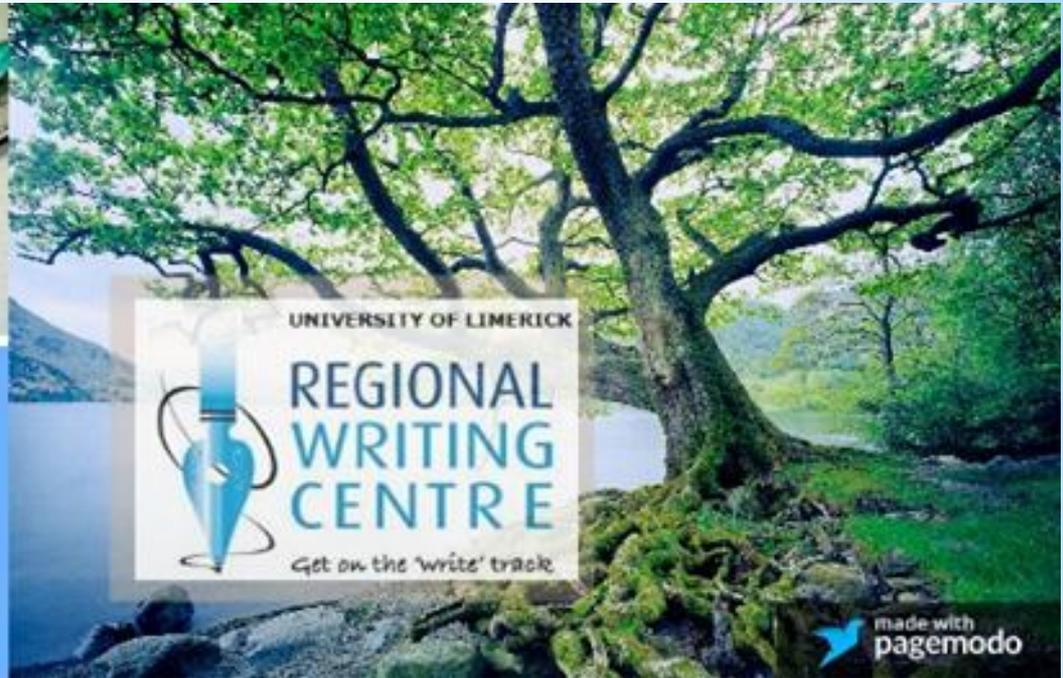


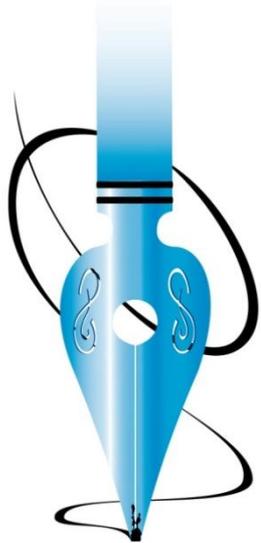
Because every
writer needs
motivation



Because even
the best writers
need help



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Writing Centre Resources



- **One-to-One Peer Tutoring**
- **Writers' Groups**
- **Workshops and Seminars**
- **Online Resources**



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Get on the 'write' track



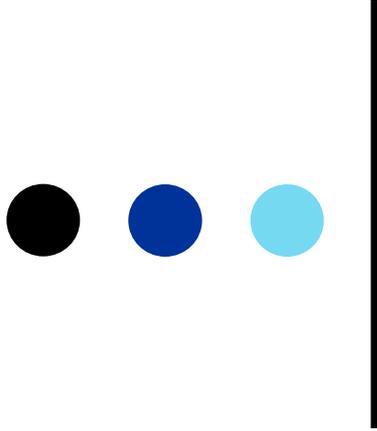
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C1-065 Main Building

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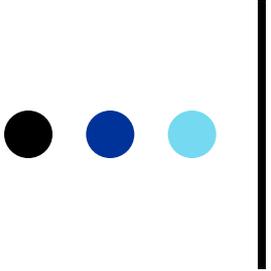
writingcentre@ul.ie



