

Essay Checklist

I. Your Thesis Statement

1. Have I stated the thesis that I am going to be defending **at the very beginning of my essay**? Yes __ No __
2. Is the statement of my thesis **clear** and **concise**? Yes __ No __

II. Using Your Space Properly Checklist: Key Question

1. Have I devoted **at least two-thirds** of my essay to setting out **my own** arguments and/or analyses, and considering objections?

III. Introduction

1. Is my introduction **concise**? Yes __ No __
2. Does it contain a **clear** statement of my **main thesis**? Yes __ No __
3. Does it indicate very briefly my **main line of argument**? Yes __ No __
4. Does it explain the **overall structure** of my essay? Yes __ No __

IV. Overall Structure for Essays Focusing upon an Argument

1. Have I formulated the relevant argument in a **careful and explicit** fashion? Yes __ No __
2. If I am criticizing the argument, have I made it clear **exactly what step** in the argument my criticism is directed against? Yes __ No __
3. Have I set out the **most important objections** that might be raised to the view that I am defending? Yes __ No __
4. Have I offered **careful and detailed responses** to those objections? Yes __ No __

V. Overall Structure for Essays Focusing upon a Thesis

1. Have I stated the thesis **clearly**? Yes __ No __
2. Have I formulated the relevant argument (or arguments) in a **careful and explicit** fashion? Yes __ No __
3. Have I set out the **most important objections** that might be offered? Yes __ No __
4. Have I responded in a **careful and detailed** way to those objections? Yes __ No __

VI. Exposition of Arguments

1. Are arguments **carefully** set out, so that **both** all of the **assumptions**, and the **reasoning**, are clear? Yes __ No __
2. Have I, at any point, set out **more than one argument** in a **single** paragraph? Yes __ No __
3. Are objections and responses set out in **separate paragraphs**? Yes __ No __

VII. Consideration of Possible Responses to your own Arguments

1. Have I explicitly indicated to the reader which of the assumptions in my arguments are **philosophically controversial**, and **why**? Yes __ No __
2. Have I then offered reasons for thinking that those assumptions are nevertheless plausible? Yes __ No __
3. Have I considered, and responded to, counterarguments directed against **the conclusions** of my arguments? Yes __ No __

VIII. Logical and Perspicuous Structure

1. Is my essay **organized** into sections in a **logical** fashion? Yes __ No __
2. Are the sections divided into appropriate **subsections**? Yes __ No __
3. Have I made the overall structure of my essay clear by using **informative headings** for sections and subsections? Yes __ No __

IX. Overall Clarity and Conciseness

1. Is my writing **clear** and **straightforward**? Yes __ No __
2. Is my writing **concise**? Yes __ No __