



Presenting a convincing persuasive argument A↓

Writing is made persuasive through:

- The way we organise our ideas - are they clearly and logically organised
- The strength of our argument - does it support our points and is the evidence credible?
- How well-integrated our evidence is - have we incorporated the evidence with our own ideas so the argument flows?
- Our use of persuasive language - have we used language to make our argument clear (explicit)?

This week we are going to explore all of these elements of persuasive writing and ask you to apply these as you draft your essay.

10.1 Organising ideas logically and building a strong argument A↓



mathsthoughtbook.com

The focus this week is on how to make sure you have **structured your essay** logically and clearly and used evidence effectively so that your essay is a **strong persuasive argument**.

To help you achieve this we will guide you to read, or re-read relevant sections of Chapter 8 in your textbook. This is an important chapter which brings your focus back to essay writing and on how you need to present your ideas in your Persuasive Essay (Assessment 4).

To help you to understand and apply these concepts, the chapter first revisits the process of unpacking essay questions and how your essay structure should reflect the essay question, in terms of the organisation of ideas, linking of ideas and the use of persuasive language.

It also discusses and provides an example of how you should include and deal with evidence that contradicts your thesis. Perhaps most usefully, it provides a short model essay (p.179) that you will find very usefully as an example of the required layout, language, organisation of ideas in the body, requirements for an introduction and conclusion, and key referencing tips for your Assessment 4, Persuasive Essay.

So, to begin with we would like you to focus on the first part of the chapter to build your skills in:

- Structuring your whole essay logically
- Organising your argument effectively
- Dealing with evidence that contradicts your thesis



Structuring ideas logically

1. Work through Chapter 8 the pages 166 to 175

2. Apply what you have learned from this to your Assessment 4 essay plan by:

- Revising your taxonomy for your assessment to insure it is logical,
- Checking that the evidence you have so far is convincing and counter evidence included where relevant,
- Noting what evidence you still need to find to back up your arguments.
- Search for evidence and take notes from this to use in your essay

As a overview for essay structure, have a look at the diagram below and note the key elements required in an academic essay. This week's exercises in Chapter 8 will elaborate on these.

10.2 Integrating evidence and using persuasive language A↓

So far we have talked about how our writing is made persuasive when we organise our ideas in a clear, logical way in Chapter 8 (pp 164-168), building a strong argument with credible evidence (pp 171 – 173) and strengthen it in the introduction and conclusion paragraphs. But let's look at what we mean by the other two points:

- How we integrated our evidence - have we incorporated the evidence with our own ideas so the argument flows?
- How we use persuasive language - have we used language to make our argument clear (explicit)?

Integrating the evidence

To integrate evidence well, you need to first introduce the point/sub argument you are making, then introduce the evidence that supports that point and explain why and how it relates. To help you understand this better, we have listed the required aspects of integrating evidence below. Can you identify these in the example paragraph.

Topic sentence introducing subargument
Evidence to back up sub argument paraphrased with in-text reference
The point/ relevance of the evidence is explained
Linking/concluding sentence to build on argument

From a social/cultural point of view, sustainable outcomes in Kakadu National Park must take into account the different value systems of the Indigenous land owners. As Bruekner et al (2013) explain, there is often an assumption that Indigenous people prioritize economic wealth in the same way many non-Indigenous cultures do. But, they clarify, the spiritual value of land and kinship obligations are generally valued much more highly than economic wealth. For this reason solutions must involve full consultation with the Indigenous land owners with the view that spiritual and kinship obligations may have to be met first. In doing so, a more sustainable tourism industry in Kakadu can be achieved.

Here is the paragraph again colour coded to indicate the parts for integrating evidence effectively:

From a social/cultural point of view, sustainable outcomes in Kakadu National Park must take into account the different value systems of the Indigenous land owners. As Bruekner et al (2013) explain, there is often an assumption that Indigenous people prioritize economic wealth in the same way many non-Indigenous cultures do. But, they clarify, the spiritual value of land and kinship obligations are generally valued much more highly than economic wealth. For this reason solutions must involve full consultation with the Indigenous land owners with the view that spiritual and kinship obligations may have to be met first. In doing so, a more sustainable tourism industry in Kakadu can be achieved.

So, the take-home message is to make sure you are very clear about how and why the evidence relates to your argument. Don't just throw in it without hooking it into your argument.



