

Smarthinking Essay Centre Definitions

Main Idea/Topic

Confirm that your paper contains a main topic that is expressed well. Tutors may check that the essay purpose is clear, matches the assignment guidelines, and is fully developed in the body of the essay.

Introduction/Conclusion

Tutors focus on either the introduction or the conclusion. Tutors might address missing or unnecessary background information for the introduction or missing summary, topic implications, or reflection for the conclusion.

Grammar & Mechanics

Check that your writing uses the rules of grammar and punctuation correctly. For example, tutors look for recurring patterns of error in verb tense, agreement, possessives, punctuation, etc.

Content Development

Determine if your work builds on your main topic. Tutors may address body paragraph topics that do not match the assignment or purpose, missing topic sentences or supporting details.

Referencing

Ensure your referencing is accurate according to the specific referencing style. Tutors address how well students incorporate evidence within their drafts, ensuring that outside sources match the assignment requirements. Tutors may also address citation guidelines, including in-text citations or reference entries.

Sentence Structure

Verify that your sentences are written in the grammatically correct way. Tutors provide feedback on patterns of error with run-on sentences, comma splices, or fragments.

Organisation

Make sure your introduction, paragraphs, and conclusion are organised effectively. Tutors may assess essay-level organisation, such as missing body paragraphs or a disconnect between the order of ideas in the introduction and the order of the body paragraphs.

Transitions

Ensure the ideas in your submission flow together. Tutors may address using topic sentences to connect ideas between paragraphs or using transition words throughout the essay.

Word Choice

Make sure you have chosen the correct words for your specific task. Tutors provide feedback on repetitive word usage, homonym errors, inappropriate point of view (first person, second person, etc.), or pronoun/verb tense agreement errors.