

College & University Essay Writing

Printable workbook

1st Edition

Published 2026

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HOW TO WRITE AN ESSAY

A College and University Guide to Academic Argument, Research, and Revision

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First edition, 2026

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The applicable assignment sheet, instructor rubric, course or program requirements, institutional policies, and admissions requirements take priority over this guide.

Start Here

1. Choose your task: planning, source work, revision, or submission. Read the matching guide chapter and its worked example first.
2. Follow your assignment or venue requirements. This workbook does not replace a rubric, current submission rules, or required disclosures.
3. Printable edition: write in the outlined areas. Fillable edition: download and save a project-specific copy, then type in a form-capable PDF reader.
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5. Keep responses concise. Text fields have character limits and do not scroll; use a labelled continuation sheet for longer material. Check your saved or printed copy for hidden text.
6. A completed example is clearly marked fictional. Blank source and continuation pages contain no example data. Label QUOTE, PARAPHRASE, and MY ANALYSIS separately.
7. Keep sources, exact locators, limitations, revision decisions, and actual assistance records together. Do not invent a source, permission, interview, or completed check.

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Academic Essay Planner

Complete for your own project. Use a labelled continuation sheet when needed.

Assignment, task, and grading requirements

Research question and scope

Working thesis or main claim

Why the claim matters

Paragraph or section plan

Citation style and source requirements

Collaboration, reused material, and permitted AI assistance

Opening and Ending Planner

Complete for your own project. Use a labelled continuation sheet when needed.

Opening problem or research question

Background, concepts, or scholarly conversation

Connection to question and thesis

Conclusion, synthesis, and necessary limits

Significance or next question

Completed Source Example

Study this example, then use the blank pages for your own sources.

FICTIONAL TEACHING EXAMPLE - NOT REAL RESEARCH

Claim: An unchanged last departure precedes the late class ending reported by eight volunteers.

Sources: university chapter 1, Record B (timetable row), Record C (method and item 3).

Evidence: 20:10 final departure; 20:30 class ending for eight of twenty volunteers.

Limit: The open survey does not establish the campus-wide scale or a before/after change.

My analysis: Schedule compatibility and boarding counts measure different outcomes.

Before using a real source, record its actual creator, title, version, locator, and the exact material consulted.

Citation does not repair an unsupported inference. The fictional example is not evidence to submit as research.

Source and Evidence Record

Complete for your own project. Use a labelled continuation sheet when needed.

Claim or question

Source details and exact locator

Evidence, quotation, or paraphrase (label the type)

Support and limitation

My analysis and relationship to other sources

Use decision and next verification task

Additional Source Record

Blank continuation page for your own work. Identify the project and source in your entries.

Claim or question

Source details and exact locator

Evidence, quotation, or paraphrase (label the type)

Support and limitation

My analysis and relationship to other sources

Use decision and next verification task

Revision and Integrity Audit

Complete for your own project. Use a labelled continuation sheet when needed.

Does the thesis answer the question within the evidence limits?

Sources verified, accurately represented, and analysed

Citations and source-list correspondence checked

Feedback and substantive revision actions

Authorship, collaboration, reuse, and assistance disclosures

Final formatting, accessibility, exported file, and submission check