Consolidating all the elements of persuasive writing

Work through pages 176 - 183 to consolidate your understanding of persuasive writing.

NB Some additional things to look for as you interrogate the sample 'tobacco' essay on page 177 are the:

- Argument
- Counter argument
- Refute of the counter argument
- What words the essay writer uses to integrate ideas from references

Next week we will be showing you how to put this understanding of persuasive writing into practice by working off your taxonomy to write your topic sentences and integrate the evidence.



To help you consolidate your understanding of this, have a look at the example on page 174 of your textbook.

This shows how a number of pieces of evidence are integrated to support the argument in that paragraph and how contradictory evidence is dealt with. You will find it useful to work through the exercise on this page to really consolidate your understanding of this essential academic skill.

Persuasive language

Now let's examine how the words you choose can help your argument to be more persuasive. Persuasive language is the language in-between your key ideas that in a subtle and non-emotive way, helps convince the reader that your argument is a valid one. It does this by:

- Making the argument explicit
- Using signpost words to emphasise point of view

Making the argument explicit

The topic sentences for each of your paragraphs are an important way to add persuasion to your argument. They advance your argument and maintain the thread and logic of your discussion. Look at the following example of a topic sentence and ask yourself what makes it persuasive:

The first essential application of communication for nurses relates to patient care.

The persuasive elements are:

- The linking words 'The first ...' that tell the reader - This is the first of a number of arguments.
- The restating of the thesis '... essential application of communication for nurses...'
- The introduction of the paragraph topic: '... relates to patient care', which gives the reader a clear indication of what the argument for this paragraph will focus on.

All these elements help to persuade the reader as they make your argument and the organisation of your ideas clear throughout the essay.

Using sign-post words to emphasise a point of view

Throughout your essay, signpost words like: **however, conversely, unfortunately, importantly and additionally** indicate your point of view or argument about the ideas you are conveying.

Persuasion in the introduction and conclusion

Like clear topic sentences in the body of your essay, a clear statement of your thesis and supporting arguments is essential in the introduction and conclusion so your reader understands what you are trying to argue and how you will argue.

Importantly, the body of your essay should be organised logically in the same order you have promised the reader you will use in the introduction. So if in your introduction you have said:

'This essay will first describe a sustainability scenario in Bendigo and then suggest a resolution in terms of a process and a solution that would meet environmental, social and economic sustainability'

then this is the order you should discuss these things in your essay.

If you are not clear about the organisation of your ideas in the introduction, then body your argument will lose persuasive power because the reader will be too busy trying to understand the organisational logic of your ideas to notice whether the evidence and ideas are any good.

NB As you have developed a taxonomy, this will already show the consistent logic in the way ideas are ordered.

The final point about a persuasive argument, is that it needs adequate, credible and properly referenced evidence. Without it, you have no argument at all!

11.2 Working off your taxonomy to draft your essay

Now you have reviewed your taxonomy we will get you started on using your completed taxonomy to help draft your essay. Build paragraphs and integrate your evidence effectively



