

EAP Worksheets

The process of writing an essay

The following procedure is useful when writing an extended essay or assignment.

	Task	Skills Needed	Product
1.	Read the question and understand what you are required to do. Think about the subject, the purpose and the audience.	thinking academically	Essay subject.
2.	Think about what you know about the subject. Write it down in some way.	brainstorming	Diagrams or notes.
3.	Go to the library and find relevant books or articles.	library/research skills	Reading list.
4.	Find the books on your reading list and study them.	reading skills: skimming and scanning	List of materials studied.
5.	Make notes on these books and articles. Record full details of the materials used.	reading in detail selecting & note-taking paraphrasing/summarising	Notes.
6.	Organise your essay/assignment.	planning organisation	Essay plan.
7.	Type or write your first draft.	writing from notes synthesis writing paragraphs typing/word-processing	First draft.
8.	Discuss your first draft informally with friends, other members of your class and your lecturer if possible.	speaking skills listening skills discussion skills	List of revisions/changes.
9.	Revise your first draft, bearing in mind any comments that were made in your discussions. Go back to 2. if necessary Produce your second draft.	use of dictionaries & reference books writing introduction & conclusion quoting/writing a list of references	Second draft.
10.	Proofread your draft.	checking for spelling mistakes, punctuation and grammar, checking vocabulary use & style checking organisation, references, plagiarism, etc.	Assignment with changes marked.
11.	Produce a final typed version.	typing/word-processing writing title/contents page	Final assignment.
12.	Check everything.	final check	Hand in.

Task - 1

1. Read the question and decide what kind of writing you should be doing and what the essay should be on.

Task - 2

1. It is most unlikely that you will find the information you need about your topic in just one specific section of the library. Think as widely as you can about possible subject areas that may be relevant to your topic. Use various methods such as drawing diagrams, writing lists or fast writing to record everything you know.

Task - 3

1. Go to the library and find relevant books or articles.

2. Encyclopaedias can give you an initial idea of the important aspects of a subject.

Find out where they are kept and note down their class numbers.

Look up some of the areas or topics that you wrote down in Task 1. Make notes on the information if it is useful. Remember to record the name, date and publisher of the encyclopaedia and the numbers of the pages you are using.

3. Use the *library* computer catalogue to find useful material for your topic.

Choose the:

Search the Catalogue option on the main menu.

Use the:

Keyword option on the *Search the Catalogue* menu and identify the names and class numbers of the sections of the library that might hold useful material for your topic.

Write down some subject area names and their class numbers.

Record the bibliographical details of the books and their class numbers in the following order:

Author	Date	Title	Edition (if not 1st)	Place of Publication	Publisher	Class Number
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4. Using information obtained from part 3, as well as information you already have, search now in the: *Author* or *Title* search

option on the *Search the Catalogue* menu of the terminal for the details and class numbers of some relevant books.

Record the bibliographical details of the books and their class numbers in the following order:

Author	Date	Title	Edition (if not 1st)	Place of Publication	Publisher	Class Number
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5. If you need more information from the library, use the:

Advanced search option on the *Search the Catalogue* menu of the terminal for the details and class numbers of some relevant books.

Record the bibliographical details of the books and their class numbers in the following order:

Author	Date	Title	Edition (if not 1st)	Place of Publication	Publisher	Class Number
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6. If you need more specialised information, choose option:

Links to Remote Resources on the main menu.

7. *Bibliographies* give details of books and articles, usually on particular subjects. They are usually located on the ground floor of the library.

Find the bibliographies relevant to your topic. Note any useful information.

Remember to record the bibliographical details of the books and their class numbers in the following order:

Author	Date	Title	Edition (if not 1st)	Place of Publication	Publisher	Class Number
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and note the call number.

Remember to record the bibliographical details of articles in the following order:

Author	Date	Title	Journal Title	Volume	Page Numbers
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8. If you need even more specialised information, you might want to look at the information available on CD-ROMs, or on various on-line databases.

9. Go and search in the different sections of the library you identified under 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 as useful.

Remember to ask the librarians for help if you need it or any information relating to materials, systems etc.

Task - 4

1. Go to the library with your reading list.
2. Find some of the books and articles you identified.
3. Every student has the same problem: how to get through the vast amount of reading given for each course. There is not enough time to read everything line by line. You need to be able to read efficiently. The way you read something will depend on your purpose. You need to read quickly to find relevant sections, then read carefully when you have found what you want.
Look at the books and articles. Use the index, the preface, the blurb (publisher's comments on the cover), the table of contents and glance through a book rapidly in order to identify the relevant sections. Look at the chapter titles. If the chapter seems useful, look at the headings and sub-headings. Quickly survey any useful chapters by reading the first few lines of each paragraph or by reading the first and last paragraphs.
4. When you think you have identified relevant sections, skim through them, read the conclusion perhaps, to be sure they are relevant.
5. Make a list of the materials you have studied. Mark the useful ones.