Essay Writing Workshop 2

Íde O'Sullivan, Lawrence Cleary
Regional Writing Centre

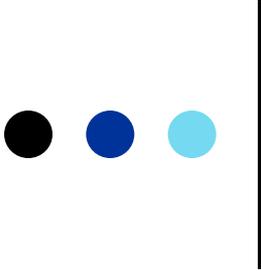
www.ul.ie/rwc



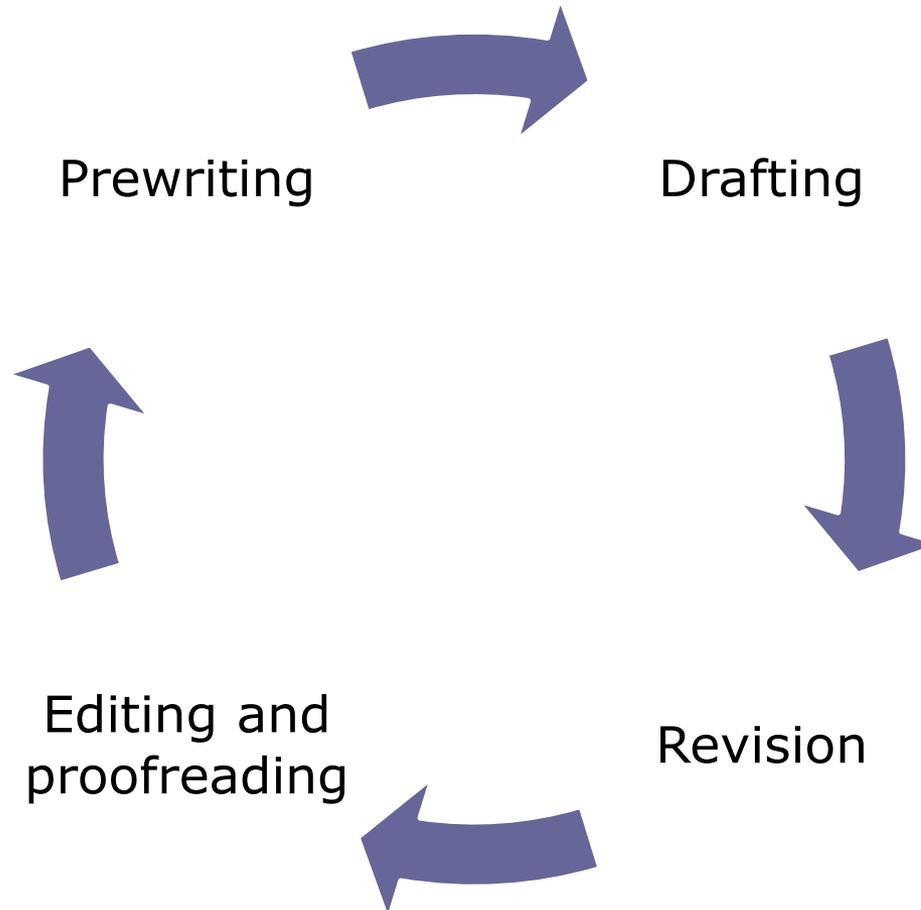
Plan of workshops

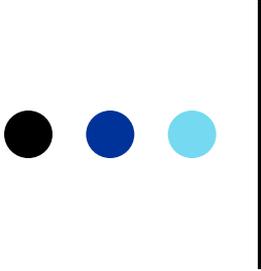
Wednesday 12.00 to 13.00 or 15.00 to 16.00, C1-067

- **Workshop 1**: Understanding the assignment. Planning and organising your writing assignments
- **Workshop 2**: Structuring your writing assignments
- **Workshop 3**: Citing and referencing: reporting the work of others in your writing assignments
- **Workshop 4**: Revising and editing your writing assignments



