

Essay Structure:

Tips for writing
Introductions,
Body Paragraphs
and Conclusions

- University of Southern Queensland Library Services





There are a variety of academic essay genres including argumentative, comparison and persuasive. However, learning how an academic essay is structured is fundamental to:



Developing a logical argument to answer your question



Making your assignment clear for your reader



Making the writing process more manageable

Introduction (10% of total word count)

Context
Thesis statement (your argument or position)
Overview of structure
Scope (if relevant)

1st Body paragraph

Topic Sentence
Explanation/Elaboration
Evidence
Concluding sentence/Link
to next paragraph

Link

2nd Body paragraph

Topic Sentence
Explanation/Elaboration
Evidence
Concluding sentence/Link
to next paragraph

Link

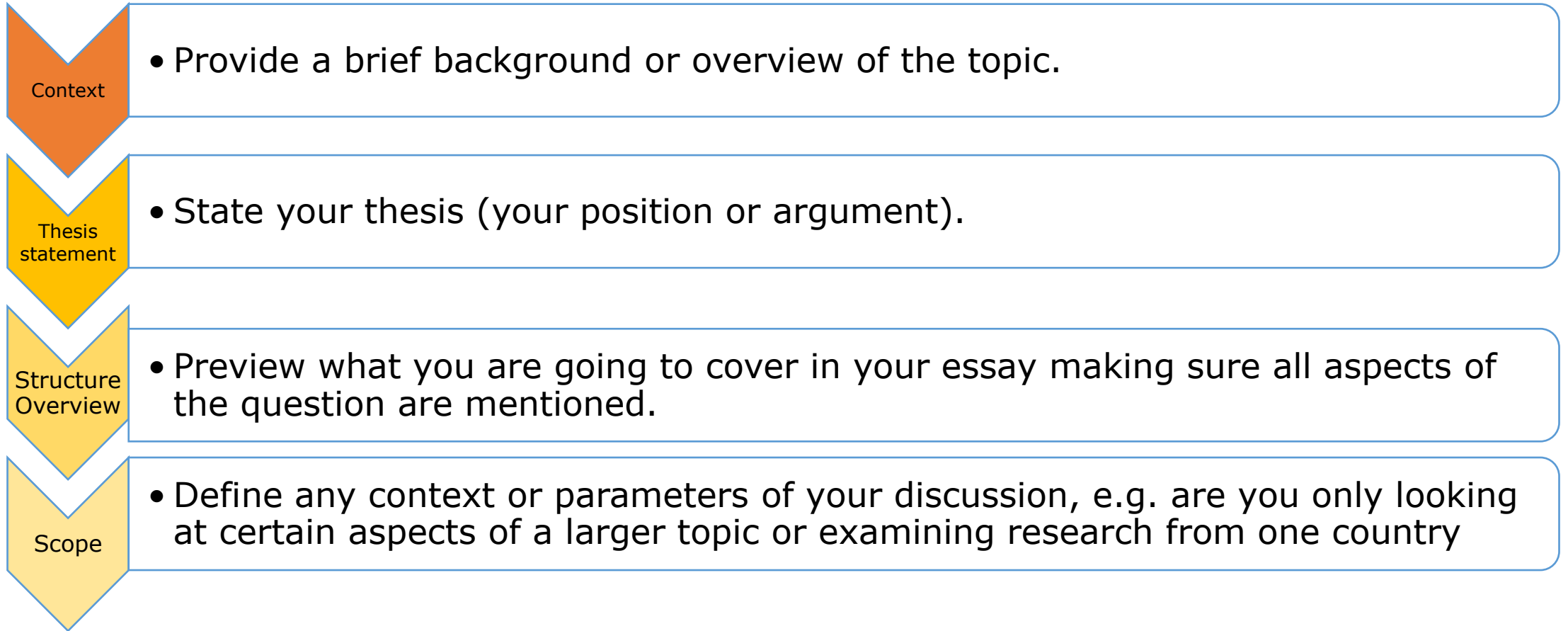
3rd Body paragraph

Topic Sentence
Explanation/Elaboration
Evidence
Concluding sentence/Link
to next paragraph

Conclusion (10% of total word count)

Summary of key points
Link back to thesis

Constructing Introductions



Introduction example

“Graduate registered nurses require more than clinical skills to meet the needs of patients”. Critically discuss this statement. Relate it to the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) - Standards of Professional Practice (2016).

