

# Conclusions in academic writing

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An essay conclusion should be approximately 10% of the overall word count of the essay. You could refer back to the title/question of the essay to remind your reader and demonstrate that you have remained focussed on answering the question. The conclusion should summarise what has been written in the main body of the assignment but it should not introduce any new material or points. However, the conclusion is where you can offer your own thoughts and opinions having evaluated the evidence you have offered in your essay. It is also the place where you may add any recommendations for future action on the issues you have discussed.

The following is taken from *The Study Skills Handbook* (Cottrell, 2008. p.184):

- Summarise your argument and the main themes.
- State your general conclusions.
- Make it clear why those conclusions are important or significant.
- In your last sentence, sum up your argument very briefly, linking it to the title.

If you find it difficult to phrase what you would like to say, try following the link below to the University of Manchester Phrasebank, a resource created to help students with academic language by providing examples, in context, of useful academic phrases.

<http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/writing-conclusions/>

On the following page is an example conclusion taken from the University of West London website (2020).

**The question was:** Examine the impact of physical inactivity on mental health (1000 words)

**Summary of the essay:** This essay has critically examined the relationship between physical inactivity on mental health. The impact of physical inactivity on depression, stress, self-esteem and anxiety has been discussed.

**Main conclusion:** Through the review of literature, it has been determined that a lack of physical activity can negatively affect mental health and in some cases, worsen symptoms.

**Further research and recommendations:** It is suggested that health education should be advertised to individuals susceptible to physical and mental health conditions. It is also recommended that healthy living programmes are integrated into workplaces and other high stress environments.

<https://www.uwl.ac.uk/current-students/support-current-students/academic-support/writing-introduction-and-conclusion>