



IoSCM Assessment Guidance

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ESSAY WRITING

Essay Writing

What is an Essay?

- A piece of written work, which is written to a specific set of rules.
- Frequently used as a major form of assessment throughout education.
- A well-reasoned document that moves logically from beginning to end.
- It allows the writer to explore a topic in a way that they feel is appropriate, with relative freedom.
- It is not a report.

What is a report?

- A form of communication containing information from a person who has collected and studied facts, to a person who has requested the report for a specific reason.
- The most usual way of communicating the results of a project or investigation.
- They should be concise and have a specific structure.

The Essay

Identify the reader and what the reader expects. The reader for this course is your tutor(s) who will be marking your work and the external verifier who will check that the marks awarded by the tutors are deemed fair and consistent. Therefore, the reader will expect you to accurately interpret the question being asked of you.

It's advised that you ensure you fully understand your course materials, as this will give you a firm idea of what is expected of you. Again, if you need some further guidance, please get in touch with your dedicated support team.

Structure

For the purpose of this exercise, we will look at a sample essay question.

In 2,500 words, answer the following question: - “Describe, what is meant by, the term ‘logistics’. By using examples, show how the discipline has devolved, where possible relating this to your own organisation.”

It's a good idea to use a checklist like the one below, this may help you stay focused and ensure you meet the required criteria.

What you need to know	Your notes
What are the requirements of the essay?	Number of Words = 2,500
What will get a good mark? What are the assessment criteria? What are the things that will most improve my grade?	[These areas are dependent on the information supplied on the assignment brief.]
What is the 'norm' for essays in the subject area?	Writing in the passive voice or third person.

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Planning:

What you need to know	Your notes
What is the topic or question?	Describe what is meant by the term 'logistics'. Using examples show how the discipline has devolved; where possible relate this to your own organisation.
What is/are the instruction word (s)?	Describe what is meant by the term 'logistics'.
What do they suggest about the purpose of the essay and what do you need to do?	Show how the discipline has devolved and using experience to underpin the discussion.
What is/ are the word (s) that give the essay focus?	'Logistics', how it has developed; use my own organisation as a case study.
What is implied?	Logistics has developed and may need to discuss current logistics elements by using my own organisation as a case study.

This then gives you the skeleton of the essay.

Research

What makes your research useful?

- Identify the key issues by referring back to the essay question and identifying major points you need to make in your essay.
- Cover the important aspects of the topic area and be selective – amongst a mass of information that you will identify whilst doing your research, identify salient points needed to meet the requirements of the essay.
- Identify whether you are looking at different appropriate angles to the topic, or an in-depth study of one angle.

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Questions I need to answer:	Possible sources of Information
What areas of logistics do I need to identify?	History and origins of logistics The supply chain Warehouse and distribution The five driving forces Websites Journals and industry magazines Text books
How do these affect my organisation?	Internal documentation and strategies
What are the implications of logistics and the changes in logistics with relation to my own organisation?	History and origins of logistics The supply chain Warehouse and distribution The five driving forces Websites Journals and industry magazines Text books Communication with my line manager
Which of the five driving forces affect upon my own organisation? Identify examples to underpin my discussion?	History and origins of logistics The supply chain Warehouse and distribution The five driving forces Websites Journals and industry magazines Text books Communication with my line manager Country documentation covering different policies affecting logistics (movement of freight; movement of people; barriers to trade; customs and excise etc.)

Writing

Structure - The essay has a particular structure and layout:

Title:

Every essay has a title containing an actual or implied question. This enables you to focus your essay on the title and address the question.

Referring back to the example title:

Describe, what is meant by, the term 'logistics'. By using examples, show how the discipline has devolved, where possible relating this to your own organisation.

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Introduction:

(Circa 250 words – for an essay of 2,500 words):

Definitions – What the essay will cover and the order

Throughout the essay, use the Harvard Reference System to cite the sources of information used.

Paragraph One:

Covers the first thing that your introduction said you would address.

The first sentence introduces the main idea of the paragraph.

Other sentences develop the theme of the paragraph including relevant examples, details, evidence, quotations and references.

The last sentence of the paragraph acts as an introduction to the next paragraph.

Paragraph Two and Subsequent Paragraphs:

The first or opening sentences link the paragraph to the previous paragraphs and then introduces the main idea of the paragraph.

Other sentences then help to develop the paragraph's topic.

Conclusion:

The conclusion contains no new materials or points to be made.

The conclusion ends the essay by:

- Summarising the main points
- Stating the main features of the topic
- Highlighting any further ideas that may need additional investigation
- Restating the hypothesis you set to prove.
- Making recommendations concerning what you think should happen.
- Making a judgement about or evaluating aspects of your topic.

State your general conclusions and make it clear why these conclusions are important or significant.

Your last sentence should sum up your argument very briefly linking it to the title.

Bibliography:

List all books, articles and other materials you have used to assist in your essay. Using the Harvard Referencing system as discussed.

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Final Considerations

The language used to convey your message must be clear and must meet academic expectations – use formal and appropriate language.

Do:

- Use correct written English, avoid the overuse of acronyms. For example RCT means Royal Corp of Transport. In the first instance write Royal Corp of Transport (RCT) and then use RCT in subsequent cases.
- Spell check.
- Use correct punctuation.
- Avoid jargon.

When editing your essay ask yourself the following questions:

- Does the essay meet the requirements identified from the topic?
- Have you answered all the questions identified from the topic?
- Does the essay have a beginning, middle and end?
- Do the paragraphs flow?
- Are the paragraphs in the best order?
- Is the spelling correct?
- Have you used the right punctuation?
- Is the grammar correct?
- Have you used formal academic language?
- Have you used an appropriate mix of long and short sentences?
- Have you referenced your work using the Harvard Referencing System?
- Does your layout help the reader and make the work more attractive?

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