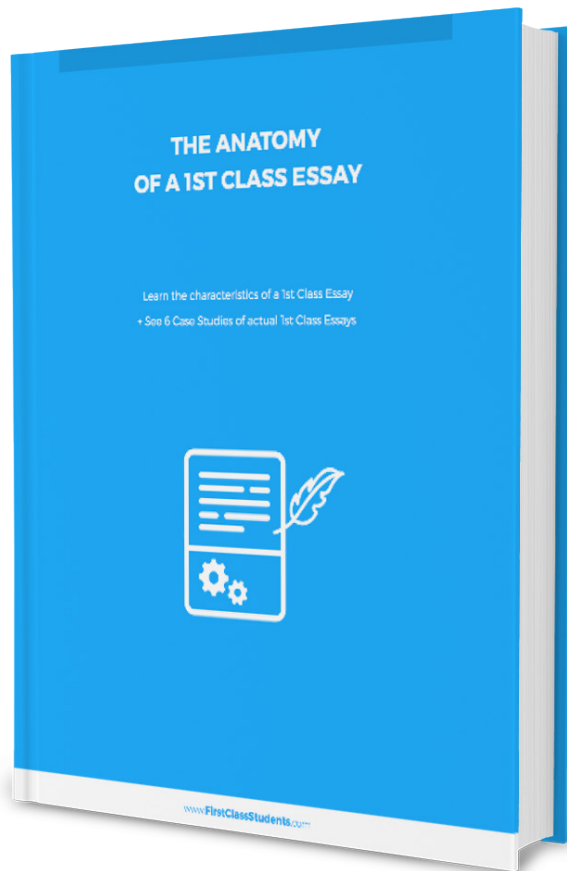


# The Anatomy Of A 1st Class Essay



## With this book you...

- Learn how to comply with all the requirements of a 1st Class essay.
- See up to SIX PROVEN First Class Essays. Case studies are the best way to learn - taken from exams that scored **72** and **81** marks respectively.
- System is fully adaptable to your revision schedule, no matter if you are starting on 1 June or 1 May.
- TEACHING GUARANTEE  
I will answer any further questions if the book did not answer them for you.
- Your MONEY BACK if that is not enough.

**No abstract guidelines. I teach using examples taken from 1st Class essays.**

**- Ignore this advice at your own risk -**

## Key benefits

- Only if you see and can recognise the 1st Class standard, will you be able to **produce 1st Class Essays** yourself.
- I used the same approach for all of my essay-based subjects, **always scoring in the 70 - 81 marks range.**

# THE ANATOMY OF A 1ST CLASS ESSAY

Learn the characteristics of a 1st Class Essay  
+ See 6 case studies of actual 1st Class Essays



**This is a short preview of the book that only displays a couple of parts taken from the books various sections.**

**Every time you see this symbol [...], it means that several pages or at least parts of a page have been omitted.**

**You can get the full version by visiting:**

**<http://www.firstclassstudents.com/s/1st-Class-Study-Systems>**

**There you will find information on pricing and a link to the online store at the very end.**

**Just copy the link and paste it into your browser or click on it directly.**

**Please don't hesitate to contact me via the contact form at [www.FirstClassStudents.com](http://www.FirstClassStudents.com) if you have any questions. I'll get back to you asap.**

**Cheers,  
Oliver :)**

## **This Is A System That You Can Adapt To Your Time Schedule!**

### **A) You have sufficient time**

Implement the system in full and have a virtual guarantee that you will score 70+ marks.

### **B) You have limited time**

At the end of the book, I will show you exactly which parts of the system you can implement immediately. Even small changes can have a huge positive impact on your grade. Don't give any marks away!

Dedication:

**I dedicate this book to my loving family  
and to my wonderful girlfriend Margarita.  
Thank you for all your support  
during the course of my studies.**

**I would also like to thank all the people who took  
the time to explain something  
to me that I didn't yet understand.  
I feel fortunate to have had every single  
one of you as my teacher.**

# Topic Overview

## **1st Class Essay Structure**

The Introduction

The Main Body

The Conclusion

## **Style**

Writing Style for Maximum Marks

Citation Style

## **Argumentation Models**

## **Adaptation in the Exam**

## **How You Can Adapt This System to Your Revision Schedule**

## **1st Class Essay Case Studies**

(You will find a detailed index at the back of the book)

## **INSTEAD OF A LONG INTRODUCTION, JUST A GENERAL NOTE:**

**1)**

Please note: I assume throughout this book that you will be sitting a 3-hour exam, in which you have to write 3 essays. So that's 1 essay in 1 hour. Your essay will be approximately 800 to 1300 words long. If your exam follows a slightly different structure, say you have to write 4 essays in 3 hours, or you are writing other, longer essays, that doesn't matter. The principles remain the same. If you fall into this category, please adjust my guidelines accordingly.

