

You can use the 'draw' function in word to 'check off' each item. Draw is found in the ribbon at the top of your page between 'insert' and 'design'. It is a fun option.

Legal Essay Checklist ✓

First Steps

- I have read and followed the assignment instructions, including reviewing all material provided by my teacher.
 - I have ensured my essay answers the question(s) posed for the assessment.
 - My contention is in the introduction and it answers the issue(s) posed by the essay question.
 - I've read the primary sources of law that I've cited (and not just relied on secondary descriptions of it).
 - I have reviewed the *Guide to Academic Success* (particularly the chapters about writing for law and referencing) and the *Australian Guide to Legal Citation* (4th Edition) (hereby referred to as 'AGLC4').
 - I have made a contribution to the broader discussion. (Have I answered the "so what?" question?)
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Argument

- I have communicated an argument (and not just a description).
 - Each section makes a substantive contribution to my main contention.
 - I have backed up my arguments with logic and citations.
 - I have acknowledged and addressed any debates/disagreement on my topic.
 - I have provided enough background for each assertion for the reader who is legally trained, but not a specialist, to follow the argument.
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Structure

- My introduction explains the question to be answered or the problem to be considered, explicitly states the argument, and concludes with a "roadmap" that provides the reader with an outline of the argument to follow.

- I have used informative headings and sub-headings throughout my essay.
 - Each section has a transition to the next section.
 - I have organised my sections in a manner that allows the reader to follow my argument.
 - Each key idea flows in order.
 - Each paragraph stands for a single key idea. **No** paragraphs are a page long.
 - Each paragraph has a topic statement that clearly states the key idea, and every subsequent sentence supports it.
 - I have read through the paper to eliminate any (unnecessary) repetition of information.
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Grammar and Style

- I have used a tone appropriate for my audience.
 - I have checked every sentence for clarity.
 - I have eliminated unnecessary (and often confusing) language. All modifying words and phrases are necessary, specific, and precise.
 - All subject-verb combinations agree.
 - I have removed legalese, clichés, and colloquial language.
 - I have reviewed all my transition words (further, however, therefore, thus, etc) and they are correct.
 - I have deleted all use of the word 'besides'.
 - I have reviewed the use of all pronouns and ensured the antecedent is clear to the reader.
 - I have not used contractions.
 - All my quotes are necessary and appropriate.
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Formatting and Citation

- My headings and sub-headings are in AGLC4 format.
- Every claim, quotation and reference has a citation.

- My footnotes are in AGLC4 format.
 - Direct quotes are correctly formatted.
 - Case names and legislation in the text and footnotes are *italicised*.
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Finishing Touches

- I have a bibliography that is in AGLC4 format.
- I have included my student number and removed anything that can identify me by name.
- I have inserted page numbers into my document.
- I have used the font size requested by my teacher for my document's body text and footnotes.
- I have used the Legal Essay Pre-Consultation Tool on this website to identify any gaps in my essay and to prepare for a consultation with my teacher or another advisor.
- I have made an appointment with the Legal Academic Skills Centre to review the draft of my essay.