



# **Essay Writing for Introductory Microeconomics**

Anna Jones

Teaching and Learning Unit

Economics and Commerce

# The Question

- What is the operational word (the word which is telling you what to do)?

analyse

- What is the key term?

effects of growth

- There are other key terms to define in the essay? eg supply/ demand

# The Question continued

- **Part one** is asking you to consider supply and demand and to think of the travel agents as an intermediary.
- Look at the shifts in the demand curve and think about what happens when it changes
- Always analyse the diagram in words as well as drawing it. What does it mean, what does it tell us?

# The Question continued

- Does the travel agent increase or decrease the social surplus? How and why?
- Should the government regulate the sale of tickets using the internet? Why or why not? What are the economic effects of regulation?
- What is the future of this industry? Why?

# The Question continued

- **Part two** is asking you to think about the shift in the demand curve and what happens when it changes
- What is the future of this industry? Why?
- Use economic analysis to think about the different services provided by the post office (supply and demand)

# Things to Consider

- What are your assumptions?
- Are they clearly stated and explained?
- What are your variables?
- What model are you using?
- How are you applying the model?

# Things to Consider continued

- What are the effects of growth in e-commerce on travel and Australia post?
- How are you discussing the relationship between supply and demand?
- How are you discussing social surplus (consumer and producer surplus, dead-weight-loss)?



# Analysis

Your essay is supposed to do more than simply describe. Think about:

- Why something happens this way
- Why something is important
- What it means
- What the implications are
- How something works

# Pre-Planning

Make a list of questions based on the topic

- Why is this important?
- What terms need to be defined?
- What about .....?
- How does this affect .....?
- What are the key factors?
- What is your point of view?

# Brainstorm

- Write down all your ideas on the topic without referring to your notes, without organising or worrying about what is relevant.
- Then organise these ideas into categories or headings.
- Use concept maps to develop the connections between ideas.

# Planning

- Group ideas together
- Think about the connections between ideas
- Think about how you develop your ideas
- Think about how the ideas develop
- Think about how the ideas connect
- Your essay should move in a line

# Writing

- Keep the question in front of you
- Ask yourself:
  - How am I answering the question?
  - Why is this relevant to the question?
  - How are these ideas connected to each other?
  - Is this absolutely clear to the reader?

# Writing continued

Make your point clear by using phrases such as:

- Thus it can be seen that .....
- Hence, it is clear that .....
- From this it can be argued that .....
- The evidence suggests that .....
- When using this assumption we can conclude that .....

# Paragraphs

- Each paragraph should have only one idea
- It should begin with a topic sentence that states the main idea and connects with the paragraph before
- The following sentences should develop the idea and give examples
- The final sentence should bring your ideas together

# Academic Writing Style

Generally, an impersonal, formal style is expected eg

- When considering the supply curve, it is clear that .....
- In order to understand the effect of e-commerce on demand, it is important to consider .....

# Introductions

- Need to indicate the central idea and put it in context
- Should make your point of view or central theme clear - make the end clear at the start
- Should answer the question
- Should not address issues that are not dealt with in the essay

# Conclusions

- Should tell the reader ‘this is what I have been saying and this is the perspective I have arrived at’
- Bring together the main points
- Sum up the argument rather than repeat it
- Make it clear that you have answered the question
- Link in to the introduction

# Citing

- Acknowledge all sources used, even if they are summarised rather than quoted directly
- You will get more marks from citing sources than not citing them
- Make it clear what is a summary and what is a direct quotation
- Think critically about what someone else has said

# Citing continued

If you use a direct quote, use quotation marks and the page reference

- According to Taylor (1991: 34) “.....”
- Lee (1999:259) has argued that “.....”
- Shapiro and Varian (1997:139) identify the three key features as being “.....”

# Citing continued

When referring to an author, ask yourself:

- Why is what they say important?
- Why are you quoting the idea?
- Who else has written on the topic (do they agree/disagree/ consider another angle?)
- How do these ideas connect to others?
- What is your point of view?

# Citing continued

If you use a direct quote, use quotation marks and the page reference

- According to Abrahamson (1991: 34)  
“ ..... ”
- Lee (1999:259) has argued that “.....”
- Smith (1997:139) identified the three key features as being “.....”

# Citing continued

When using a summary or paraphrase use phrases such as:

- Williams (1996) comments/ argues/ claims/ asserts that.....
- Schiavello (1990) discusses .....
- There is much evidence on which to base the argument that .....(Cameron 1987, Perkins 1992, Chen 1995)

# Citing continued

The reference list at the back of the essay should be organised alphabetically

- underline or italicise the title of the book or journal
- if you are using the internet, state the author, date, name of article, home page, web address

# Citing continued

Shapiro C. & Varian, H., *Information Rules*,  
Harvard Business School Press, Boston,  
1999

Abrahamson, A. (1991) 'Managerial fads and  
fashions: The diffusion and rejection of  
innovations', *Academy of Management  
Review*, 16(3) 586-612

# Citing continued

From the internet

Burka, Lauren (1993) 'A hypertext history of multi-user dimensions' MUD History, <http://www.ccs.neu/home/1pbud-history.html>

# Editing continued

- you have CLEARLY answered the question
- you have cited all your sources
- your expression is clear
  
- Get someone to check your essay

# Essay Question

Analyse the effects of the growth in electronic communication through computers (i.e. the internet and email) on

1. The travel industry and in particular the services provided by travel agents and
2. The Australia post office and the different types of delivery services it provides.