

How to write an essay at AH Crime and Law

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Writing an essay at AH is just the **same as writing a 20 mark essay at Higher level** only you have a little more time and there are 30 marks up for grabs. However marks are allocated differently at AH.

There are:

- **NO knowledge marks but you still need to display your knowledge so you can analyse and evaluate what you know!**
- 8 marks for analysis
- 8 marks for evaluation
- 6 marks for international comparisons
- 8 marks for synthesis and conclusions

The key is to have a clear line of argument which you follow through in your analysis and evaluation. You need to have a point of view on the topic and follow through on that argument developing your points towards the conclusion. Remember to include an alternative point of view for balance and analyse that too.

So how do I write a good AH Mods essay?

Introduction

- KU - establish with the reader that you understand any key terms in the question and define them. What is the issue? Why is it important?
- Factors - How are you going to address the question? Reference any factors which are relevant to answering the question and state which you will discuss.
- LOA - explain what your line of argument is and how you expect to address the question. Make sure it considers both sides whilst making a clear conclusion.
- International Comparison - state which countries you are going to discuss in addition to Scotland/UK.

You are unlikely to receive marks for the introduction however it is a **vital part of your essay**. It gives you the opportunity to gather your thoughts and allows you to think through what the question is asking you. By saying how you will answer the question you are essentially providing yourself with a **mini plan**.

Do's -

Excellent essay answers will address all the above and include

- ▶ structure their answers with a focused introduction, analysis, synthesis and conclusions that are directly related to the question set
- ▶ analyse the issue in depth and ensure that all sides of the argument are covered. There does not have to be the same number of arguments for and against.
- ▶ use relevant and current exemplification (this is Modern Studies use examples from the last 10-15 years).
- ▶ use appropriate quotations, for example, from experts, academics, politicians, from reliable sources
- ▶ stick to the time limit of one hour suggested for each essay
- ▶ develop conclusions that directly relate to the question set (always refer to the question) and attempt to reach a decision based on the evidence in their essay.

Do NOT's

Features of poor answers from the exam:

- ▶ they are not planned
- ▶ they lack structure
- ▶ they are too descriptive, don't go into enough depth.
- ▶ there is little analysis, evaluation (your own opinion in your own words) and synthesis (line of argument)
- ▶ Lack of international comparisons throughout the essays.
- ▶ there is lack of argument/balance

- ▶ specific and relevant exemplification is lacking
- ▶ quotes are rarely used
- ▶ referencing/acknowledgement of examples is rare
- ▶ lack of depth and detail in the conclusions
- ▶ conclusions that do not address the question set.
- ▶ Lack of mini conclusions through out at the end of each paragraph.
- ▶ lack of any conclusion in the essay.

Breakdown of Marks

- 8 marks for analysis
- 8 marks for evaluation
- 6 marks for international comparisons
- 8 marks for synthesis and conclusions

The key is to have a **clear line of argument** which you follow through in your analysis and evaluation. You need to have a point of view on the topic and follow through on that argument developing your points towards the conclusion. Remember to include an alternative point of view for balance and analyse that too.

8 marks for analysis

Analysis involves identifying factors, the relationship between them, and their relationships with the overall theme eg analysing the role of punishment within the overall purpose of prisons. It can also involve drawing out and relating implications.

An analysis mark should be awarded where a candidate uses their knowledge and understanding to identify relevant parts (eg of an idea, theory, argument) and clearly show at least one of the following links:

- links between different factors
- links between factors and the overall theme
- links between factors and related theories
- similarities and contradictions
- consistency and inconsistency
- different views/interpretations
- possible consequences/implications

8 marks for evaluation

Evaluation marks should be linked to analysis.

Evaluation involves making a judgement(s) based on criteria. Candidates should make reasoned evaluative comments on factors such as evidence which supports their line of argument, and also evaluate alternative arguments.

Evaluative comments will relate to, for example:

- validity and reliability of evidence
- the extent to which a viewpoint/argument is valid
- the extent to which a viewpoint/argument is supported by evidence
- the relative importance of factors in relation to the issue
- the impact/significance of the factors when taken together
- the relative value of alternative arguments

Hinge words for **evaluation / analysis in essays**

- However ...
- Similarly, ...
- Contrastingly ...
- As a result, ...
- Consequently, ...
- Nonetheless,
- On the contrary, ...

