



## WRITING LAW ASSIGNMENTS 1

During your law course you will often be asked to write in order to show the extent of your knowledge and understanding. The amount and kinds of writing you do will depend on the modules you are taking, but in general there are four kinds of writing:

- **Discussion essays**
- **Problem-based essays**
- **Exam essay questions**
- **Responses to seminar questions**

The purpose of an essay question is not only to test your understanding of the law but also your ability to select information, structure an argument, and engage in detailed legal analysis using supporting authorities where appropriate.

➤ When you produce any piece of writing in law you need to show:

- ❖ **Understanding** of the question and key law principles
- ❖ **Knowledge of the law** which you can apply to the facts
- ❖ **Ability to communicate complex ideas** clearly and concisely
- ❖ **Critical analysis** of the relevant law issues
- ❖ Ability to present a **balanced argument**
- ❖ Use of **appropriate and accurate language**
- ❖ Appropriate **referencing** of source material

## STRUCTURE of a DISCUSSION ESSAY

- A discussion essay may be structured in different ways depending on:
  - the question
  - your approach to the question

But whatever your structure is, you want to help your reader follow your Ideas / arguments so your ideas and structure always need to be:

- well-organised
- logical
- coherent
- persuasive
- clear
- cohesive
- relevant

- **Sample structure of a discussion essay:**

### Introduction

- Identify key issues
- Outline useful background information
- Define key terms
- Take a position based on the focus of the question

### Main body

- Main point 1
  - Arguments for
  - Arguments against
  - Evaluation
- Main point 2
  - Arguments for
  - Arguments against
  - Evaluation
- Main point 3
  - Arguments for
  - Arguments against
  - Evaluation

### Conclusion

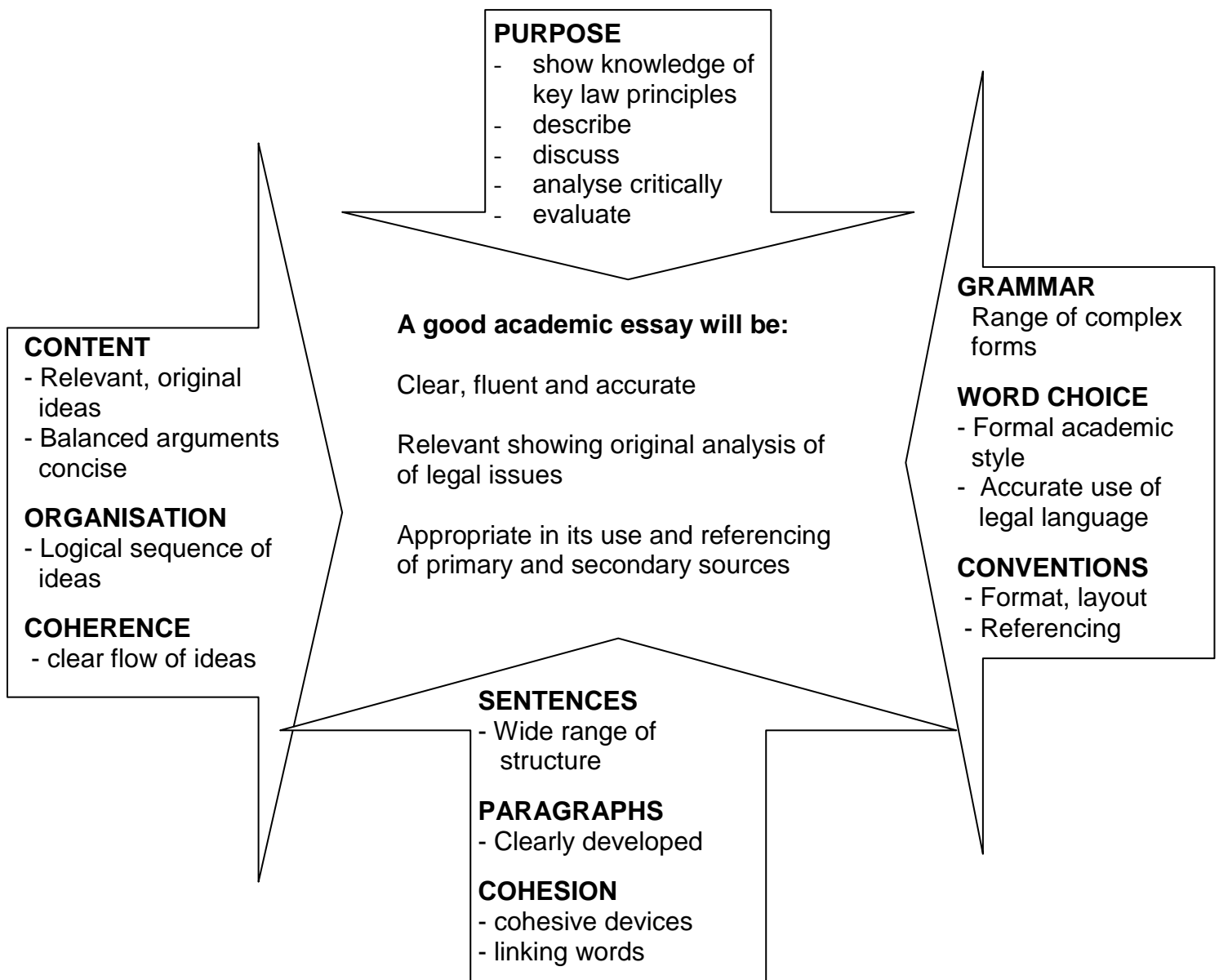
- Restate the main points in other words
- Use key words from the question
- Give brief evaluation of the law in this area
- Make recommendations

## Bibliography / References

### FEATURES OF LEGAL ACADEMIC WRITING

When you write your first essay, you may be wondering: 'What will make it a good essay?' Or you may be thinking about your last essay: 'Why didn't I get the mark I expected?'

In fact, when you write an essay, there are many aspects to consider. See the points in the arrows for the different aspects you need to consider.



**Now read WRITING LAW ASSIGNMENTS 2 about how to write a legal academic essay.**