Essay Check-list

# 1. Essay format / presentation

* Title page is the first page of the essay
* Student number (not name) is on each page
* 1.5 line spacing
* 12 point font, Times Roman
* 2.5cm left and right margins on each page
* Page numbers located in the right hand bottom corner of each page
* Student number located in the header
* Essay question appears on the title page
* Word count listed on the title page
* Reference style listed on the title page
* Consistent use of white space throughout essay
* Completed spell check (electronic AND manual)
* Thorough proof-reading
* Minimum number of references consulted
* Reference list in correct and consistent Harvard or APA 6 format
* Reference list in alphabetical order and on separate page
* Consistent quotation marks. Use ‘single’ quotation marks.

# 2. Essay content

* Develops an appropriate thesis statement that acts as the basis for essay argument
* Substantiates argument by reference to appropriate and authoritative sources and analyses / synthesises sources
* Substantially covers the key questions on the issue (applies the 5Ws and the H to the topic - Who, What, When, Where, Why and How)
* Substantiates by sound argument/logic and evidence
* Avoids excessive reliance on opinion and generalisation
* Does not include irrelevant content
* Does not introduce new material in the conclusion

# 3. Essay structure

* Effectively sequences ideas
* Relates and integrates ideas through the use of transitions
* Clearly draws conclusions from preceding argument

# Essay style

* Uses the most appropriate words and expressions for an academic essay on the chosen topic
* Avoids contractions (e.g. it’s, can’t, won’t, isn’t), colloquialisms/slang/profanity, abbreviations (e.g. uses ‘for example”, not ‘e.g.’; uses ‘that is’, no ‘i.e.’; does not use ‘etc.’ or ‘etcetera’)
* Avoids inappropriate jargon
* Explains and illustrates vague and complex concepts
* Conveys ideas concisely, directly, and concretely
* Uses clear and logical sentence construction
* Avoids sentence fragments
* Uses fully developed paragraphs with appropriate transitions
* Uses a rich and varied vocabulary – avoids clichés
* Does not use the first person (I, we, me, us, my, mine, our)
* Does not use expressions in the second person (you, your, yours)
* Uses the ‘historic present’ to refer to source materials (states, argues, suggests, claims, etc.)
* Maintains consistent tense

# 5. Essay mechanics

* Correct spelling
* Correct grammar
* Correct punctuation
* Correct, consistent and thorough documentation