Building your paragraphs

Writing your topic sentences

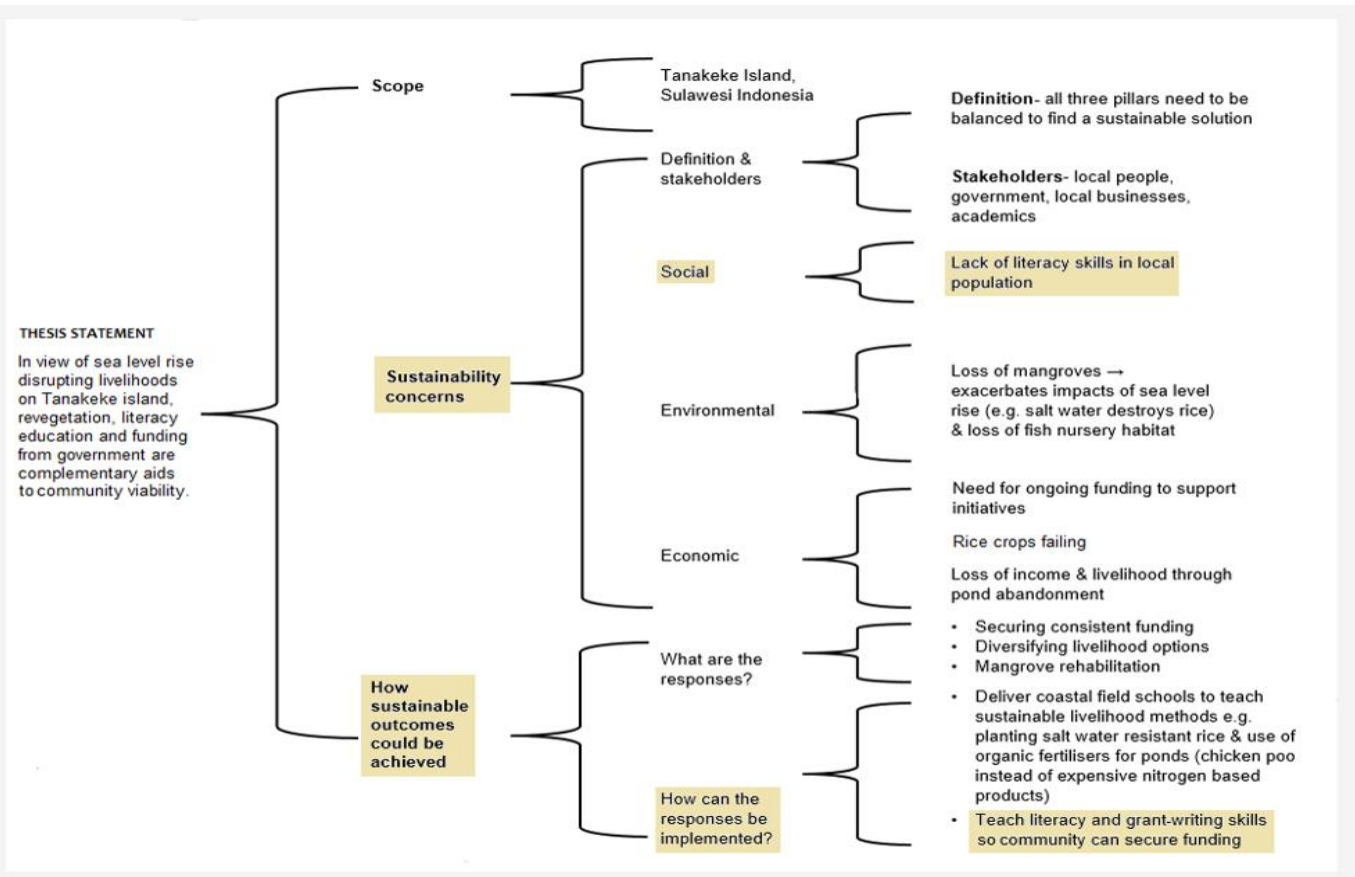
Again you should be able to use your taxonomy for your topic sentences since the taxonomy provides the overall thesis for your essay, the sections and then at the next level the main point of each paragraph.

The key ideas that you have noted down at the paragraph level are the topic of your paragraph and by now you should have the references noted as well so this is your cue for the evidence you will use to support the idea introduced in the topic.

The linking words you need to include in your topic sentences will just relate to where the paragraph is positioned: Firstly, secondly/additionally, the third point, finally or they may relate to the flow or a turn in the argument. For example, taking the first section our example taxonomy below we have come up with the following topic sentences:

Topic sentence 1: One of the key social concerns on Tanakeke Island is the lack of literacy skills in the local population.

Topic sentence 2: Teaching literacy and grant writing skills is a crucial response to ensure the community can secure ongoing funding and their livelihoods.



Integrating your evidence

Once you have your topic sentences finished, it's just a matter of presenting your argument and evidence in a persuasive way in support of the sub-argument presented in each topic sentence. You should have the relevant evidence noted on your taxonomy and your notes from these references, so it's just a matter of integrating these as your evidence. Don't forget to use the correct referencing conventions according to a particular style guide.

Let's look at an example from the same section of our sample taxonomy

In the case of paragraphs dealing with issues covered in the readings, you may find you have more or less created these paragraphs in the second, commentary paragraph of your annotated bibliography for that reading, so copy it across into the relevant part of your essay and massage it so it flows logically. To demonstrate, the commentary of the example annotation we provided you in Week 6 can be massaged in the following way:

Original comment from annotated bibliography

Chapter one is particularly useful for informing issues regarding sustainable tourism in Bali. It provides general definitions of sustainable development and the components of and interaction between the three dimensions. These can be used to set up the key definitions and frame an analysis according to the three dimensions. The chapter also provides an Integrated Assessment (IA) Toolkit which can be used to guide the analysis of sustainability scenarios and provide a framework to analyse the problem of sustainable tourism in Bali. On Page 26, models for measuring sustainability are provided and these can be applied to a range of issues including sustainable tourism.

