How to Write a 1500 Word Essay: A Paragraph Plan That Works

By Bright Quill Team | brightquill.site | 21 November 2026

Learning how to write a 1500 word essay gets much easier once you stop staring at the total and start thinking in paragraphs. A 1500 word essay is really seven short pieces of writing joined together, and each piece has one job to do. When you know what each paragraph has to say, the words follow.

This guide gives you a paragraph plan you can use for almost any 1500 word essay, with word counts for every part and a simple way to build each paragraph. You'll see how to open strong, how to give each body paragraph a clear point, and how to close without repeating yourself.

If you'd like a hand with your own essay, our assignment writing service can review your plan and your draft and show you where the argument needs more weight. The rest of this guide gives you the same plan to work from yourself.

1. Start With the Question, Not the Word Count

A 1500 word essay starts with the question, not the word count. Read the question twice, slowly, and underline the words that tell you what to do. Words like discuss, evaluate, compare and analyse each ask for a different kind of answer, and mixing them up is the fastest way to write 1500 words that miss the point.

Once you know what the question asks, write your answer in one sentence. That sentence is your thesis, and it will sit at the end of your intro. If you can't say your answer in one sentence yet, you aren't ready to plan. Talk it through out loud or jot down a few rough versions until one of them feels right.

Then sketch a rough plan before you write a single paragraph. List the three to five points that support your thesis, in the order you'll make them. This takes twenty minutes and it saves hours, because a writer with a plan never has to stop mid paragraph and wonder what comes next.

2. The Shape of a 1500 Word Essay

A 1500 word essay has a simple shape. One intro paragraph, five body paragraphs and one conclusion. That's seven paragraphs in total, and each one has a single job. When every paragraph knows its job, the essay holds together even if your sentences aren't perfect.

The word counts fall out of that shape. Your intro gets about 150 words and your conclusion gets about 200. That leaves 1150 words for the body, which splits into three paragraphs of 250 words and two paragraphs of 200 words. The exact split can shift a little, but the shape stays the same.

Five body paragraphs might sound like a lot, but each one carries a single point. One point per paragraph keeps your writing clear and it keeps your marker on track. If a paragraph tries to make two points at once, split it. If a point needs more room than 250 words, it probably belongs in two paragraphs.

3. The Word Count Plan for Every Paragraph

Here is the plan in full. Treat these numbers as a guide, not a rule carved in stone. Some paragraphs will run a little long and some will run a little short, and that's fine. What matters is that no single part eats up words another part needs.

Give your strongest point the most room. Your first body paragraph sets the tone for the whole essay, so put your best evidence there. Your second and third paragraphs build on it, and the last two paragraphs handle the smaller points and tie the threads together.

Keep the intro short on purpose. An intro that runs to 300 words has already spent a fifth of your essay before the argument starts. Say what the question asks, state your answer, and get moving. Your marker will thank you for it.

The word count plan at a glance

Intro: 150 words, about 10 percent of the essay. Set up the question and state your answer.

Body paragraph 1: 250 words. Your strongest point, with your best evidence.

Body paragraph 2: 250 words. Your second point, building on the first.

Body paragraph 3: 250 words. Your third point, or the counter view.

Body paragraph 4: 200 words. A smaller point or a closer look at one example.

Body paragraph 5: 200 words. Your final point, tying the threads together.

Conclusion: 200 words. Restate your answer and leave a clear final thought.

4. How to Build a Body Paragraph That Earns Its Words

Every body paragraph follows the same rhythm. Open with a sentence that states the point of the paragraph. Then bring in your evidence, a fact, a quote, an example or a short case, and explain what it shows. Close the paragraph with a sentence that links the point back to your thesis. Point, evidence, explanation, link. That's the whole recipe.

Keep your evidence short. A quote of two lines does more work than a quote of ten lines, because you get to spend the rest of the paragraph explaining it. If you quote a whole passage and then move on, your marker reads the source's words instead of yours, and the marks go to the source.

Explain every piece of evidence you use. Don't drop a quote into a paragraph and hope it speaks for itself, because it won't. Say what it means and why it matters for your point. The explanation is where your thinking shows, and it's what earns the marks.

A paragraph of 250 words holds about five or six sentences. If your paragraph runs much longer than that, check whether it is really one paragraph or two ideas sharing a roof. If it runs much shorter, ask whether the point has enough evidence behind it. The word count is a useful check, not a target to hit by padding.

5. The Intro and the Conclusion: Short, Sharp, One Job Each

Your intro has three jobs and only three. Set up the topic in a sentence or two, show you understand the question, and state your answer. Some writers add a short roadmap sentence

that names the points to come. That's it. Don't preview your evidence, don't argue your case, and don't open with a dictionary definition.

Your conclusion mirrors the intro. Restate your answer in fresh words, pull your main points together in a sentence or two, and finish with a clear final thought. The conclusion is not the place for new evidence or a new point. If something matters, it belongs in the body, not in the last paragraph.

The two classic mistakes are an intro that swallows the essay and a conclusion that copies the intro word for word. Keep the intro under 150 words and write the conclusion from scratch instead of copying sentences. Your marker reads both, and a fresh conclusion leaves a much better last impression.

6. Editing Down: How to Cut 200 Words Without Losing Marks

Most first drafts run long, and that's normal. Write your first draft without watching the word count, then edit it down. Cutting is easier than adding, because a long draft gives you material to choose from. A short draft leaves you staring at a blank page.

Start by cutting filler. Look for phrases that add words without adding meaning, repeated points dressed up in new words, and long quotes you could paraphrase in a line or two. Most essays lose 100 words this way without losing a single idea.

Then check each paragraph against its job. If a paragraph doesn't support your thesis, cut it or rewrite it. If two paragraphs make the same point, merge them. Be honest with yourself here, because a paragraph you love can still be a paragraph the essay doesn't need.

Finish by reading the essay out loud. You'll hear the clumsy sentences and the repeated words your eyes skip over. Fix them, check your word count, and give the whole piece one last read for spelling and sense. If you're still over the limit, cut an example, not an argument.

A 1500 word essay stops feeling big once you split it into seven paragraphs, each with a job and a word count. Plan first, write each paragraph to its job, then edit with a cold eye and a loud read through. If you'd like a second pair of eyes on your draft, our assignment writing service is ready to help, and you can reach out through the contact page for a free quote.