ideas?

## Specific focus and definite conclusion

- Does the essay develop one consistent theme or argument?
- Does the essay reach some definite conclusion?
- Does it consider all sides of the argument, but argue why one side is the best?

# 6. Thesis/argument

## Interesting thesis or argument

- Was the essay an interesting read?
- Did it say something novel?
- Did it make you think; did you learn something new?
- Does it identify specific theories, models, or experimental findings that are relevant, and explain why?

## Title

- Does the title give a good sense of the essay's argument/thesis?
- Did it accurately reflect the contents of the essay?

# 7. Writing quality

## Variety of sentences

- Are the sentences of varied length (short and long)?
- Are there some simple sentences and other more complex, with subordinate clauses?
- Are there questions raised and answered?
- Are the sentences tripping you up or helping to move forward?

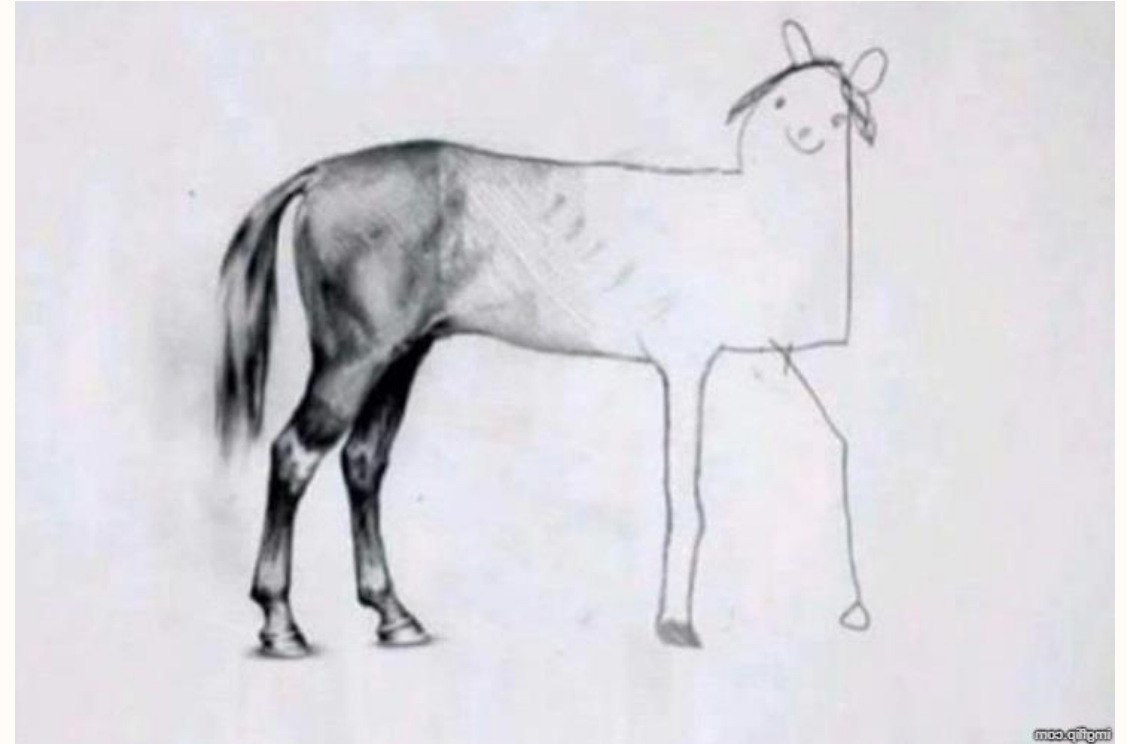
## Conciseness

- Does the essay have high information content given its length, but was still easy to understand?
- Is it repetitive and verbose?
- Are the ideas described succinctly?
- Did it communicate a rich set of ideas?

# 7. Writing quality

## Quality of English

- Is the grammar accurate and vocabulary good?
- Are there any glaring grammatical errors?
- Are the right words used to capture what is intended to say?
- Is the writing quality consistent throughout?