**2)**

Essay writing is part science, part craft. None of these rules are set in stone. You are free to deviate from this structure. However, I used this structure for all my essays and scored 70+ in all cases without exception. Take that as proof that my approach works. While I know others who have a less structured approach and who have still scored 70+ marks, my structure does apparently do a good job of setting you up for success. This is particularly true for those of us who are less good at 'freestyling' as writers. Besides, examiners love a clear and logical structure.

This is a system that you can apply.

**The uni will only give you general, abstract guidelines on essay writing.**

**By contrast, I teach using plenty of concrete examples taken from 1st Class essays.**

**Ignore the advice in this book at your own risk.**

# Structure



# Structure

The first immediate and salient feature of a 1st Class essay is its clean structure. This will be:

I1  
I2  
  
P1  
P2  
P3  
P4  
(P5)  
  
C1  
(C2)

I = Introduction

P = Paragraph of main body

C = Conclusion

We have Part 1 and Part 2 of the introduction and conclusion. C2 is in brackets because it is optional.

And we have paragraphs 1-5, which correspond to your main ideas/ arguments in the essay. Three paragraphs is generally the minimum. The norm is three to four paragraphs. I set P5 in brackets because it is less common for the first four paragraphs to be so short that you have the opportunity to include a P5.



**The Anatomy of a 1st Class Essay**

# The Introduction

# The Introduction

The introduction has 2 parts

## **PART 1 OF YOUR INTRODUCTION**

In part 1, you will do some or all of the following:

- A) Introduce the topic / set the frame for the issue at hand
- B) Write out any definitions
- C) Briefly portray the 2 main sides of a debate
- D) Explicitly narrow the focus of your essay. Usually necessary when a definition or debate encompasses a broad spectrum of things.
- E) Take on the question by
  - E1) clarifying its meaning
  - E2) directly attacking the statement/ question and/or immediately show where you stand

## **PART 1 EXAMPLES:**

**Example for 11a) where you introduce the topic / set the frame for the issue at hand**

'Poverty is more than a lack of income'. Discuss

Poverty is commonly equated with a lack of income (White). However, income is but one dimension of poverty which itself is a highly complex concept. This is important because how poverty is understood ultimately influences policy.

Definitely **do not** write some dumb general statement or truism to start your essay.

Example

Globalisation is a global phenomenon...

Or

Globalisation affects people worldwide...

**Example for IIb) where you write out any definitions**

Critically discuss the assertion that violence is a development issue.

[...]

Development is a contested concept but it can roughly be defined as anything that furthers a human's freedom to realise his or her potential (Sen).

Violence can be defined as the use of physical force or power that results in injury, death and/or psychological harm (WHO) and it spans a broad spectrum, ranging from domestic violence to genocide.

**Example for IIc) where you briefly portray the 2 main sides of a debate**

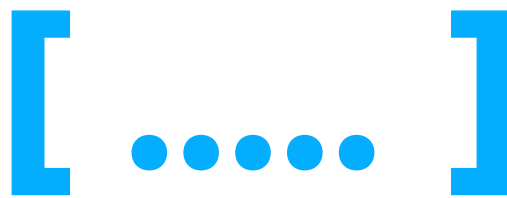
'Give peace a chance: constrain media freedom.' Critically evaluate this statement in terms of whether it represents a viable post-conflict strategy.

The freedom of the media is typically seen not only as a crucial element of democracy, but also as a precondition for it.

Only a free media can give a voice to citizens, represent the opposition, hold politicians to account and disseminate ideas that challenge elites. Hence the media is a vital element of the system of checks and balances and represents the so-called 'watchdog', or 'fourth estate'.

By contrast, media censorship is commonly viewed as a key tool for oppressive regimes to spread propaganda and quench dissent.





