Academic Support Study Tip

Structuring an essay – Mind Map

Clarity your title
- What is the 'Process word' or action (e.g. compare and contrast, discuss, analyse)?
- What is the topic? (the overall area of concern)
- What is the focus? (the specific aspect(s) of the topic)

Reference list / Bibliography

Introduction (10% of word limit)
- Explain how you are interpreting what the question wants
- Identify your method or theoretical approach
- Outline the aspects you will look at and the order of these

Paragraph 1
- Cover what your introduction said you would address first - clearly identify the topic
- Each sentence then develops the topic of the paragraph with relevant examples, details, evidence and quotations and/or references to sources

Follow-up paragraphs

Paragraph 2 and other paragraphs
- Link paragraphs by using connecting words and phrases - see also University of Manchester Academic Phrasebank

Conclusion (5-10% of word limit)
- Summarise your main argument
- Identify and justify the significance of your conclusions
- Link back to your title

No new material

Follow-up paragraphs

List all the sources you have referred to in your essay, in the appropriate style/layout

http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/StudentServices/StudyResources