Essay Writing Glossary

Words and terms regularly referred to in the context of essay writing

Abstract: A very short account at the beginning of a journal article/research paper that states what the article is about, including what was investigated, where it was investigated, how it was investigated, and what was discovered.

Academic writing: Written work that is carefully considered; the style is formal, accurate, clear and supported by evidence from appropriate sources.

Analysis: A detailed examination of the different facets of an idea/argument and the connections between them.

Argument: A point of view on a particular topic (in this context, an argument is not usually combative, negative or adversarial).

Cite: Use a phrase or sentence from a piece of writing or speech, in order to support an argument.

Coherent: The argument presented makes sense and is well supported by evidence that is obviously related to the topic.

Cohesion: Writing that leads the reader from one point to the next by skilfully structuring the sentences and paragraphs in a way that ensures the reader’s journey is a smooth and enjoyable experience.

Continuity: Writing that makes strong links between the ideas; it is very clear in the sense of leading the reader from point to point; the theme followed is obvious to the reader.

Criticism: An evaluation or judgement about such things as ideas, actions, theories, or creative works (such evaluations are not necessarily negative or adversarial).

Current literature: Written work produced by experts in a particular field of endeavour, which represents the most recent thinking / research in a particular field.

Editing: Reading a written text to identify and address lapses of clarity, inaccuracies, a lack of continuity and grammatical errors.
**Essay:** A written response to a question or proposition that has been posed in relation to a particular subject / topic (usually supported by evidence).

**Evidence:** Information, usually gained from research, which is used to support an argument.

**Paper:** Often used as an alternative to the word essay or dissertation.

**Paraphrase:** Restating an idea / information provided in a text or passage by using different words from those used by the original author without changing the intended meaning of the original text.

**Point of view:** A position taken in relation to an issue, question or proposition (in the university context it should be supported by evidence and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the topic).

**Proofreading:** Re-reading a piece of written text, for the purpose of identifying errors, including formatting and English language errors.

**Quotation:** A phrase or passage from a text which is used to support a point of view expressed in another text (e.g., an essay).

**Referencing:** Naming the author of a text as the source of evidence in an essay.