

ESSAY CHECKLIST

(provided by the Academic Center)

This essay checklist aims at providing you with some essential points to check before handing in your essays to your instructors. It lists typical mistakes and questions that come up regularly when writing essays. If time permits, the Academic Center team would appreciate it if you checked your piece of work according to this list before coming to our office hours.

PLEASE NOTE: This essay checklist does not apply to WOC essays. If your instructors provide you with any special requirements in their individual courses, please follow those guidelines primarily.

<p>BASICS</p> <p>There is a clear introduction, main body and conclusion in my essay.</p> <p>My essay is based on a clear, unambiguous thesis statement.</p>	
<p>PARAGRAPHS</p> <p>I use paragraphs that follow the stylistic requirements.</p> <p><u>Content:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All aspects described in the paragraphs are relevant to the question. - I do not just give statements, but argue. <p><u>Structure:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The paragraphs are approximately of equal length. - The paragraphs are coherently linked. - Each paragraph focuses on one main argument/ aspect. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → The paragraph elaborates on this main argument by providing textual references / quotes/ examples. 	
<p>STYLE</p> <p><u>Register:</u> I write in formal style and avoid colloquial language.</p> <p><u>Grammar:</u> I mainly use present tense (esp. when discussing fictional texts).</p> <p>I use simple syntax: the sentence structure is not monotonous, but varies.</p> <p>I use appropriate linking words, e.g. contrast – <i>in contrast, however, despite of etc.</i> extension – <i>moreover, in addition etc.</i> reinforcement – <i>likewise, similarly etc.</i> etc.</p>	

<p>In my essay, I do not generalise, exaggerate, repeat myself....</p> <p>The reader is able to follow my line of argument.</p> <p>I stick to either British English or American English spelling conventions.</p>	
<p>CITATION</p> <p>I position myself critically to quotes and do not just add them to my text without further comment.</p> <p>I quote from reliable sources.</p> <p>I do not start sentences with direct quotes, but introduce them with e.g. <i>XY argues that...</i>, <i>“quotation”</i> or <i>The following quotation highlights that...</i></p>	
<p>FORMAT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Justify text (Blocksatz) - Line Spacing (1,5) - Indent the paragraphs <p>I follow my instructor’s requirements.</p> <p>If my instructor does not provide me with individual/special requirements, I consult the Stylesheet that can be found on the IAA WIKI.</p>	
<p>INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION</p> <p><u>Introduction:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I provide the reader with basic information (i.e. name of author, novel, year of publication...). - I make it clear why the topic at hand is relevant to my audience. - The length of my introduction is appropriate with regard to the whole essay (e.g. 4 - 5 page essay: introduction and conclusion each ca. ½ page). <p><u>Conclusion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I do not repeat my introduction, but sum up my main line of argument. - I do not provide the reader with new arguments. - OPTIONAL: I offer an outlook on possible further research or discussions related to my topic. 	
<p>FINAL CHECK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I have reread my essay, corrected inaccuracies and checked spelling mistakes! 	