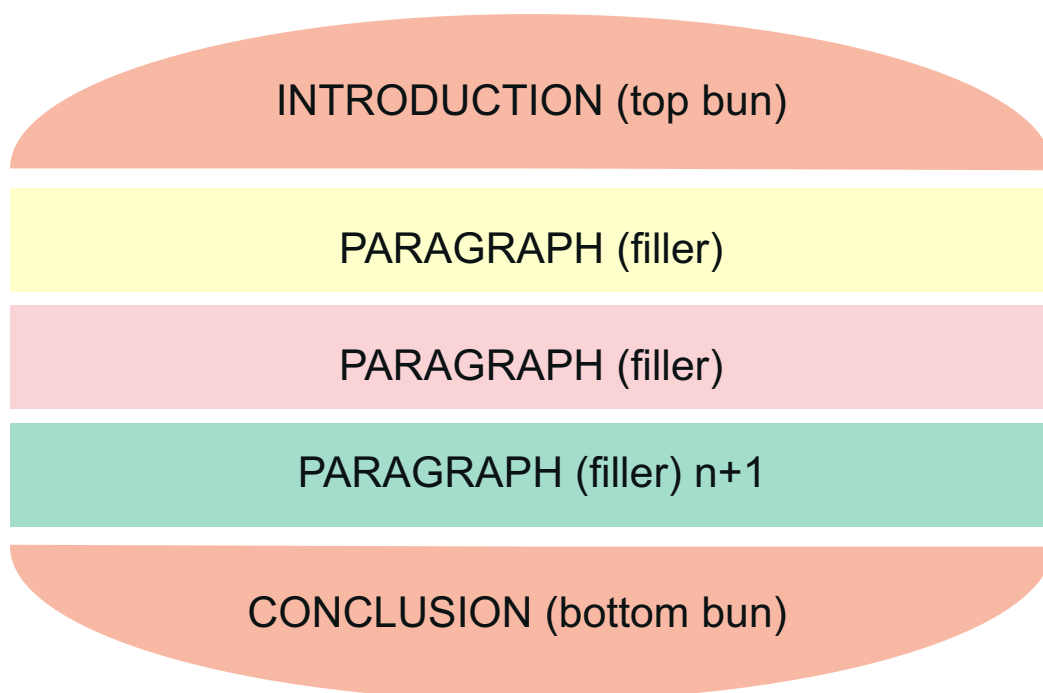


# Essay Structure at University

The purpose of essays is to convey your argument in a **clear, coherent** and **logical** manner. Having a logical essay structure that is easy to follow helps to strengthen your argument.

We can think of essays as burgers. A burger has two buns on either end to hold all the fillings together, which is what your introduction and conclusion do. A good burger has more than one filling, but not so many that it is difficult to digest. Hence, a good essay requires more than one body paragraph but not so many that it becomes difficult to adequately explain each point within the word limit.



## Introduction:

An introduction establishes your thesis to the reader and acts as a roadmap for your essay by outlining what will be discussed in the paper. Hence, it is important to make sure that these points are in the same order as they are in your essay.

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# Essay Structure at University

Your introduction should include:

- 1) An introductory statement to establish the topic;
- 2) A thesis to demonstrate your answer to the question; and
- 3) Your supporting points in the order in which you will present them.

**Example:** Whether cats or dogs make better pets has been a long-debated topic. Whilst both animals make good pets, cats are better pets than dogs. Cats contribute more toward the household. They are also cheaper in the long run, and despite their independent nature, they still demonstrate affection to those who care for them. Hence, cats make better pets than dogs.

- Introduction statement
- Thesis
- Points in order of how they will be introduced
- Linking/Transition Sentence

## Body Paragraphs:

Body paragraphs are the fillings of your argument. These paragraphs are the evidence used to support your thesis. This is where you demonstrate most of your engagement with the question and your research. At a university level, you are likely to want to include more than one piece of evidence per point, therefore your body paragraph should include:

- 1) An overarching topic sentence or sentences, depending on how you would like to introduce your point, and whether it needs further elaboration;
- 2) Your evidence;
- 3) Your elaboration on the evidence to show how it supports your thesis to answer the question;
- 4) An internal linking sentence;

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- 5) A sentence to introduce your next piece of evidence;
- 6) Your second piece of evidence;
- 7) Your elaboration on the second piece of evidence to show how it supports your thesis to answer the question; and
- 8) A linking/concluding sentence to reiterate how your multiple pieces of evidence form a point which supports your thesis.

Depending on how many pieces of evidence you have for your point, you may repeat steps 2-7 a few times. However, you don't want your paragraph to be too long, so make sure each paragraph only addresses one point.

<b>Example:</b> By contributing towards the upkeep of the household, cats are better pets than dogs.	- Topic Sentence
Cats naturally hunt rodents and bugs. Their scent also serves to deter certain pests from inhabiting the same household.	- Evidence
Cats therefore contribute to the household by eradicating and preventing pests from invading. This saves the household the costs of hiring pest control which contributes towards the household's savings.	- Elaboration
Cats therefore contribute more than dogs to the household they have been adopted into.	- Internal Linking Sentence
Cats further contribute towards the household by nature of their health benefits.	- Introductory Sentence 2
According to CHI Institute (2003, 1), the purr of a cat has healing benefits on human bones and tendons.	- Evidence
Having a cat therefore contributes to the household through the reduction of healthcare costs.	- Elaboration
Therefore, as cats actively contribute toward the household, they make better pets than dogs.	- Linking Sentence

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# Essay Structure at University

## Conclusion:

Conclusions are the bottom bun of your essay. Although they may seem unimportant at the start, if you do not have this bun, your burger will fall apart as there won't be anything to hold it together. Your conclusion shouldn't introduce any new points. Instead, it should synthesise your points to support your thesis and draw your argument together.

Conclusions should include:

- 1) A reiteration of your thesis
- 2) A quick summary of your points and your main supporting evidence
- 3) A direct statement answering the question

**Example:** Cats are therefore better pets than dogs because they contribute to households, are cheaper and still demonstrate affection for their owners despite their independent nature. By hunting rodents and having healing purrs, cats save households money in the long run. Their expenses are also generally cheaper than dogs. They also show affection in a subtle manner to those around them. Therefore, due to their many advantages, cats are better than dogs.

- Statement reiterating thesis and main points
- A summary of key pieces of evidence
- A direct statement answering the question

## Adapted From:

"CHI Institute presents Conclusive Studies Proving Healing Effect of Sound." Townsend Letter for Doctors and Patients, April 2003, 19.

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