Context

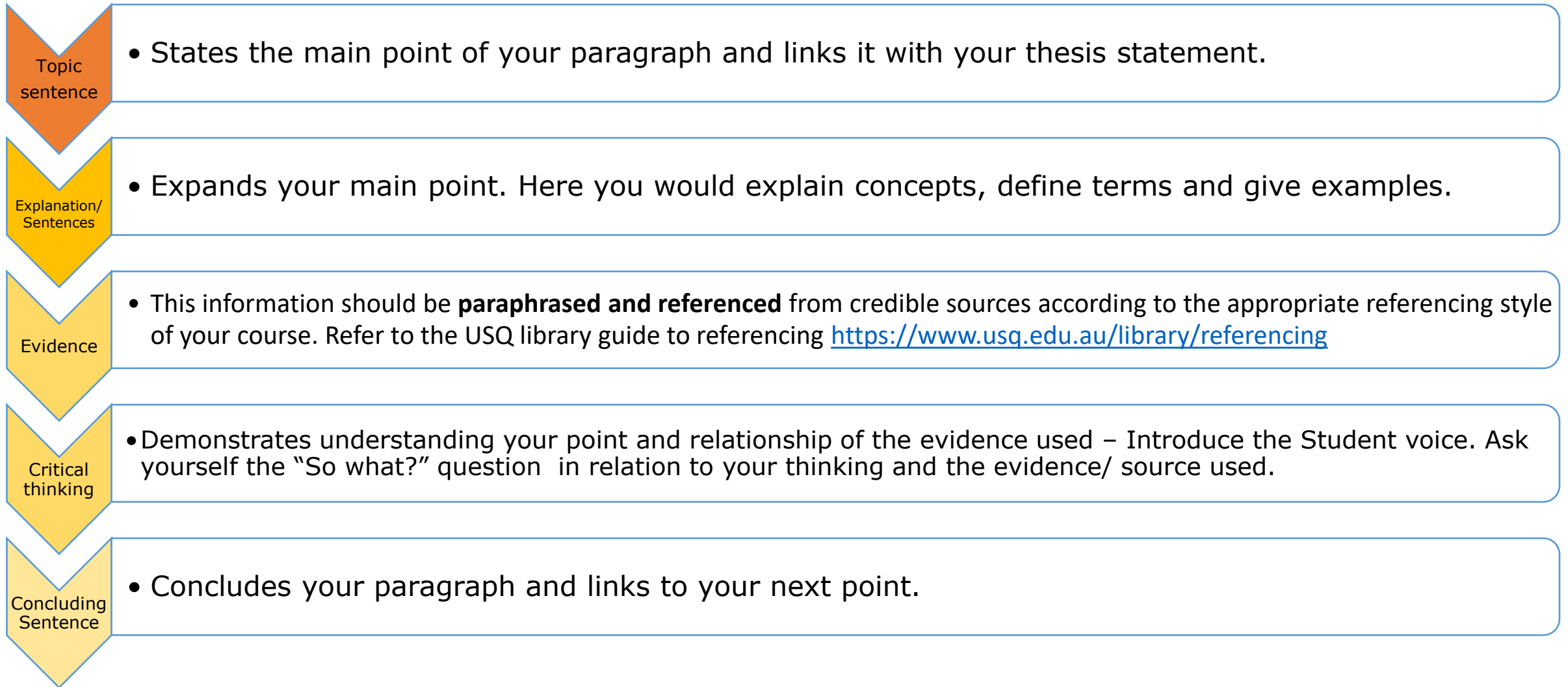
Nursing is both a rewarding and demanding profession. In Australia the profession is governed by the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) - Standards of Professional Practice (2016) which provide a code of practice to protect both patients and nursing practitioners. Clinical knowledge is vital however this paper will argue that registered Nurses (RNs) are required to demonstrate multiple skills in addition to clinical competency to provide a safe and supportive patient environment. Four skills will be critically discussed, these are communication, teamwork, critical thinking and problem solving. Each of these will be justified by relating to the relevant sections of the ANMAC competency standards.

Thesis Statement

Structure Overview

Scope

Constructing body paragraphs



Body Paragraph example

“Graduate registered nurses require more than clinical skills to meet the needs of patients”. Critically discuss this statement. Relate it to the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) - Standards of Professional Practice (2016).

Topic sentence

It is important for graduate nurses to develop good communication skills to provide safe and supportive patient environments. Boyd and Dare (2014) argue that empathetic

Further explanation with evidence source 1 (Boyd and Dare)

communication is a vital skill if nurses are to provide quality patient care. They add, the ability of the nurse to communicate is important to ensuring the patient’s overall hospital

Transition words

experience is positive. This is supported by NMBA competency standard 2.2 which states that nurses are required to communicate “...effectively and [be] respectful of a person’s

Further explanation with evidence source 2 (ANMAC)

Critical thinking (student’s voice) & concluding sentence

dignity, culture, values, beliefs and rights ” (NMBA, 2016). As nurses spend more time than doctors with patients, the ability to communicate is an essential graduate attribute.