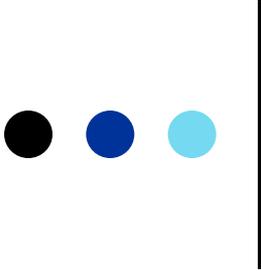
Key stages in the writing process





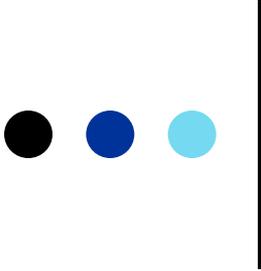
Planning and organising your essay

- Instruction words in the assignment question often indicate the method of development which 'will influence or even determine how you organize your paper' (Ebest *et al.*, 1997: 13).
- If your instructions were to compare or contrast, or to show the cause or effect of something, then your method of development is set, and how you organise your paper is largely determined by those methods of organisation normally used to illuminate or explain something .



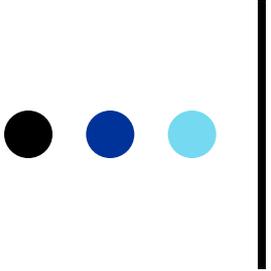
Planning and organising your essay

- Analysis, classification, definition, exemplification, narration, process essays, and discussions, for instance, would require different kinds of organisational strategies appropriate to the particular task at hand.
- Narration or processes might be organised around a chronological organisation pattern.
- Descriptions might be either chronologically or spatially ordered, depending on the nature of that being described.

