## Planning and writing a good introduction

A good introduction is essential in clearly setting the scene for a well-structured piece of academic writing; and for demonstrating that you understand and will address task requirements in an organised, coherent and logical manner.

An introduction should make it clear:

- WHY the topic/theme of the paper is important or relevant (*orientation to the topic*)
- WHAT your answer or argument is, or WHAT it is you will discuss or analyse (thesis or position statement)
- HOW you will support your argument or discussion (main points to be developed)

Your introduction should include the relevant **key words**, including **instruction words** from your assessment task instructions and marking rubric, to show your marker that you are addressing the task AND to keep you on track.

The following provides a logical structure for a good introduction.

WHY 2-3 sentences

- 1. Start by leading in to your topic with a sentence that includes key words from your task instructions and shows you are addressing task criteria.
- 2. The next sentences should provide brief <u>background</u> and <u>context</u> with information that orients the reader to the topic and explains **WHY** the information to be discussed is important/relevant. It is expected that this information will be evidence based and require in text citations.
- 3. You may also need to include definition/s which will also require in text citations.

WHAT 1 sentence Provide a clear statement, using **key words**, to tell the reader **WHAT** exactly the paper is about or will argue.

- If you are responding to a task or question, your thesis statement could be a restatement of the task that indicates your position.
- Use the key words from your assessment task including the instruction word

(ie: evaluate/discuss/critically analyse)

**HOW** 1-2 sentences

Finish your introduction with an outline of **HOW** the information in your paper will be organised. This should provide an overview of the key points you will discuss in your body paragraphs.

- Try to use key words from your task and marking criteria.
- Present each key point in the same order they will be discussed in the body paragraphs.

Drafting your introduction before getting started with your body paragraphs can help you to organise your ideas and ensure you are addressing task criteria. However, it is important to keep in mind that as you research, write and edit, your key points may change. For this reason, it is a good idea to finalise your introduction after you have finished writing your paper.

For more on understanding and preparing for assessments see the SCU Learning Zone's Quick Guides.

Learning Experience Team











## Example 1

**Task**: Avoidance of obesity is an important factor in maintaining health and retarding the progression of chronic disease. Discuss.

Obesity is one of many factors that may contribute to decreases in health and vitality in individuals.
According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) (2017), obesity is measured according to Body Mass Index (BMI) and defined as "abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that may impair health" (para.2).

This paper will discuss the importance of avoiding obesity in order to maintain health and retard the progression of chronic disease.

WHAT

The discussion will focus on the impact obesity has on the quality of life physically, psychologically, socially and economically.

## Example 2

Task: Choose one clinical scenario and discuss relevant ethical and legal issues.

WHY	Nurses are governed by ethical and legal regulations, and it is their responsibility to demonstrate professional behaviour by adhering to standards of practice and codes of conduct as they interact with patients, the public and colleagues (Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia [NMBA], 2021). The NMBA (2021) Code of Conduct for Nurses and the International Council of Nurses [ICN] Code of Ethics for Nurses (ICN, 2021) provide frameworks for professional, ethical and legal practice.
WHAT	This case study discusses the ethical and legal issues relevant to a student nurse's conduct while, and after, caring for a patient who is a well-known celebrity.
HOW	Issues of justice, equity, privacy, confidentiality and honesty will be discussed in relation to nursing frameworks, codes of conduct and principles of care as set out by regulatory and professional bodies.

Use the template on the following page to plan your introduction. Start by identifying the key words and instruction words from your **task instructions** and **marking rubric** and ensure that you use these words as you draft the WHY, WHAT and HOW of your introduction.



## Use this template to draft your introduction

Key words:		
Instruction words	s:	
WHY		
	1	
WHAT		
HOW		
	J	