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# Style

# Style

So far so good. Now you should have a pretty good idea of what type of structure works well. Before we move on to discussing different models for structuring your argument, it is important to discuss style, i.e. how you sound when you write.

## WHY IS STYLE IMPORTANT?

Style is important because how you sound reflects 'how you think'. So why is that important? You will understand as soon as you understand what the university's two main goals are.

1) Educate you thoroughly in whatever your degree is in.

2) Make sure a certain type of thinking, a certain type of attitude towards information, is firmly lodged in your brain. You are expected to have a critical attitude towards unsolved and disputed problems in the real world. This is the LSE Mindset.

## THE LSE MINDSET







## CRITICAL THINKING - IN STYLE AND WITH CONFIDENCE

However, in terms of how to show your critical thinking when you write essays, I think I can give you better advice than just to tell you what kind of mindset you are supposed to have.

Critical thinking means that you are constantly **critiquing.**

This means that you evaluate (a theory or practice) in a detailed and analytical way.

In particular, critical thinking means that you are constantly **questioning everything!**

- Question approaches
- Question definitions
- Question commonly held views
- Question underlying assumptions
- Question the validity of arguments
- Question the validity of official explanations and reasons
- Question the validity of entire concepts

**Don't ever consider any argument or solution to be complete**

In the social sciences and in the real world, things are complex. This means that solutions must be viewed in the context of underlying assumptions and that they must depend on the specific circumstances involved. Be very suspicious of one-size-fits all solutions or anything presented in a simple 'black or white' fashion.

So whatever the concept or proposal is that you are dealing with, write about it in a critical manner.

You must become the perpetually unsatisfied academic - at least in your writing, hopefully not in other areas of your life.

Never be satisfied with the status quo (question it, challenge it!), which often also means that you think that change towards something else is desirable. Frequently, this automatically leads to discussing solutions and proposals for improvement (which is a good thing).

This is best shown with examples of typical wording that you should be using when you write.

Examples:

Poverty is a **multi-dimensional and complex concept**.

Approach A to measuring poverty **has serious shortcomings**.

Even Approach B (which addresses the shortcomings of Approach A) is **plagued by severe limitations**.

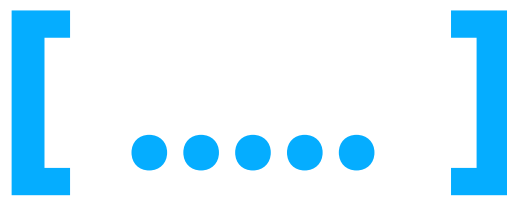
This essay will **critically examine the various dimensions/factors**.

This essay will **scrutinise the opposing sides in the debate, arguing that...**

Both sides **put forth valid arguments but ultimately miss the nuances/several shades of grey that are important in practice**.

It is **this essay's contention that current approaches are ultimately misguided. Alas, solutions are likely to be highly complex**.

Yet, the **validity** of this argument is **highly questionable**.



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# Argumentation

# Argumentation

We have now looked at 1st Class Essay structure, as well as 1st Class Essay style.

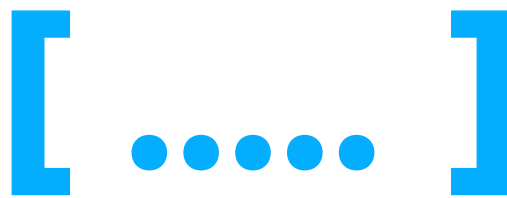
So if your essay is a house, at this stage you've got the concrete walls built (structure) and you've even painted the walls and included a ton of decorations like that fancy chandelier in the living room (style).

However, we are still missing content. What will end up being inside that house?

1) Your personal belongings (knowledge from your course: papers, case studies, concepts etc.)

2) You! (Your line of argumentation and ideas)

Let's look at some models for typical argumentation structure.



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# Adaptation

# Adaptation

**How do you become good at adapting flexibly to new questions?**

## 3 Scenarios

There are essentially three possible scenarios in the exam as far as adapting to the question goes.

- 1) Essentially no adaptation. The question is nearly identical to a past question that you have prepared for.
- 2) Some adaptation necessary. The question is similar to a past question that you have prepared for. However, you will have to make some structural changes.
- 3) New question. You have to plan and write an essay as fast as possible.