# Wrapping up: key takeaways

**Read the Rubric** early. Try to understand it and apply it as you write.

**Use the rubric as a checklist** against the text once you are done writing.



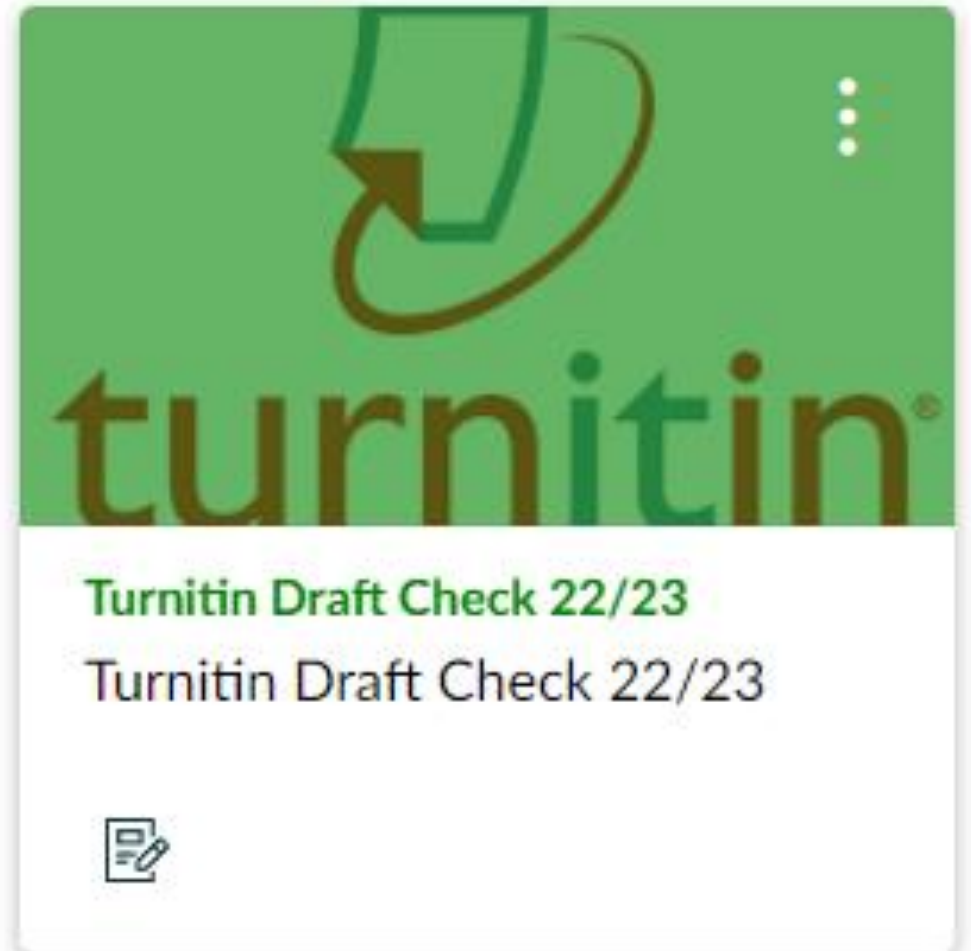
# Honorable mentions: Turnitin

There are 3 steps to using Turnitin

Step 1: Upload your work

Step 2: View your Similarity Report

Step 3: Use the report to improve your essay



# Honorable mentions: Skills Hub

[Home](#)

[Announcements](#)

[Discussions](#)

[Assignments](#)

[Units](#)

[Reading List](#)

[Panopto Recordings](#)

[Zoom](#)

[Quizzes](#)

[Skills Hub](#)

## Quick links

- [Academic skills workshops and support](#)
- [Academic integrity](#)
- ★ [Academic writing style, editing and proof-reading](#)
- ★ [Critical essay writing](#)
- [Critical thinking](#)
- [Dissertations](#)
- [Effective Revision Strategies](#)
- [ELAS](#)
- [Exam techniques](#)
- [Feedback](#)
- [Group work](#)
- [How does the grading system at university work?](#)
- [How teaching and learning works at Sussex](#)
- [How to be a successful student](#)
- [Library](#)
- [LinkedIn Learning](#)
- [Note-making](#)
- [Note-making styles](#)
- [Note-making Tips](#)
- [Planning and Structuring your Essay](#)
- [Presentations](#)
- [Reading](#)
- ★ [Referencing](#)
- ★ [Referencing styles](#)
- [Reflective writing](#)
- [Reports](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Revision and exams](#)
- [Seminars](#)
- [Starting at Sussex](#)
- [Time management](#)
- [What type of academic writing do you need to focus on?](#)
- [Writing and assessments](#)



# The End! Questions?

My email: [nk397@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:nk397@sussex.ac.uk)

Join the PAL Canvas for our  
timetable and resources.

Good Luck with your essays!