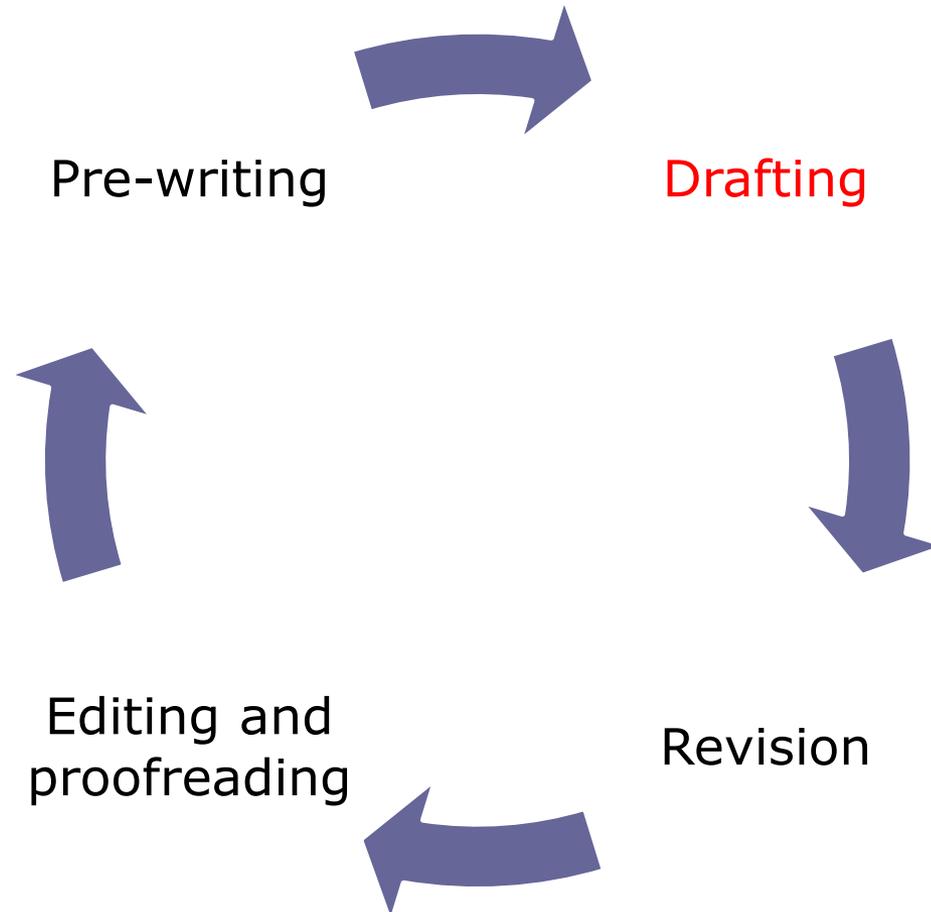


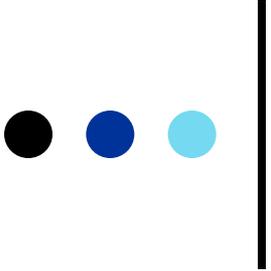
Planning and organising your essay

- The instruction word will indicate that a thesis is either called for, or not called for. For instance, instructions that ask you to summarise or outline something are not normally interpreted as calling for a thesis statement.
- The method of development and organisation will suggest where the thesis will appear in your essay.



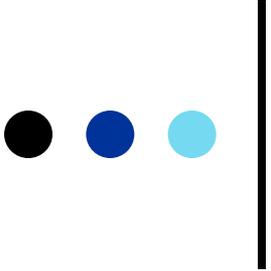
The writing process





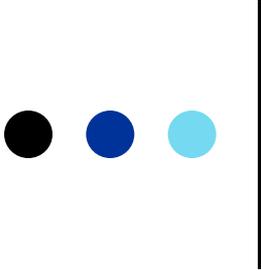
Drafting

- Try to visualise your report/paper. Work toward that vision.
- Begin to structure it—establish your section headings; give them titles. These do not have to be permanent.
- Examine the logical order of ideas reflected in those titles.
- Do not get hung up on details; elements of the draft are subject to change in the revision stage.
- Start to write the sections that you are ready to write.



Drafting

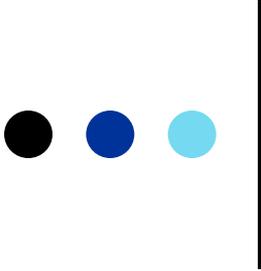
- Continue to reassess your rhetorical situation.
- Does what you have written so far contribute to the achievement of your purpose?
- Experiment with organisation and methods of development.
- Don't get bogged-down in details; focus on the big issues: organisation and logical development.



Drafting the paper: Essay structure

When drafting your plan, always keep in mind that an essay should contain the following elements:

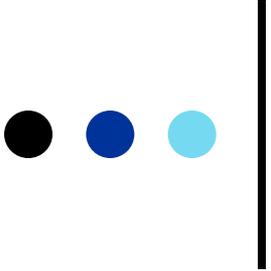
- ✓ Title Page
- ✓ Main body
 - ✓ Introduction
 - ✓ Body
 - ✓ Conclusion
- ✓ References



Drafting the paper: Essay structure

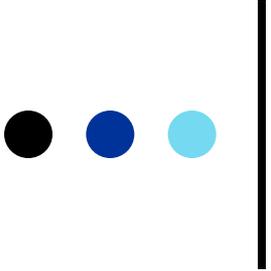
Organise the essay so that the argument unfolds in a clearly stated, detailed, logical, linear progression and arrangement of ideas.

- Introduction: present the thesis, hypothesis, or question that you will try to defend, prove or disprove, or answer.
- Sections: to support the thesis
- Conclusions



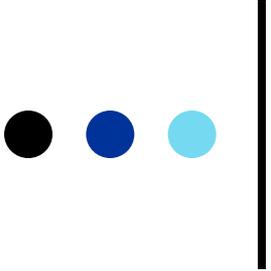
The introduction

- In academic writing, an introduction, or opening, has four purposes:
 - ✓ To introduce the topic of the essay
 - ✓ To indicate the context of the conversation through background information
 - ✓ To give some indication of the overall plan of the essay
 - ✓ To catch the reader's attention, usually by convincing the reader of its relevance.



The introduction

- The introduction has two parts:
 - ✓ General statements.
 - General statements attract a reader's attention, and give background information on the topic.
 - ✓ A thesis statement
 - States the main topic.
 - Sometimes indicates sub-topics.
 - Will sometimes indicate how the essay is to be organised.
 - Is usually the last sentence in the introduction.

