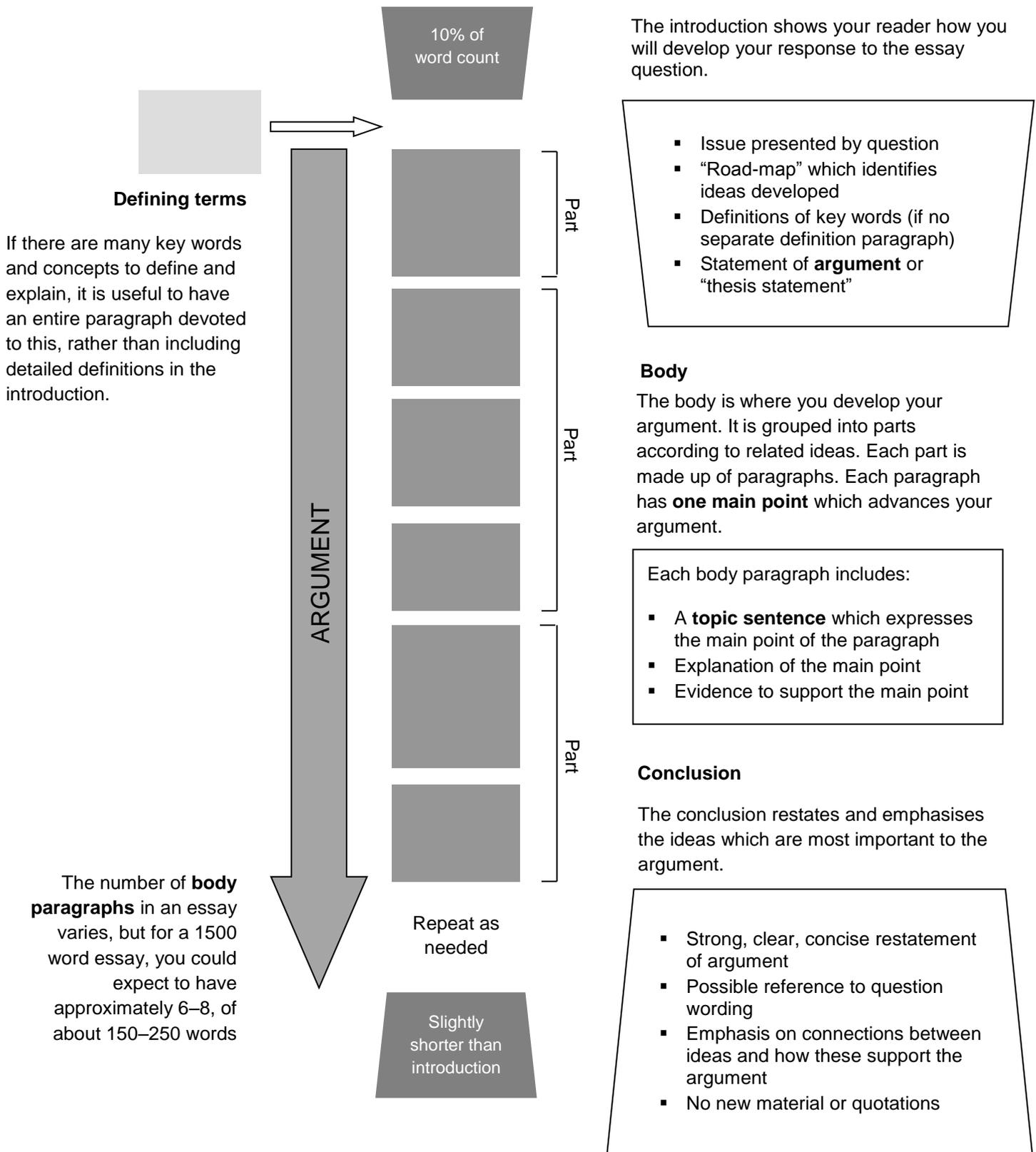


Academic Essays

The structure of an academic essay



Glossary

Academic essay:	The aim of an academic essay is to present an argument in order to persuade the reader. An academic essay must include an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. It is written in formal language .
Argument:	Your response to the essay question. It always involves taking a position and must be supported by evidence . You may need to present multiple viewpoints but your position must remain clear throughout the essay.
Body paragraph:	A paragraph is a distinct section of text written in complete sentences. A body paragraph presents one main point expressed in a topic sentence , explanation of that main point, and evidence to support it. A typical body paragraph is between four and eight sentences long.
Evidence:	Primary or secondary sources used to support the main point of your body paragraph . It can include quotations from primary sources, statistics, and results of other authors' research (summarised or quoted directly). Sometimes referred to as <i>examples</i> .
Formal language:	The style of serious written language used in academic publications. Avoid contractions (e.g. <i>can't, didn't, isn't</i>). Avoid conversational words (e.g. <i>massive, heaps of</i>) and emotive words (e.g. <i>devastating, brilliant</i>). First- and second-person pronouns (<i>I, you, we, us</i>) are not usually appropriate.
Main point:	A main point is an idea developed to advance your argument. Each main point is developed in a separate body paragraph . In an academic essay, main points must be supported by evidence .
Part:	A series of body paragraphs grouped according to related ideas. Parts should be arranged to show the logical progression of your argument. Sometimes each part may have a heading. If the essay question has more than one part, these may correspond to the different parts of the essay. Note that in a short essay, a part may consist of only one paragraph.
Road-map:	Outline of the ideas which will be developed in the essay to form the argument . The road-map often comes before the thesis statement .
Thesis statement:	Statement of argument in one or two sentences. Often the final sentence/s of the introduction.
Topic sentence:	Usually the first sentence of a body paragraph . It expresses the main point of the paragraph. Sometimes it may be appropriate for the topic sentence to refer back to the point of the previous paragraph in order to link your ideas; for example, "Although..." "In addition to..."