



STRUCTURE AND COHERENCE

A well-structured piece of academic work which flows in a logical way is much easier for a reader to follow and understand. To improve your marks in this area, therefore, consider the following:

INTRODUCTIONS & CONCLUSIONS

Academic work needs a **clear introduction**, setting out what it hopes to cover, and a **conclusion summarising** the main points.

Check what you are being asked to cover in your introduction and conclusion; for example, some introductions should detail the content and structure of your work, whereas others might be broader. Some conclusions should state nothing new whereas in others you may be able to leave the question open. Follow guidance in your module handbook or from your tutors.

OVERALL STRUCTURE & PARAGRAPHS

Within the body of a piece of academic work, **bring together similar concepts** or arguments, discuss these and then develop them into the next idea. In this way, you can build your ideas from one to another and make **connections**, rather than jumping around.

Use **a paragraph for each of your ideas or topics**: state the idea, back up your claim with evidence (usually references) and then explain its significance to your overall argument. Keep your paragraphs a similar length for consistency.

TRANSITIONS & SIGNPOSTING

Signposting from one idea to the next is essential: it explains how a piece of writing is ordered and helps the reader understand the **flow of your argument**. Words such as “however” “on the other hand” or “likewise” help the reader to know how your next paragraph relates to the last one.