- On the one hand, ... On the other hand, ...
- Most significant, then, was ...
- While it is true that ..., this does not overshadow / negate / outweigh Y ...
- It is true that Z, but this is superseded/of limited significance/value/weight in terms of Y ...
- Ostensibly ...

6 marks for international comparisons

Comparison involves making a judgement between two (or more) entities in order to show similarity or difference. Candidates must draw out key similarities/differences and show the extent of these. You should try to include at least three international comparisons integrated into your argument. Avoid separate paragraphs which focus on only one country - it's better to use the same one or two countries, but several times to show the depth of understanding which you have.

1-2 marks	3-4 marks	5-6 marks
<p>Candidate's comparison:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explains a key, relevant difference or similarity between the issue in the UK/Scotland and in another country/countries explains the extent of the difference/similarity. 	<p>Candidate's analysis meets the requirements for 2 marks and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> points of comparison, including the extent of the similarity or difference, are made throughout the candidate's response and are supported by relevant and contemporary evidence. 	<p>Candidate's evaluation meets the requirements for 4 marks and in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> points of comparison are integrated into and form a key part of the candidate's line of argument.

8 marks for Synthesis and Conclusions

Conclusion

- Bring all of your arguments together, whilst ensuring you are reinforcing your LOA.
- Summarise points.
- Show balance - provide a counter argument.

<p>Synthesising information to structure and sustain lines of argument</p> <p>Synthesis involves drawing two or more pieces of information/viewpoints/evidence together to support a structured line of argument. A line of argument involves bringing together/linking points in a coherent manner, building towards a conclusion. The candidate's conclusion will go beyond a summary of key issues, making a relevant overall judgement which addresses the specific question or issue. Conclusions may be found throughout an extended response or within one separate concluding section.</p> <p>A well-reasoned conclusion will include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear evidence that a conclusion has been reached detailed reasons to justify the conclusion. 				
0 marks	1-2 marks	3-4 marks	5-6 marks	7-8 marks
<p>No evidence of any</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attempt to draw together information line of argument. 	<p>Information is drawn together to summarise the key elements or main points but there is no clear conclusion on the question</p> <p>OR</p> <p>There is a clear conclusion but this may not follow from a clear line of argument.</p>	<p>Pieces of information are drawn together into an overall conclusion which provides an overall judgement on the question.</p> <p>The conclusion follows from a line of argument and is supported by detailed reasons/evidence (candidate reasons/evidence builds to the conclusion).</p>	<p>Requirements for 4 marks are met and in addition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the overall conclusion results from a sustained line of argument developed by organising, linking or sequencing ideas throughout the response overall conclusion includes a response to at least one relevant counter-argument. 	<p>Requirements for 6 marks are met and in addition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the line of argument integrates points of analysis and evaluation, using these to support the overall judgement the overall judgement is based on several points of analysis or evaluation.

So how do I write a good AH Mods essay?

1. Introduction

TASK 1: Read the following introductions and using 3 different coloured highlighters, highlight the following. Make comments on each - are they missing anything?

- Factors
- LOA
- IC

1. "Preventative methods of policing are somewhat effective in reducing crime; however, it is the different policing methods that are the driving factors in reducing crime and therefore are the most successful. These methods are community policing, stop and searches, and hot spot policing. Overall, this essay would argue that out of these 3 methods, the most effective at reducing crime is hot spot policing, as evidenced by the large decrease in crime as evidenced by this method."

1. "Preventative responses to crime can be considered successful, although non-preventative responses to crime can have an impact on the extent of crimes carried out in the UK as well, the preventative responses are more commonly successful. Preventative methods can include early intervention which covers First contact intervention programmes, where specific programmes target individuals initially before they are involved in crimes and meet police. Also stop and search prevention which is frequently used by police around the UK to prevent crimes from happening, both methods have shown to be successful. Custodial and non-custodial sentencing can also be considered successful methods of intervention, custodial sentencing focusing on incarcerating the victims and removing them from society whereas non-custodial focuses on community service and methods of punishment which don't remove the offender entirely from our society. Overall preventative methods of tackling crime can be considered effective in preventing crime from happening and promoting public safety."

