



WRITING AN INTRODUCTION

Essay title: Critically analyse the concept of institutional racism in policing and evaluate policy responses to it.

EXAMPLE

“By its very nature, much of policing is controversial and conflictual.” (Newburn, 2005, p.525). This can be seen in the major debate on race and racism that has permeated contemporary British policing from the 80s to the present, featuring heavily in popular media and political debates. The growing interest in the position of ethnic minority groups in relation to the criminal justice system increased when it was brought to light that they did not receive treatment equivalent to their white counterparts. This was revealed in a number of high profile cases, leading to public concern over whether racism operated at the individual level, or whether it was embedded in the policies and practices of the police (Easton and Piper, 2005). In this period, two significant inquiries were carried out: the Scarman report and the Macpherson report, investigating and probing police procedures to determine if or where racism was present in the system. Whilst some progress has been made since these two inquiries were carried out, many improvements still need to be made to overcome institutional racism. These two inquiries will provide a focus by which to critically analyse the concept of institutional racism in policing and evaluate the policy responses to it. Firstly, the relations between the police and minorities will be considered in the context of history, through the Brixton riots, which triggered the Scarman inquiry, and the death of Stephen Lawrence that led to the Macpherson inquiry. Secondly, the concept of institutional racism will be analysed. Thirdly, the Stephen Lawrence case and the recommendations Macpherson presented to create change in policies will be examined. Finally, policy responses to the inquiries will be evaluated.

EXAMPLE BROKEN DOWN WITH COMMENTS ON PAGE 2 AND 3

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Example adapted from Wrasse: <http://wrasse.plymouth.ac.uk/extract/essay-critically-analyse-the-concept-of-institutional-racism-in-policing-and> (creative commons)
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BROKEN DOWN EXAMPLE

COMMENTS

“By its very nature, much of policing is controversial and conflictual.” (Newburn, 2005, p.525).

You could use a quote to start and grab the reader’s attention. This is not always effective. Only do this if it is relevant and short. In this case, the students has successfully used a quote as they go on to explain its significance. They have also provided a reference.

This can be seen in the major debate on race and racism that has permeated contemporary British policing from the 80s to the present, featuring heavily in popular media and political debates.

Student reveals why this is a topic worth investigating.

The growing interest in the position of ethnic minority groups in relation to the criminal justice system increased when it was brought to light that they did not receive treatment equivalent to their white counterparts. This was revealed in a number of high profile cases, leading to public concern over whether racism operated at the individual level, or whether it was embedded in the policies and practices of the police (Easton and Piper, 2005).

The student has explained here what they understand by “institutional racism”. They have provided a reference to show where they got this information from.

In this period, two significant inquiries were carried out: the Scarman report and the Macpherson report, investigating and probing police procedures to determine if or where racism was present in the system.

Whist the essay question itself is broad, the student is using their introduction to tell the reader the limits they have set such as dates and specific significant events in order to produce a focused essay. It would be impossible to cover everything on a topic so you may need to set your own limits when writing an essay.





Whilst some progress has been made since these two inquiries were carried out, many improvements still need to be made to overcome institutional racism.

Here the student is outlining the main argument they are going to present in the essay. The main body of the essay should present well evidenced reasons that examine the different perspectives of this argument.

These two inquiries will provide a focus by which to critically analyse the concept of institutional racism in policing and evaluate the policy responses to it. Firstly, the relations between the police and minorities will be considered in the context of history, through the Brixton riots, which triggered the Scarman inquiry, and the death of Stephen Lawrence that led to the Macpherson inquiry. Secondly, the concept of institutional racism will be analysed. Thirdly, the Stephen Lawrence case and the recommendations Macpherson presented to create change in policies will be examined. Finally, policy responses to the inquiries will be evaluated.

The last part of the introduction gives the reader a clear understanding of how the essay is going to be structured.