ESSAY WRITING REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for essays are set out here in brief. Further detail is contained in separate sections which must be read in conjunction with this outline, namely “How to structure an essay”, “Acknowledging authorities within the text” and “Listing References” and “Writing an Abstract”.

1. STRUCTURE OF YOUR ESSAY

Every essay should consist of the following parts:
- Title page. [required] Choose your own title. Word count.
- Abstract [required; to be placed on title page]
- Introduction
- Discussion (body)
- Conclusion
- List of References [required]

In addition to a title page, and List of References, which is required for every assignment, essays should consist of the following parts:

An abstract which sets out in brief (50 to 100 words for an Economics 1 essay) the context, the purpose and method of addressing a problem or issue and the conclusions drawn. Although the abstract is placed on the title page, it is written after the essay has been completed. (See “How to write an Abstract” in this booklet).

The introduction should lead up to, or introduce the subject. What ‘line’ are you taking? What is your central theme? Find your thesis (central theme) and put it into one sentence (Baker, 1981:3-6).

The discussion deals with the facts or the line of thought presented in a logical order. You must follow some definite scheme and therefore the arrangement of your facts or line of argument is necessary before you write your essay. Without sound planning a well-written essay is impossible. This is where you demonstrate to the reader that you can back up your thesis.

Within the discussion, it is necessary to be constantly aware of exactly how the material you are presenting relates to the title or central thesis of your essay. Assistance in this respect is often gained by remembering the rules for paragraph construction. Each paragraph should contain a leading or introductory statement, which sets the scene for the topic to be dealt with, and a summary statement or sentence at the end. If not at the end of every paragraph, then certainly at the conclusion of major sections of the essays, it is necessary to indicate to your reader exactly how the material just presented relates to the title of your essay. An inability to fulfil this function suggests that you are straying from the point and should seriously rethink and rewrite the section before progressing further.

The conclusion is drawing your final inferences, summarizing and emphasizing your thesis. If you follow the above scheme there should be no reason to be told that you have not answered the question. It is necessary of course to do more than arrange facts. You are asked to DISCUSS, JUDGE CRITICALLY, COMPARE and CONTRAST. Many essays handed in completely ignore the drawing of any inferences. In most questions in Economics it will be necessary to show the examiner that apart from knowing the line of argument, you are able to draw logical conclusions. Whether the final inference agrees with the examiner’s personal opinion or not, is not important. The more logically your arguments (and facts) are arranged, the more easily and convincingly will your conclusion be deducted from them.

LIST OF REFERENCES
2. PRESENTATION OF the ESSAY:

2.1 Title Page

- Include all the information as set out below:
  
  [General Format]

  Your Name and Surname
  Student number
  Tutor’s Name
  Tut Period

  [Title of the essay]
  [Course descriptor. Essay No]
  [Due date]

  Abstract
  In brief, the problem statement or issue addressed (hypothesis), the context and importance, the line of argument or the method used, and the conclusions drawn.

  [Word Count]

  [Sample layout]

  Joe Citizen
  17A1234
  A. Tutor
  8.40

  Price Discovery in a
  Market Economy
  Economics 101 Essay 1
  13 March 2017

  Abstract
  From an examination of the way in which prices are formed in an economy, with South Africa used as a case study, it was concluded that government intervention and administrative price setting were significant, but sub-ordinate to the market.

  [Word Count]

2.2 Putting it together

- Place the title page at the front of your essay. Additional attachments at the back.
- Staple the pages together by using a single staple at the upper left-hand corner.
- Please DO NOT place essays into plastic sleeves or use a cover.

2.3 Paper size, Paragraphs and Numbering

- Essays must be typed.
- Use plain white A4 paper and one-and-a-half or double-space your lines.
- Separate paragraphs by leaving a blank line between each paragraph.

2.4 Use the spell and grammar check

- Word processing programmes have

2.5 Diagrams and tables from books and websites

- You may insert hand drawn diagrams into your printed text.
- NO diagrams, tables, etc., may be COPIED and PASTED from electronic textbooks or other sources. Diagrams etc MUST be drawn by you!
3. MINIMUM NUMBER of SOURCES to be USED and ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of AUTHORITIES

3.1 Use at least four published references:
   a. One article obtained from a newspaper/press report or credible newspaper website upon which the essay is focused. [Staple a clear, referenced, printed copy of the electronic version of the article to the back of your essay. You may NOT use an article either photocopied or cut from any source whatsoever.]
   
b. At least a further three sources of which one source must be a book other than Van Rensburg et al. (2008) or any other editions of Van Rensburg.
   c. PREFERABLY USE MORE!