We will discuss different approaches as they apply to each scenario. However first, it is important that we look at what you will be doing no matter which of the scenarios applies.





# How Do You Adapt This System To Your Time Schedule?

## How Do You Adapt This System To Your Time Schedule?

### 1) If You Have Lots of Time

(Now as you read this or as you apply this system next year)

In this case, your strategy is straightforward.

[.....]

**In fact, following this system, you have a virtual guarantee that you will score 70+ marks.**

After developing this system myself, I always scored in the 70-81 marks range and I would not have obtained 1st Class Honours without knowing how to consistently write 1st Class Essays.

It is my hope that thanks to this book, you will have found a better way to learn (critical thinking, style, originality etc.), that you will have become a more organised writer, and that you will do exceptionally well in your own exams.

## 2) If You Have Limited Time

There are many things discussed in this book that you can implement right now, even if you have little time.

The very first thing to point out is that you have seen what not to do. The 'don't' and 'do not do this' sections should have helped you avoid doing things that will drag down your grade and make scoring 70+ marks impossible.

As for the other key lessons that can be implemented immediately, we will look at them going by section.

### Structure

You now know how you can structure your essay in such a way that you will get full marks in your introduction and conclusion. Towards the end of the chapter on adaptation, you saw how you can even write a fairly simple and less detailed introduction while still complying with all the structural and stylistic aspects that make for a good introduction and conclusion.

You have seen how to reference the question properly, which is very important for making sure that you answer the question directly without falling into the category of 'question-spotting'.

You know how long each part of your essay should be and how much time to spend on it. In addition to knowing what the organisational structure of your essay should look like, you also know how to write in your answer booklet so that this structure is reflected visually.

## Style

Thanks to this section, you now know how you must sound when you write. You have seen many examples showing the type of academic wording that is associated with 'critical thinking'. You have also seen what it means to confidently put forth your own views while avoiding to sound like you are merely 'reporting'. Finally, you have seen what proper citation style looks like. Just these stylistic changes alone can make a huge difference to your grade because now your essay sounds 'argumentative' rather than 'descriptive'.

## Argumentation

In this section, you have learnt how to tell the difference between a weak essay and a strong essay in terms of their line of argumentation. Even if you do not have the time to rewrite all your practice essays, you can use the YES/NO Models to help steer you towards discussing your essay topic from different angles, thereby making your line of argumentation more interesting. If you still have a little more time, you can try to write 'bonus paragraphs' which you will hopefully be able to use in most of your essays on a given topic. This will help you display originality at the level of your line of argumentation.

## The Writing Process At Home VS In The Exam

This section has explained why there is so little time in the exam: you are indeed expected to have done nearly all of your thinking before the exam. The little time that you do have for thinking should be used to adapt your knowledge to the question at hand.

## **Adaptation**

This section discussed how to do just that. We looked at 3 different scenarios that you have to be able to adapt to. This section discussed the importance of annotating the question and using your answer booklet to help you (re)structure your argument or your 'building blocks'. In particular, you have seen how you can apply the YES/NO models when using your answer booklet as a thinking aid. Most importantly, you have seen how you can apply the YES/NO models when you are trying to adapt to a new question rather than having to tackle a new question without any type of a process in place. These approaches alone should prove to be very useful in the exam.

## **Case Studies!**

I firmly believe that abstract guidelines are quite useless when it comes to teaching. That's why you have seen many examples used throughout this book. Most importantly, you will find, depending on your edition of this book, up to 6 case studies of essays that are near-equal to the essays that scored 81 and 72 marks in LSE-graded exams attached at the end of this book. Seeing what a 1st Class essay actually looks like is incredibly useful: once you can recognise the 1st Class standard, you will be able to produce it yourself.

## **One Last Thing**

One last thing I would like you to know.

# Case Studies

Thank you for choosing a 'PROVEN 1st Class Essay Pack'

Pack 1 comes with one 1st Class Essay case study.

Pack 2 comes with two 1st Class case studies.

Packs 3 and higher come with all six 1st Class case studies



**The Anatomy of a 1st Class Essay**

# Case Study 1

**This essay is one of the three essays near-equal to the actual essays graded by the LSE examiners in the exam that scored 81 marks.**





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