

Sample Essay Question

“Discuss the factors that contribute to successful student academic performance at university”

There are diverse and sometimes contradictory explanations for why some students succeed where others fail, suggesting that academic success cannot be attributed to a single factor alone. Rather, it seems probable that a complex mix of factors account for successful academic performance. These include the policies and practices of the university itself, such as the provision of quality teaching practices, the physical environment of the institution and the availability of appropriate and accessible student support services. Also important however are individual difference factors related to the student, with evidence suggesting that students who take control of and accept responsibility for their academic performance, and actively seek ways to think and learn effectively and stay motivated and engaged, may well have the edge when it comes to success at university. Understanding the complex interplay of factors that impact academic performance can empower higher education providers to foster an environment, both at the institutional and individual level, that promotes and enables success.

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GOLDEN RULE 1**REITERATE THE MAIN TOPIC OF THE ESSAY**

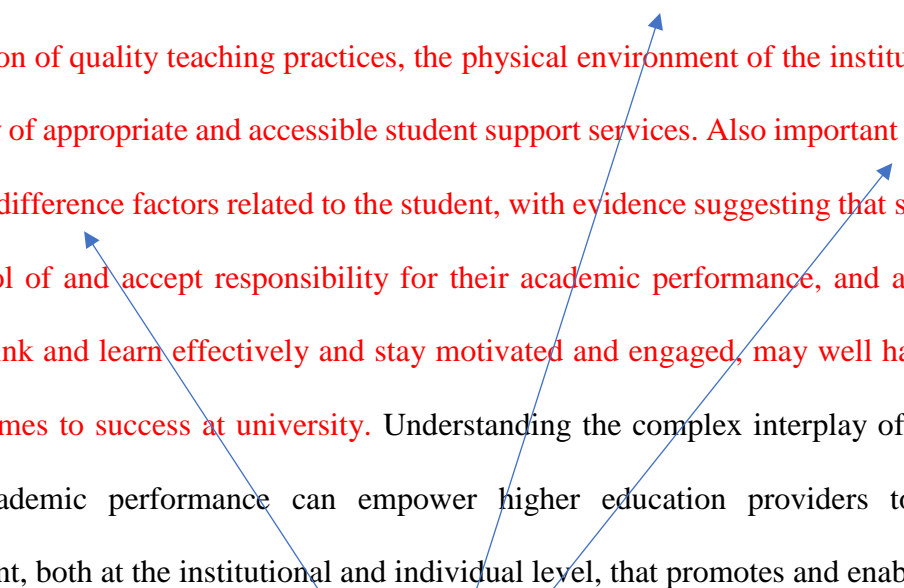
So looking at this conclusion, we can see the first sentence clearly reminds the reader that the topic of the essay is academic success – more specifically the factors that impact academic success.

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GOLDEN RULE 2**RESTATE YOUR MAIN ARGUMENT OR THESIS STATEMENT**

The next sentence provides more detail for the reader by highlighting the main argument or thesis statement of the essay. In this example, the main argument is that it is a complex mix of factors that contribute to academic success (rather than a single factor alone).

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GOLDEN RULE 3

SUMMARISE AND SYNTHESISE THE MAIN POINTS OUTLINED IN YOUR ESSAY WHICH SUPPORT THE MAIN ARGUMENT

The next couple of sentences summarise and bring together the main points that have been argued throughout the essay which come together to help support the main thesis statement. Here, the essay writer explains the specific institutional and individual factors that combine to influence academic success.

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GOLDEN RULE 4

FINISH WITH A CLEAR 'SO WHAT' STATEMENT WHICH HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPLICATIONS OF YOUR ARGUMENT AND THE TOPIC

The final statement presents the 'so what' factor in relation to the argument, showing the implications of knowing and understanding the various factors that impact academic success. By implications, we mean the importance of or value of knowing the information. In other words, what can we do with this information or how can it help people? In this example, it is highlighted that by understanding the different factors that contribute to academic success, education providers can deliberately foster an environment that promotes and enables it. This final statement not only provides a tangible 'so what' factor for the reader, it also gives a clear 'full stop, the end' to the essay.