HUMANITIES WRITING CENTRE

Postgraduate Writing
The Writing Process

Step 1: Analyse your topic:
E.g. Topic:
Discuss the impact of technology on theology.
Step 2: Plan:

Whatever you start with, your planning should result in an outline.

Outlines are basically the skeletons of your writing, and contain the structure and main ideas.
The Writing Process: The structural diagram of an essay

INTRO

BODY

Topic sentence

Topic sentence

Topic sentence

CONCLUSION
An outline should have all of these blocks filled in with your main ideas.
Step 3: Research:

Once you have completed your planning, you will know which kind of information you want to put into your writing.

You will also know from analysing the question what information you already have from your prescribed readings and what information you still need to look for.
Basic Essay Structure

Introduction:
• Hook/context
• Thesis statement
• Plan of development
Basic Essay Structure:
Hook/context

Explain/place topic in context

**Topic:**
Discuss the impact of technology on theology.

**Hook/context:**
Technology has a far-reaching impact on many aspects of our lives. One of these aspects is our theological outlook.
Basic Essay Structure: Thesis statement

The point of the essay should be made clear in one sentence.

**Topic:**
Discuss the impact of technology on theology.

**Thesis statement:**
Technology can have a positive impact on theology and can be helpful to theologians.
Basic Essay Structure: Plan of development

Provide an outline for your essay (i.e. plot the steps you will be following in order to complete your essay).

**Topic:**
Discuss the impact of technology on theology.

**Plan of development:**
This essay will discuss the various views of the impact of technology on theology, including positive views, negative views, and refutations to these negative views.
Technology has a far-reaching impact on many aspects of our lives. One of these aspects is our theological outlook. Technology can have a positive impact on theology and can be helpful to theologians. This essay will discuss the various views of the impact of technology on theology, including positive views, negative views, and refutations to these negative views.
Basic Essay Structure: Body

One idea per paragraph.

The first sentence of each paragraph introduces the idea of the paragraph (topic sentence).

The remaining sentences of the paragraph expand on the topic sentence.
Basic Essay Structure: Body

Refer to your plan of development when devising topic sentences.

Our plan of development:
This essay will discuss the various views of the impact of technology on theology, including positive views, negative views, and refutations to these negative views.

1. Positive views
2. Negative views
3. Refutations
In a positive light, Garner (2013:253–255) notes that technology can give the church the freedom to address issues like hunger, poverty and the effective spread of the gospel.

Main idea:
Freedom for church

Key words:
address issues  hunger  poverty  gospel
Basic Essay Structure: Conclusion

Summarise the main points/arguments of the essay (this is easier if you have a **plan of development** and have made use of **topic sentences**).

The last sentence of the conclusion sums up the point of the essay and links back to the topic.

Do not raise any new points.
Plan of development:

This essay will discuss the various views of the impact of technology on theology, including positive views, negative views, and refutations to these negative views.

Topic sentence(s):

In a positive light, Garner (2013:253–255) notes that technology can give the church the freedom to address issues like hunger, poverty and the effective spread of the gospel.

Topic:

Discuss the impact of technology on theology.