

Planning and writing a good introduction

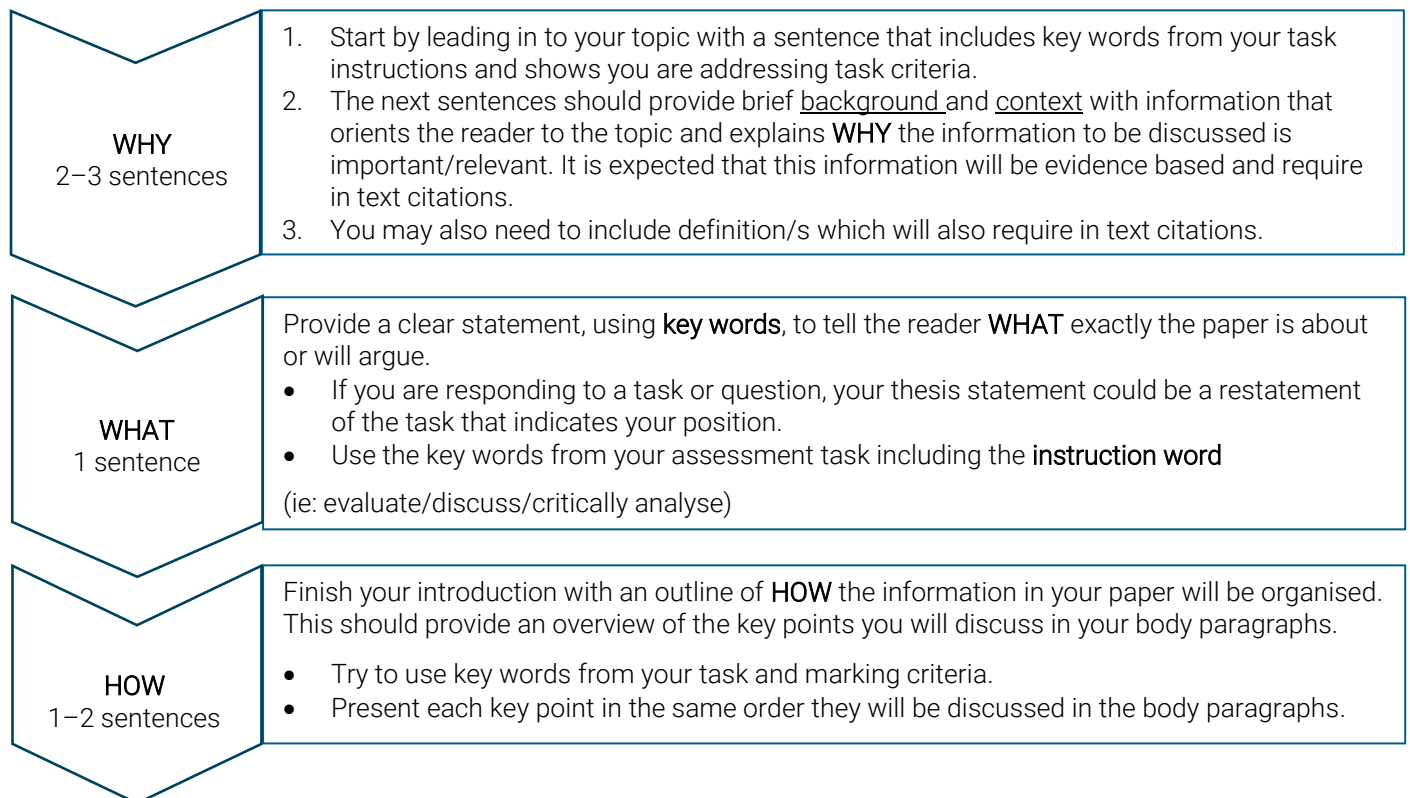
A good introduction is essential in clearly setting the scene for a well-structured piece of academic writing; and for demonstrating that you understand and will address task requirements in an organised, coherent and logical manner.

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.



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](#).

Example 1

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

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

WHY

WHAT

HOW