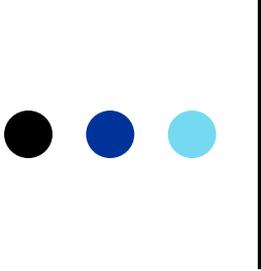


The introduction

Example thesis statement

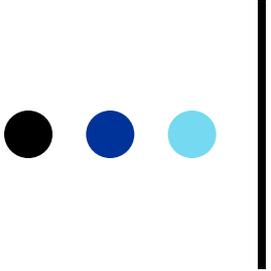
“On the surface at least, U.S. and Japanese societies seem totally opposite.”

(Oshima and Hogue 2006, 115)



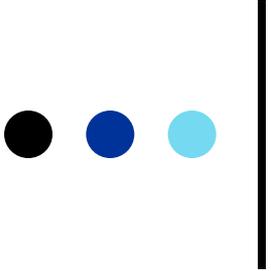
What should I put into the introduction?

- Identify the domain and the topic
- State the problem - claim, hypothesis, or question - to be investigated
- Gives the problem context and significance within the research community
- State the objectives and outline the plan
- Give a detailed description of what will follow in subsequent chapters



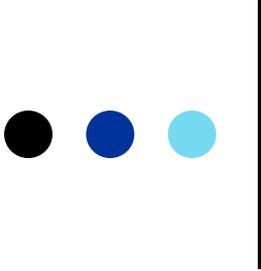
In brief...

- The introduction should be funnel shaped
 - Begin with broad statements.
 - Make these statements more and more specific as the writer narrows the scope of the topic and comes to the problem.
 - Be sure that the question, hypothesis or claim is one that can be handled in a report of the length specified.
 - This question, hypothesis or claim is your thesis statement.



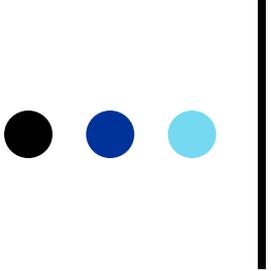
Paragraph structure

- Essays are divided into **paragraphs** in a meaningful way.
- What is a paragraph?
 - Series of sentences
 - Coherent (introduction, middle, end)
 - Common theme
- Every sentence in a paragraph develops one topic or idea, and each paragraph in an argumentative essay, likewise, develops the line of argument that supports the thesis statement.



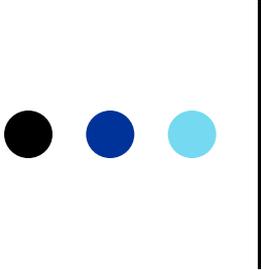
Paragraph structure

- Paragraphs signal the logically organised progression of ideas.
- When organising paragraphs, the main idea in one paragraph should flow logically into the next.
- The flow of information should be organised around themes and comments.
- Shifts in the argument or changes in direction should be accurately signalled using appropriate adverbials, conjunctions, and prepositions.



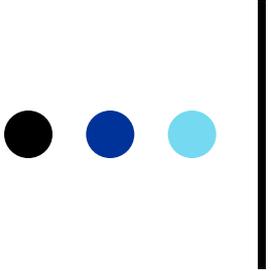
Paragraph structure

- Just as an essay is guided by a thesis statement, a paragraph is organised around its **topic sentence**.
- A topic sentence informs the reader of the topic to be discussed.
- A topic sentence contains controlling ideas which limit the scope of the discussion to ideas that are manageable in a paragraph.



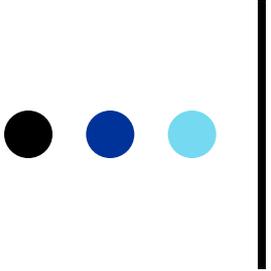
Paragraph structure: Supporting sentences

- The sentences that follow expand upon the topic, using controlling ideas to limit the discussion. The main idea is supported by
 - Evidence in the form of facts, statistics, theoretical probabilities, reputable, educated opinions,
 - Illustrations in the form of examples and extended examples, and
 - Argumentation based on the evidence presented.
 - Qualifying statements indicate the limitations of the support or argument.