Sentence starters for critical thinking

What does critical thinking look like? A simple way of including critical thinking is to ask yourself the “**so what**” question as a way of justifying your argument and choice of evidence. Consider these as sentence starters.

- This could mean therefore...
- Thus, this illustrates...
- This evidence shows that...
- This example illustrates...
- This data is relevant because...
- This is important because...
- This research indicates...



Make your writing flow by creating links between your ideas.

Successful academic writing should demonstrate logical flow of ideas. Use transitions (linking words and phrases) to connect your ideas between and within paragraphs. The order of your body paragraphs should reflect the order that you presented your ideas in your introduction.

Transition Words and Phrases					
For continuing an idea	For providing a contrasting view	For showing Cause and Effect	For showing sequence	For concluding	For restating a point or giving examples
Additionally... In addition... Moreover... Because Consequently... Clearly, then... Furthermore... In the same way... Continuing this idea... Also... Pursuing this further...	In contrast to these... Unlike the previous example... Different from this... Despite these findings... However... Contrary to these findings... In opposition to... Nevertheless...	Following... In response to... Therefore... As a result of... For this reason... The result... Thus... Due to this... Consequently... The reaction...	The first [concept/aspect]... The second [concept/aspect]... The third [concept/aspect]... Firstly, Secondly, Finally After...Afterwards... As soon as... In the first place... In the meantime... Later... Meanwhile... Next...	Therefore... This..... Hence... In final analysis In conclusion... In final consideration... Indeed...	In other words... Specifically... For instance... For example... One such occurrence... This is demonstrated by To illustrate... Also... To demonstrate... This is supported by...

It is also important to consider how you use language to introduce academic sources as evidence into your writing. These words can help you integrate...

paraphrase and quotes
into assignments

- Argues
- Articulates
- Asserts
- Claims
- Concludes
- Comments
- Describes
- Demonstrates
- Examines
- Explains
- Hypothesises
- Indicates
- Observes
- Outlines
- Predicts
- Reasons
- Research
- Reports
- States
- Suggests

additional
sources into your work to
agree with existing
evidence.

- Affirms
- Corroborates
- Supports
- Substantiates
- Validates
- Verifies

additional
sources into your work to
**critically assess or
challenge** existing
evidence.

- Argues
- Challenges
- Contradicts
- Contrasts
- Debates
- Disputes
- Doubts
- Opposes
- Questions
- Refutes
- Rejects



Use these words to give your sentences variety

According to Charles (2017)...

Chen and Singh (2012) state...

Turner (2013) observed...

McGovern (2014) asserts...

Johnson (2015) takes an opposing stance on this view and theorises instead that...

If possible demonstrate synthesis of knowledge by showing connection of multiple pieces of evidence instead of only including one source to support your idea.

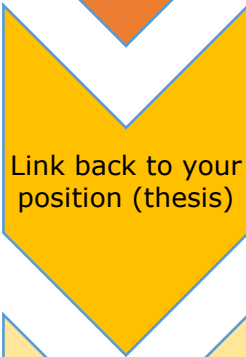
Although McGovern's (2014) research demonstrated health benefits associated with surgical intervention, more recent research by Charles (2017) with a larger population sample has shown positive patient outcomes can be achieved through less invasive options such as diet and exercise.

Turner (2013) affirms Chen and Singh's (2012) theory and support his claims by...

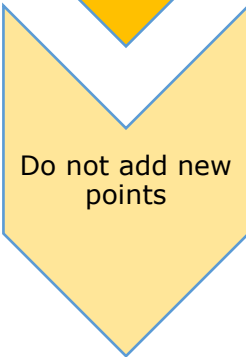
Paragraph Structure – Writing effective conclusions



- **State the main points covered (Past tense)** Summarise your main points -



- **Overall conclusion related to the position you adopted in the introduction – Restate your position**



- **Do not include anything you have not already discussed in your essay**

Conclusion example

“Graduate registered nurses require more than clinical skills to meet the needs of patients”. Critically discuss this statement. Relate it to the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) - Standards of Professional Practice (2016).

This paper has analysed the complexity of the GRN role in the Australian Health care system. A range of skills including communication, teamwork, critical thinking and problem solving is required, as reflected in the ANMAC standards, if GRNs are to provide care which is effective holistic, compassionate and patient centred.

It is therefore determined that while clinical expertise is paramount, it should not be considered as the sole function of the GRN, as this role is far more complex.

Summary of
key points
covered
(structure)
and overall
conclusion)

Overall
conclusion
linking to
thesis
Statement