Parts of comment integrated as part of two different paragraphs in the essay

Bell and Morse (2013) provide the following definition of sustainable development: ... Further, they describe the successful interaction between the three dimensions: environmental, social and economic as essential for the achievement of sustainable development.

In analysing the three dimensions of the issue of the development of sustainable development of tourism in Bali, the Integrated Assessment (IA) Toolkit from Bell and Morse (2013) will be used to provide a framework that takes into account the three dimensions and measure how well the needs of these are being met.

If you get stuck, then feel free to email a one-paragraph draft to your tutor for feedback.

Adding the introduction and conclusion

You should have drafted your introduction and conclusion last week so once you have built up the paragraphs in the body of the essay, add the introduction and conclusion and you should have a first draft.

A final note of reassurance: by the end of your first year, persuasive writing will be coming to you much more naturally.



Maintaining clear direction

As you come to finalise your essay, make sure you read the Assessment 4 Guidelines and make sure you check the pre-submission checklist. The items you are checking are the ones your assessment will be based on, so it is important that you get them right.

You should also check the formatting guidelines for A4, as you are also being assessed on your word processing skills in the final essay.

You might like to join the recorded Collaborate session on the marking criteria for the final assessment, as well as a Q&A on approaching the essay question. If you are already familiar with the pre-submission checklist for assessment 4 then you will get more out of the Collaborate session.

By now you should have received feedback on your main thesis and your essay plan as part of the PowerPoint presentation. As discussed above, writing is a process and so we expect that you will make some changes to your thesis as well as your plan and we will not be checking your final essay against your presentation to ensure that they are the same. In fact, we hope that you do evolve and improve on your thesis and your essay structure, right up until the moment of editing your final draft.

As you write your essay, drawing out the supporting arguments identified in your essay plan, you may find yourself stuck on certain points or lost in particular places in your line of argument. This is quite common in all forms of writing, and especially in persuasive, analytical academic writing, where you are endeavouring to maintain a clear and coherent line of argument.

Sometimes, simply walking away from your writing and taking a break will help to break the feeling of stalemate when you come back to it.

Other times, you may need to go back to your essay plan and remind yourself what you are trying to achieve with this paragraph, how it relates to your main thesis, and what the main point is that you're trying to make at this particular stage of your argument.

As the process of writing unfolds, you may find yourself arguing a new 'thread' of argument that you hadn't considered in your essay plan. Or you may find that a single paragraph is not enough to sufficiently explain and justify the point that you want to make.



Some final tasks for this week

In preparation for finalising your draft next week you may like to do the following:

- If you are still short of references, continue to research for Assessment 4. Don't forget assistance is available from the liaison librarians, and you can still access the recorded Online Classroom sessions.
- Contact your lecturer with any questions/feedback on drafts

11.3 Strengthening your argument in the introduction and conclusion



Your textbook covers introductions and conclusions on page 173-175. It sums up the main parts of introductions and conclusions as:

Introduction	Conclusion
• Orientates the reader to general topic • States the essay thesis • Outlines the main points to be covered • Gives the scope (if necessary)	• Confirms the essay thesis • Summarises the points/argument covered • Qualifies the thesis (if necessary)



Understanding through examples

To help you understand these parts and how they expressed in writing, have a look at the examples across pages 173 - 175 and work through the exercises to label the parts comparing what you came up with what is described in the textbook.

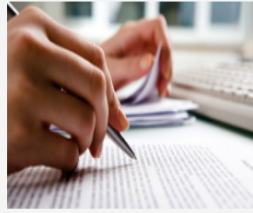


Applying to your own introductions and conclusions

Now have a go at writing an introduction and conclusion for your essay.

NB. Remember you should be able to work directly off your taxonomy to write these. The main points covered will be the main themes being explored in your essay and any other major parts to your essay. For example, if you plan to define key terms, you might say as part of your introduction: 'This essay will first define key terms and then discuss ...'.