Paragraph structure: Concluding sentences

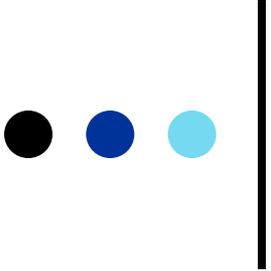
- Not every paragraph needs a concluding sentence.
- Concluding sentences can either comment on the information in the text, or
- They can paraphrase the topic sentence.



Example:

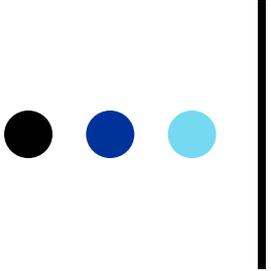
(Meei-Fang et al. 2007, p.471)

People with dementia are particularly vulnerable to malnutrition: they have a decreased ability to understand directions and to express their needs verbally, are easily distracted from eating, prone to become agitated, and may use utensils incorrectly. Inability to feed oneself (eating dependency) is a major risk factor for malnutrition among older people living in long-term care settings (Abbasi & Rudman 1994, Durnbaugh et al. 1996). When people with dementia can no longer take food voluntarily, assistance is required although, as the disease progresses, even taking food with assistance can become difficult and, in some instances, tube-feeding may be required to supply nutrition. This form of feeding can, however, cause distress and anxiety, not only for the person being fed, but also for caregivers (Akerlund & Norberg 1985, Burgener & Shimer 1993).



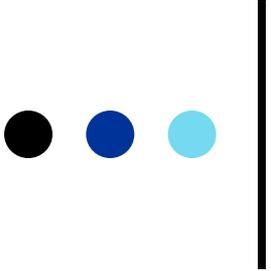
Paragraph structure: Unity

- Paragraphs should be unified.
- “Unity means that a paragraph discusses one and only one main idea from beginning to end.” (Oshima and Hogue 2006: 18)
- “Every good paragraph has a topic sentence, which clearly states the topic and the controlling idea of the paragraph.” (Oshima and Hogue 2006: 4)



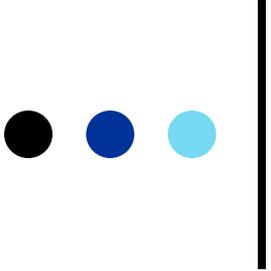
Paragraph structure: Coherence

- Coherence means that your paragraph is easy to read and understand because
 - your supporting sentences are in some kind of logical order;
 - your pronoun references clearly point to the intended antecedent;
 - your ideas are connected by the use of 'appropriate transition signals' (Oshima and Hogue 1999: 18).



Paragraph structure: Transition signals

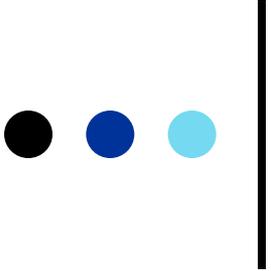
- Transition signals do exactly what it says on the tin: they ‘signal’. They can signal relationships between sentences, just as they can signal relationships between paragraphs.
- Example: ‘Finally, there have been numerous women altogether outside the profession, who were reformers dedicated to creating alternatives’ (Gillet 2012: Online).
- The signal indicates the final point in a series of points.



Example

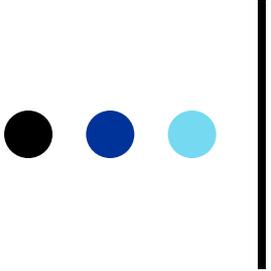
According to Marks et al. (2005) physical activity reduces your risk of chronic diseases like cancer and heart disease. Research shows that many Irish people do not get enough exercise. The SLAN report explains that 55% of Irish people are physically active. The SLAN survey states that older people have less physical activity than younger people (2007). Ellis et al. (2007) in their study say that people with disabilities have less physical activity. Physical activity is also known to help mental wellbeing. The aforementioned survey also discusses that women are more likely to be inactive.