1. "Preventive measures are effective to some extent, with some initiatives having a higher success rate than others. Overtime, there has been a global agreement that organisations need to do more to prevent crime. One organisation that have invested in preventative measures is the Police. With a focus on Police Scotland, this essay will discuss the introduction of stop and search, community policing and hot-spot policing, and determine the effectiveness of these measures in preventing crime. To provide a deeper understanding, this essay will compare Scotland's measures to other countries such as the USA and Japan in order to provide a reliable conclusion on whether or not preventative responses have been effective."

2. Main Body of Essay

Do not try and twist the question to suit the view you have. Tackle the factor addressed in the question first and analyse that. Then go onto the alternative points of view.

Each paragraph should follow this format (or something similar):

- Point - make your point - eg how _____ prevents crime / why crime can be argued to be distorted.
- Explain - explain your point - how/why does it prevent crime / how people have a distorted view.
- Example - give an example, statistic, case study to support your point
- Analyse - consider any links/ consequences/ international comparisons
- Evaluate - any criticisms of this approach (counter argument - however...)? Any merits of this approach? International comparisons could come in here too.
- Synthesis - make a judgement/ conclusion

Ideally your international comparisons should be woven throughout your essay - not a separate paragraph and should show either contrasting approaches or similarity in approach here in Scotland/UK. You should try and have minimum of 2 examples to use, not necessarily from different countries. Remember the USA is 50 states with different approaches to crime and law within each state.

TASK 2 - using 6 different coloured highlighters, highlight each of the PEEAES in the following main body paragraphs.

Has the writer followed the PEEAES format? Have they become too descriptive? What could you remove/change/add to make it better?

1. "The first preventative measure this essay will exam is that of hot spot policing, an initiative trialled by multiple police forces across the UK in a bid to target specific areas and reduce specific types of crime. One force within the UK that has trialled this initiative is Bedfordshire constabulary who after implementing the strategy have seen a decrease in crime by roughly 40% within targeted areas. Furthermore other forces have reported a drop of nearly 70% in violent crime following the introduction of this idea. Hot spot policing in essence is without a doubt a successful method of prevention within the United Kingdom it allows police to direct funding and resources into specific areas with high crime in an attempt to drive those numbers down. However it can't be said for certain this works with all other countries and may be specific to the UK's style of policing as to why it has been so successful. One comparison of another country is South Africa, when they attempted to implement hot spot policing to their major towns and cities it simply pushed the crime from the richer areas to the poorer ones. This was put down to

the likelihood that the people within the city had more of a desire to prevent crime and that tailed off as they went further into the poorer parts of the country. Another example of a foreign nation is that of the United States, within the state of Kansas they trialled hot spot policing and seen a roughly 70% drop in crime rates across the board. Furthermore, when they specifically targeted burglary's, they seen a near 40% drop in that crime zone. Overall, it can be said that hot spot policing is for definite a strategy that works within the United Kingdom however when it comes to other lesser developed nations or poorer nations it seems to lose its efficiency at being a robust preventative measure due to the lack of interest or desire to reduce crime."