3.2 When and How to Document (cite) a Source
   ▪ Always acknowledge whatever is borrowed from other writers, not only direct quotes. See ‘Acknowledging sources within the text’ in this booklet.

3.3 Checking for matching text using RUconnected
RUconnected contains a text matching detection programme (called ‘Turnitin’) that determines the percentage of matching text between your essay and other sources accessible through the internet.

If you submit your assignment early enough, as a “draft”, you can use the programme to check and improve your own work before you submit it for assessment.

You are allowed to submit a “draft” copy that can be altered later. That is, after you have made changes, you will be able to resubmit the assignment. Note that the copy submitted to RUconnected must EXCLUDE the List of References.

Your report should be available no later than 24 hours after you have submitted it and you can then view it. Therefore, it is your responsibility to ensure that you submit your essay to ‘Turnitin’ more than 24 hours before the deadline. (Eg. Essay 1 must be submitted BEFORE 7am on Monday 11 March 2017 and Essay 2 must be submitted BEFORE 7am on Monday 22 April 2017).

Note that a report showing more than 15% matching text (even if it is properly referenced) is too much and you should think of ways to paraphrase some of your quotes. Note that, since the system may not detect all sources, a clear Turnitin report is only an indication - not a guarantee - of the extent of matching text. If markers detect other forms of plagiarism, or matching text from other sources, you may still incur penalties.

3.4 What is plagiarism?
   ▪ “Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person’s phrasing, ideas, insights, general line of argument, conclusions or opinions” (Visser, 1992: 59).
   ▪ Students are not allowed to copy from another’s work. Plagiarism is regarded as a serious offence. (See student disciplinary code in the University Calendar and later in this booklet).

3.5 How to Document Sources
The Faculty of Commerce and the Department of Economics follow the ‘British Harvard’ (or author-date) system of documenting sources. In this course you are required to use the Harvard method as set out.
In the list of references at the end of the essay:
Only list those works actually referred to in the essay in alphabetical order. Do not number the references. See ‘Listing References’ in this booklet.

REFERENCE

4. SUBMISSION of the ESSAY ASSIGNMENT: hardcopy and electronic submission

Before submitting the assignment, use the spell and grammar check tools on the computer (set to South African English, NOT USA spelling).

The following attachments are required to be stapled to the back of the assignment:

- You are required to hand in two copies: a hard copy in the Tutor boxes and an electronic copy via the TURNITIN link on ‘RUconnected’ (TEXT MATCHING Programme).

The hardcopy should consist of the following documents:
1. Front cover (see pg 65 for required format)
2. Essay (including the list of references)
3. A copy of the article used for the essay.
4. THE FULL TURNITIN REPORT

Please note that essays that fail to comply with the following will be scored ZERO:

1. An essay without an article attached.
2. An essay that does not explain the article.
3. An essay that has a cutting from a newspaper, magazine or any other document (unless permitted by the Economics 101 lecturer concerned).
4. An essay that has no in text citations (referencing) of sources used.
5. An essay that has no List of References.

Penalties for ‘late submission’, Referencing Errors and Plagiarism

Mark deductions are set out in the ‘Table of Penalties’

HOW TO WRITE AN ABSTRACT
The Abstract sets out in brief, the purpose, the context, method of addressing a problem or issue, and the conclusions drawn. What is the issue and why is it important? How was it addressed? What were the conclusions?
The Abstract is placed at the beginning of the essay, but it is written after the essay has been completed. (Note: use the past tense).

Answer each question in 1 or 2 sentences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>is the purpose of the essay? What does it set out to achieve, i.e. what is the purpose and the issue(s) to be addressed, that is the hypothesis/problem statement?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why</td>
<td>is addressing the issue important?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How</td>
<td>was the issue addressed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What</td>
<td>were the conclusions drawn?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What an Abstract is NOT: a table of contents in the form of sentences!