

Paragraphs

In academic writing paragraphs are used to help your reader follow your ideas and arguments easily. Each paragraph should be one distinct topic or ‘big idea’ which contributes to answering your essay question. Below are some examples of paragraph structure templates:

Point	Topic sentence	Point	Topic	Point
Evidence	Elaborate	Explanation	Body	Example/Evidence
Explanation	Evidence	Evidence	Conclusion	Counter argument
Link	Link to question			Supporting details from evidence
				Conclusion

This demonstrates that not all paragraphs will be the same. However, if we look at the above structures, each one has the same core elements. Signposting and linking sentences at the start and end of the paragraph. Plus, the inclusion of evidence from the literature with some commentary from you.

Paragraph structure	
<p>Introduce your paragraph topic. We should have a good idea what the paragraph is about by reading this sentence. This contributes to the flow of your work. Are you expanding upon a previous paragraph or demonstrating a contrasting theory?</p>	
<p>Evidence from the literature, indicated by citations in your work. Each paragraph should demonstrate your knowledge based on the reading you have done. It is good practice to show a range of opinions; you should not just use literature that agrees with your point of view.</p>	
<p>Your commentary, evaluation or critique. What does the evidence seem to be saying? Can you analyse or critique what you have read? What are the strengths or weaknesses of the literature you have included? Can you link this to practice?</p>	
<p>Concluding sentence. Can you demonstrate how this paragraph has linked to your question and moved along your argument?</p>	