TLC PODCASTS: Worksheet on essay writing - the introduction

The introduction of an essay states the specific, main point that will be made in an essay. It also orients the reader as to what will be discussed and why it matters. This worksheet provides some writing prompts to help you develop your introduction. You might want to use these prompts early in your writing process, and then again once you have a draft of your essay.

Once you have analysed the set question or topic and re-written it in your own words, please write it here.

Note any terms that require defining here, together with how you intend to use the term throughout your essay.

Why is your question interesting? Why should we bother discussing it?

If you absolutely had to respond to this question with only one sentence, what would your response be? (If your answer included a version of “it depends”, be sure that you specify which factors it depends on.)

Consider the key terms in your response. Given these key terms, list the major themes that you will need to develop in your essay.

How will you organise these themes? How many parts /sub-parts? In what order?

CHECK YOUR INTRODUCTION

Once you have a draft introduction, here are a few questions to ask yourself.

* Have I addressed every part of the original essay question?
* Do my introduction and the main point I propose flow coherently from the original question?
* Is it easy to find the sentence in the introduction that succinctly expresses my main point?
* Is it clear to the reader what she or he will find in the rest of the essay?

Taking into account the draft of the body of the essay,

* Does this introduction provide a true indication of the structure of the rest of the essay?
* Do I deliver on the “promises” I make in the introduction?
* Will my reader find any of the material in the body of the essay unexpected or surprising?