Task - 5

1. When you think you have identified relevant sections, skim through them, read the conclusion perhaps, to be sure they are relevant. Then read the relevant sections carefully and make notes on them.
2. Make notes on these books and articles. Use your own words. Do not copy unless you think you will want to quote word for word. You will need to paraphrase and summarise what you read. Record full bibliographical details of the materials you use.
3. Produce your notes. Remember to record full bibliographical details of the books and articles you have read.

Task - 6

1. Look at your notes.
2. Decide on the purpose of your paper. Is it to inform, to explain, to compare, to describe something, to describe a process, to explain the reasons, to enumerate the causes, to compare/contrast, to discuss, to defend (a point of view), to contest (a point of view), etc. or a combination?
3. Organise your notes into sections; organise sections into subsections. The organisation of your paper will depend on your communicative purpose as in 2.
4. Order your information.
5. Plan your paper. The main text should consist of three main parts:
 1. Introduction
 - a. Comment on subject of essay
 - b. Which aspects will you deal with?
 2. Main body
 - a. Develop your line of argument through three or four main ideas.
 - b. Support your main ideas with examples and illustrations from experience or other authors.
 3. Conclusion
 - a. Summary of main ideas.
 - b. Answer to question or comment on topic of essay indicating wider implications for or future trends.

Task - 7

1. Start with your plan.
2. Combine your notes into sentences and paragraphs.
3. Use your own words except when you are quoting.
Sometimes it may be desirable to quote the author's words exactly. If you do so, keep the quotation as brief as possible and quote only when you have a good reason. The idea of an essay is for you to say something for yourself using the ideas of the subject, for you to present ideas you have learned in your own way. You should be on working with other people's ideas, rather than reproducing their words.
4. Type out your first draft using the word processor. Start with the main body. Do not worry at this stage if you cannot find the exact word or phrase that you need. Concentrate on getting your ideas

down on paper rather than spending time thinking whether or not you can express your ideas in a better way.

5. Print out your paper using double spacing.

6. Produce your first draft.

Task - 8

1. Start with your first draft.

2. Discuss your first draft with others in your group.

Consider the following questions:

Type of writing

What kind of writing is this text supposed to be?

Does it conform to the conventions usually expected of its type?

Purpose and ideas

Is the writer's purpose clear?

Do we understand the main ideas?

Structure of text

Is it easy to follow the development of ideas?

Would it help to rearrange the sequence of ideas?

Do the relations between the text need to be changed?

Do the connections between the ideas need to be made clearer?

Are the ideas grouped in a suitable way?

Is the text segmented into appropriate paragraphs?

Should any of the paragraphs be joined together?

Should any of the paragraphs be broken down into smaller units?

Have you written a clear introduction and conclusion?

Language

Have you used an appropriate level of formality?

Is your language too complex, or too simple?

References

Have you acknowledged all sources?

Response as readers

Does the opening make us want to read on?

Do we feel satisfied with the ending?

Are there any points that are not necessary?

Are there any points that we don't understand?

Are there any points on which we would like more information?

3. Produce a list of changes to be made.

4. Go back to the library for more information if you need to.

Task - 9

1. Start with your first draft and the list of changes.

2. Revise your first draft, bearing in mind any comments that were made in 7.

3. Produce a second draft.

4. Check your spelling using a dictionary and spellchecker.

5. Check your grammar and punctuation using a grammar book.

- check your verbs:
- correct tense, subject/verb agreement, verb in every sentence
- check your word order
- check your articles
- check your prepositions
- check your linking words
- check your punctuation

6. Check your acknowledgement of sources used.

7. Produce a reference list.

For more information on bibliographies.

8. Produce your second draft

Task - 10

1. Start with your 2nd draft.

2. Proofread your draft.

3. Check your organisation. Your paper should have the following sections:

Preliminaries Title page

Table of Contents

- Main text
 - Introduction
 - Main body
 - Conclusion
 - End matter
 - References
4. Check for mistakes: spelling, punctuation, grammar.
 5. Check your style.
 6. Check your references.

Task - 11

1. Type or write your final version.
2. Write your title/contents page - check departmental requirements
3. Print out a good quality copy. Bind it well. Keep a copy for yourself.

Task - 12

1. Check everything.
2. Hand in your final essay on time