12.1 Writing as process A↓



(from: oedb.org)

Throughout this unit, we have provided some suggested approaches to developing your formal academic writing. We have examined the generally accepted conventions for a number of different types of writing at university and we have provided you with samples of academic writing so that you can get an idea of what the finished product might look like. We have also suggested steps that you might follow in order to make your writing structured, clear, and persuasive (review the Week 11 Learning Materials). For this kind of guidance, you should continue to find your *Communicating at University* textbook extremely helpful for the rest of your time at university (and perhaps also beyond that).

It is very important to remember, that while there are certain standards, conventions, and expectations associated with different types of writing at university, writing of any kind is ultimately a very personal process. As with all forms of communication, it is shaped by a multitude of small and large choices made by you as the writer. These include word-related choices such as which:

- Words to use to best capture key ideas?
- Words to repeat throughout the essay to reinforce main argument(s)?
- Words to find synonyms for in order not to repeat or overemphasise?
- Order to put words into sentences to highlight or prioritise main ideas?

As you probably already know, these choices can be daunting and difficult enough. To help you start to think carefully about some of these choices, your textbook has some very helpful guidance and practice activities for the use of 'signpost words' in Chapter 10 (pp 270-275).

However, obviously there are many more choices involved in writing than just the choices involved with word use. Many of these choices relate to style and are therefore specific to your own personal approach to writing, your writing 'voice' so to speak. Such choices can only be made by you and depend heavily on the context of your writing: what your overall purpose is and what specific point you are trying to make at this point in your writing in THIS way in order to support your overall purpose.

To help you to navigate the various language choices in your writing, here are some general suggestions:

- Think about the various skills and strategies for academic writing that you have learned (and will continue to learn) as your own, growing repertoire of language devices. Different uses of these devices at different points in your writing will produce different effects for the reader. Think about the effect that you want to have on the reader and make conscious and deliberate choices in the devices that you use.
- Test and weigh the value and strength of every single one of your sentences. Ask yourself: Can this sentence be taken another way? Have I expressed my intended meaning with concision and precision? Is it stylish and sophisticated? (We'll come back to the matter of style later, below).
- Think of writing as an evolving, somewhat painstaking, and ultimately rewarding process; one that all writers must go through, however experienced they may be. Take comfort in the fact that questioning and struggling with your own writing is what makes you a strong writer, not a weak one, and that you are not alone in the struggle.

On the last point, in particular, remember that you are on a continuing journey to develop your academic literacies and specifically your writing. This journey will certainly extend beyond this first semester of your first year at university and, indeed, may well continue on into your professional and personal writing beyond university.

12.2 Editing your writing A↓



(from: pmdi.org)

Editing is one of the most crucial final steps in assessment writing and, unfortunately, it is one that is very often neglected by students either because they have run out of time or because they are just 'over' the assessment by the time that they have finished drafting it. Given the understanding of writing as process (see above), and the fact that simple grammatical and punctuation errors can severely affect the clarity and coherence of your writing, it really is important that you allow time to check the presentation of your ideas (edit) before submitting your assessment.

Of course you will likely do some editing as you go, changing and correcting small mistakes in your writing as you produce each sentence and paragraph. Nonetheless, a final edit of your work as a whole makes an enormous difference, ideally with some time taken away from the assessment so that you can come to the editing process with 'fresh eyes'.



To help you with the editing process, work through Chapter 10 of your textbook (pp. 257-283).



Checking your grammar, word choices and spelling

Remember that a final online grammar and spellcheck are essential, but they are no substitute for your own careful and attentive editing. If you can, ask a friend or family member to read through it as well.

'Stylish' academic writing

As a final point about editing, think about what 'stylish' academic writing means to you. Consider the academic articles and book chapters that you have already read at university - are they engaging? Interesting? Accessible?

Don't make the mistake of thinking that you need to use big, long words or long, complicated sentences in order to make your writing more sophisticated and 'academic sounding'. Simple is often better, if your message is clear, strong, and consistent with the writing that surrounds it.

Helen Sword, author of *Stylish Academic Writing*, points out that many well-published academics struggle to make their writing sufficiently clear, let alone engaging and 'stylish'. She also offers some general tips for academic writers that you may find useful.



Watch the [discussion clip](#) and take notes.



If you like, take Helen Swords 'fit or flabby' writing test found here: [the writer's diet](#) to test whether your writing is stylish or not.