(Extract taken from Maguire, Delahunt, and Everitt-Reynolds 2011)



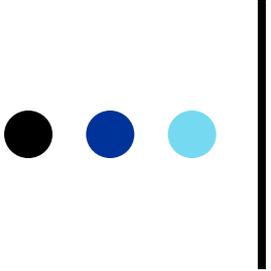
Paragraph structure

- Do not use pronouns to refer to an antecedent in the previous paragraph.
- Lengthy paragraphs indicate a lack of structure.
- Short paragraphs indicate a lack of detail or evidence to support the argument.
- Use a variety of sentence patterns and lengths to give your paragraph a lively rhythm.
- Signpost your paragraph organisation.



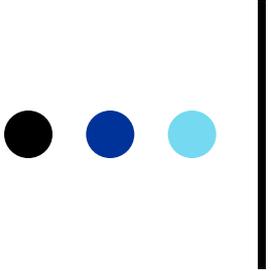
What is a conclusion?

- ‘ A conclusion is a final result, a judgment reached by reasoning, or the summing up of an essay, book, or other piece of writing’ (ABC of Academic Writing).



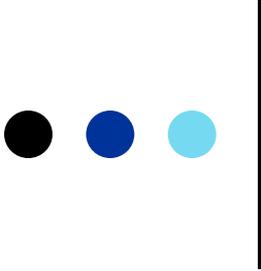
The conclusion

- How you conclude your paper, like everything else in writing, largely depends on your purpose. Generally, though, a conclusion ends by reminding the reader of the main points of the argument in support of your thesis.
- Otherwise, you may end with a reflection, a call to action, an impact question (indicating, perhaps, that you see scope for future research), a quote, or advice.



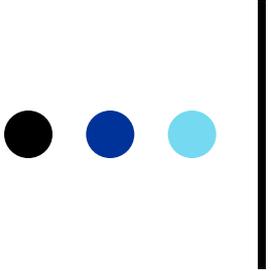
Elements of a good conclusion

- A conclusion should:
 - ✓ Remind the reader of the main points of your argument
 - ✓ Bring ‘closure to the interpretation of the data’ (Leedy 2001: 291)
 - ✓ Be clear
 - ✓ Be logical
 - ✓ Be credible



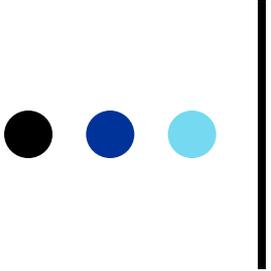
Elements of a good conclusion

- ✓ Demonstrate an awareness of the limitations
- ✓ Discuss the implications of the findings
- ✓ Offer suggestions for future developments
– Remember: A summary alone of what you have done is a weak conclusion
- ✓ End on a positive note – final sentence should be strong and positive



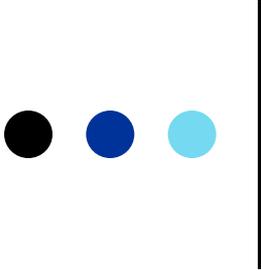
In brief...

- ‘Whatever kind of conclusion you decide on, it should not introduce new topics, apologize for any real or perceived failings in the paper, or merely stop or trail off. Make sure your paper has a clear sense of closure’ (Ebest et al. 2005: 257)



Resources

- Regional Writing Centre, UL
<http://www.ul.ie/rwc/>
- Using English for Academic Purposes:
www.uefap.com/writing
- Purdue Online Writing Lab:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>
- The Writing Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/>



References

- Ebest, S.B., Alred, G.J., Brusaw, C.T. and Oliu, W.E (2005) *Writing From A to Z: The Easy-To-Use Reference Handbook*, 5th ed., New York: McGraw-Hill.
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- Oshima, A. and Hogue, A. (2006) *Writing Academic English*, 4th ed., White Plains: Pearson.