

## Essay Structure (Part B)

(Before planning your essay, it is very important to analyse your essay question and marking guide. See the *Instructional Words* and *How to Analyse Assignment Instructions* handouts).

**An essay has three main parts:**

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Main body
- 3) Conclusion

To understand the purpose and nature of each section, let us look at the following sample essay question:

***Discuss the common biological, psychosocial and behavioural changes experienced by the elderly. Relate the changes that occur with ageing to nursing practice.***

Parts	Example Text
<p><b>1) <u>INTRODUCTION</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Use one paragraph only.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Begin with a relevant context.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Explain the topic's significance.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>Define key terms if necessary.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>End your introduction by clearly stating the objectives of the essay.</u></li> <li>▪ <u>The introduction is usually 5% to 10% of the word count.</u></li> </ul>	<p>An important issue that affects the health services in many countries relates to providing care for their greying population.</p> <p>The ageing process presents many changes that can be challenging for the elderly and for nurses who provide care for aged clients.</p> <p>This essay will discuss the common biological, psychosocial and behavioural changes that the elderly face. These changes will then be linked to the nature of nursing practice that meets the needs of aged clients.</p>

Parts	Example Text
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2) <u>MAIN BODY</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ For this sample essay, the main body has three sections.</li> <li>▪ Each section is divided into paragraphs.</li> <li>▪ Each paragraph often begins with a <b>topic sentence</b> that contains a main idea. (There are <b>8 main ideas (1) to (8) here</b>).</li> <li>▪ Each main idea must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- followed by other sentences containing relevant information from appropriate sources.</li> <li>- related to nursing practice</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ The main body is usually 80% to 90% of the word count.</li> </ul> <p><b>Biological changes</b> (1st section)</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;"><b>Topic sentence 1</b> (states the key idea of paragraph 1 of the main body)</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;"><b>Topic sentence 2</b> (of paragraph 2)</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;"><b>Linking sentence</b> (of paragraph 2) (this final sentence of paragraph 2 links to the next set of changes that elderly clients often face)</p> <p><b>Psychosocial changes</b> (2nd section)</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;"><b>Topic sentence 3</b> (of paragraph 3)</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;"><b>Topic sentence 4</b> (of paragraph 4)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">A key <b>biological change</b> in the physical status of the elderly is <b>(1) osteoporosis</b>.....Smith (2012, p. 352) stated that .....Therefore nurses must ensure that aged clients are protected from knocks and falls, by takings precautions such as .....</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Another important biological change that accompanies ageing is <b>(2)</b>..... Elderly persons need to careful to.....Nurses should therefore take into account the elderly client's.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;">While the body changes considerably with age, it is important for nurses to be aware of the issues that arise emotionally and socially for the elderly individual.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">One <b>psychosocial change</b> many elderly persons experience is <b>(3)</b>.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>(4)</b> is a common emotional issue for the elderly. According to Rogers (2013, p. 113) nurses.....</p>

Parts	Example Text
<p><b>Linking clause</b> <b>Topic sentence 5</b> (of paragraph 5)</p> <p><b>Behavioural changes</b> (3rd section)</p> <p><b>Linking sentence</b> (of paragraph 6)</p> <p><b>Topic sentence 6</b> (of paragraph 6)</p> <p><b>Topic sentence 7</b> (of paragraph 7)</p> <p><b>Topic sentence 8</b> (of paragraph 8)</p>	<p>While (4) is often a significant challenge, a positive aspect of ageing for elderly persons is (5)..... What these psychosocial changes mean for nursing practice is ..... (Lambert, 2010, p. 9). .....</p> <p>As a result of biological and psychosocial changes, many elderly people behave in certain ways. A common behavioural change is (6)..... ..... Thus nurses should be mindful of..... .....</p> <p>Another important behavioural change is (7)..... Nursing practice should be..... .....</p> <p>As people age, (8) becomes more prevalent..... ..... (Andrews &amp; Jones, 2013, para. 3). Consequently, it is important for nurses to respond to the above behavioural changes with understanding and patience.....</p>
<p><b>3) CONCLUSION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use <b>one</b> paragraph only.</li> <li>Summarise and give an overview of the main ideas (1) to (8).</li> <li>Be specific.</li> <li><b>Do NOT give new information.</b></li> <li>The conclusion is often 5% to 10% of the word count.</li> </ul> <p><b>Close the conclusion</b> by relating the key biological, psychosocial and behavioural changes that accompany the ageing process, to the wider context of nursing practice fulfilling the needs of aged clients.</p>	<p>The changes that occur in ageing are varied and complex. Common biological changes are (1) and (2)..... The psychosocial changes (3) and (4) are strongly linked in that ..... However, (5) is a positive psychosocial change. Behavioural change (6) is ..... (7) can often be determined by biological issues such as (1) and (2)..... Behaving in a (8) manner is prevalent among many elderly persons..... Possessing a good understanding of both the common changes that occur with ageing, as well as the complex interrelationships between these effects of ageing, is thus essential for nurses to be better able to provide quality care for elderly clients</p>

Example text adapted from: RMIT University. (2011). *Resources for nursing students*. Retrieved from [https://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/lisu/content/C\\_SET/nursing/Example%20Aged%20Care%20Essay.pdf](https://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/lisu/content/C_SET/nursing/Example%20Aged%20Care%20Essay.pdf)

Refer to Learning Services' **Paragraphs** handout as well

## Checklist for a 1500 word essay\*

### A. Introduction (about 100-150 words)

- Does your introduction:
  - give a relevant context?
  - explain the topic's significance?
  - define (if necessary) the key terms you will use?
  - outline the essay's objectives?

### B. Main Body (about 1000-1300 words over 4-8 paragraphs)

- Does each paragraph of the main body of your essay contain:
  - a topic sentence? This states the main idea of the paragraph and clearly links to the essay's main point or purpose.
  - evidence to support your idea? This can include examples and information from appropriate sources like academic books and journal articles. Check your marking schedule and assignment instructions for specific guidelines.
  - an explanation of the evidence? Connect relevant evidence to the paragraph's main idea and the essay topic.
  - a linking sentence that sums up the main idea of the paragraph and links to the next paragraph? (This is not always necessary because sometimes topic sentences can link paragraphs together effectively.)
- Has the evidence that you have used:
  - been provided with the appropriate citation? (See the hand out *APA Referencing: A Guide for Ara students.*)

### C. Conclusion (about 150-200 words)

- Does your conclusion:
  - summarise the main points of your essay and show how they link together?
  - give specific and important information?

### References

- Have you provided a reference list for all sources that you have cited in your essay? (See the hand out *APA Referencing: A Guide for Ara students.*)

**\* Adjust the word length suggestions proportionally for essays longer or shorter than 1500 words.**