2. "The third method this essay will discuss is hotspot policing. This is a policing tactic in which police are deployed to certain "hotspots", or areas where a large number of crimes take place. This tactic allows police to specifically target certain areas, which can be especially effective in tackling drug and organized crime. By policing certain high crime areas police can use resources effectively and can be deployed to where they are most needed. These benefits have already been seen in London, where hotspot policing has led to a reduction of some crimes by 73.5%. This therefore highlights the benefits of hotspot policing; this method of targeting crimes means police are tackling the problem areas and not wasting resources on low crime areas like traditional policing. Recently, the Bedfordshire police department trialled hotspot policing in their county, which led to areas which benefited from hotspot policing decreasing in crime by 40%. This highlights the fact that policing methods, especially hotspot policing, are more effective than preventative measures, as this style of policing has seen large decreases in crime already."
3. "The final preventative measure this essay will discuss is hot-spot policing. This is an initiative trialled across the world, with some countries having more success than others. The purpose of hot-spot policing is to be a presence in certain areas that are known to the police to have high levels of crime. With the police being present in these areas, the aim was that crime would subsequently decrease. This was the case in Bedfordshire, England. They trialled this approach and quickly saw a 40% decrease in overall levels of crime and a 70% decrease in violent crime within the hot-spot areas targeted by police. This therefore shows the success had by police in Bedfordshire that implemented this preventative measure, proving that preventative measures, if carried out correctly, can have a significant effect on reducing levels of crime. The same levels of success cannot however be said for South Africa. South African police also implemented a hot-spot approach. They focussed on their hot-spots, which happened to be more affluent areas across the country, with the same aim as the Bedfordshire police, to reduce levels of crime. However, evidence showed that although crime did decrease in these areas, it subsequently increased in poorer areas. This shows that although the police were originally successful in reducing rates in the initial hot-spots, criminals moved their crime elsewhere in the country tampering the overall success of the initiative. This is the risk with hot-spot policing and therefore can be concluded that although the UK had a positive response to the initiative, the likelihood in other countries, or even other UK communities is that criminals would just find another place to offend. Thus, resulting in the preventative measure of hot-spot policing being effective to some extent."

3. **Conclusion:**

You need to answer the question. Consider your line of argument. Have you proved it? Provide an overall conclusion which answers the question set. An excellent essay would finish with a statement that again links the issue to current affairs and future issues.

Your conclusion should not simply be a summary. It should provide a clear answer to the question and be backed up with justification for how you arrived at that answer. **You should also explain why you are discounting / accepting the other factors you have discussed.**

It is good practice to make mini conclusions as you address each factor in your essay, then answer the wider issue in your overall conclusion. In order to achieve synthesis marks, your conclusion should follow on from a sustained line of argument where you have brought together or linked points of view.

TASK 3 - critique the following conclusions, would you change anything?

1. "To conclude, preventative methods aimed at reducing crime can be very effective. First contact intervention, aiming to tackle crime before it has been committed has been proven to be successful in reducing crime, similarly the stop and search methods used by police in the UK have been shown to be successful however many argue against stop and search due to its risk of discrimination due to race. As well as early intervention methods, custodial and non-custodial sentencing has been proven to be effective in being preventative methods of crime. Custodial sentencing having a much less expensive cost per individual compared to prisoners who are incarcerated who cost thousands per year. Whilst custodial and non-custodial sentencing in the UK does not aim to be rehabilitate and instead to punish and remove the individuals from our society. Overall preventative responses/measures are the most effective in reducing crime."

1. "In conclusion, preventative measures are effective at reducing levels of crime to some extent. Stop and search has prevented thousands of crimes from taking place, with the police successfully capturing drugs and offensive weapons. In order to increase their levels of success, the Police should ensure stop and search is carried out fairly and proportionately, as this is the biggest critique of the initiative. Community policing can also be effective if carried out correctly. The issue with this is funding. CPO's, despite playing an important role in maintaining law and order and preventing crime, are the first branch of policing to have funding taken away during financial cuts. However, as this essay has proven, with consistent investment, community policing can be effective in preventative crime. Finally, hot-spot policing is also successful - especially when focussed on the case study of Bedfordshire. However, to ensure UK police do not make the same errors as other countries such as South Africa and states within the USA, the need to be aware of the likelihood of crime spreading to other areas, not classed as "hot-spots". Preventative approaches are fundamental to decreasing crime rates. However, to be fully effective, planning and funding must improve. Thus making preventative measures successful to some extent."

1. "Overall, it is clear that policing tactics are far more effective in reducing crime than preventive measures. This is because criminals are often unlikely to engage with the services to prevent crime, as can also be seen with criminals refusing to engage with community policing. However, the majority of policing tactics have been greatly effective in tackling crime, with these being hot spot policing and stop and searches. While the latter has proven its effectiveness in its high arrest rate and ability to take weapons of the street, its association with racial profiling and discrimination make it arguable. It is absolutely hotspot that is the most effective method of policing and by extension-the most effective method of tackling crime, due to allowing policer to target high profile areas and operations, making it far more effective in tackling crime than preventative measures.."