



## **Start writing essays**

*A student's approach to examination essays and writing style*

### **Jane Van Hool:**

Tim Baugh and Beth Lewis discuss examination techniques, preparation and improving your writing style.

### **Tim Baugh:**

Does your approach to essays change in the exam room? And if so, can you tell us how?

### **Beth Lewis:**

I think the major difference with an exam room is the time limit, which really changes the amount that you can say in an essay. So, I think, definitely a strict adherence to, to an essay plan is, is so important. I also write down very jotted notes, that, referring to different quotes and points that, that I, might occur to me, just in case in the middle of full flow, in the middle of an essay I suddenly get a complete block and I, I can't remember that quote that I remembered early on, 'Oh no, what was it?' And I've really got something there to remind me.

### **Tim Baugh:**

Sounds very sensible. And, of course, the essays are a lot shorter! And you can manage much less, so your plan has to be much less ambitious.

### **Beth Lewis:**

Yes.

### **Tim Baugh:**

Decide about all the questions that you're going to do before you start. And that might take you a few minutes, and that's not a problem, it's all very good work. And then write the plan for your first essay and get on with it, and every time something occurs to you, with respect to essays you now know you've chosen, you make a quick note about it in the, in the right place on your piece of paper.

Beth, are you, are you happy with your writing style now, at this stage? Or, is, is there anything you'd like to change, and, and if so, how might you go about changing it?

### **Beth Lewis:**

I think I'm always wanting to improve my writing style and my knowledge about how to write. I mean, things like punctuation and spelling and words that I haven't discovered yet or, you know, don't understand. Things that have changed since I've begun to study. I now recognise far more what I hope, what a question is asking, more immediately. And I feel more confident about putting a plan together to try and have a more authoritative voice when I'm writing than I did, perhaps, initially. Even if I don't necessarily feel as confident about the subject, I try and portray a, a certain, a certain amount of confidence. And if I have enough time, the flow of my writing has definitely improved since, since studying.