**What is a paragraph?**

**A paragraph is a logical sequence of sentences that present an argument with one controlling idea, or premise that relates to your thesis statement or essay topic question.**

* State the central idea (premise) as a topic sentence at the beginning of each paragraph. Where appropriate, back up the topic sentence with supporting evidence, quotations, and critical opinions. These are your references.
* Develop the paragraph further from the topic sentence
  + Explain more fully what you mean, give definitions, and indicate any distinctions.
  + Provide details, examples or relevant quotations. Add your own comments too. Use words such as ‘Specifically…’ or ‘For example…’
  + Follow on in a logical sequence. Connect your ideas in a recognizable pattern such as cause and effect, or compare and contrast.

In each paragraph you should have one topic sentence and one conclusion. If this is not the case, the paragraph’s argument will be unclear. The diagram in the box below will help ensure that your thoughts are presented logically and clearly with adequate evidential context.

**Topic sentence**

**⭣**

**Critical discussion/ References/ Quotations**

**⭣**

**Concluding sentence to link to the next paragraph**

