

# Instructions for writing the essay

## A. Rules for selecting the books

1. The essay should be based on three books from the list published at [https://gandalf.fee.urv.cat/professors/AntonioQuesada/Curso2526/IEP\\_2026\\_Books.pdf](https://gandalf.fee.urv.cat/professors/AntonioQuesada/Curso2526/IEP_2026_Books.pdf).
2. No two books can share an author.
3. The list is organized in 10 sections. No two books can belong to the same section.
4. Books can be requested to [aqa@urv.cat](mailto:aqa@urv.cat).
5. Search engine for shadow libraries: <https://annas-archive.gd/>

## B. Rules for preparing and delivering the essay

6. Writing the essay is an individual assessment activity.
7. The essay should be sent as a pdf document to the address [aqa@urv.cat](mailto:aqa@urv.cat).
8. Deadline: 17th of May, 2026 (included).

## C. Rules for writing the essay

9. The essay should be written in English.
10. The first page should be a cover page that includes: a title for the essay, the author's name, the date of delivery and the books selected (in this order: authors, publication date and title).
11. Avoid serious grammatical or spelling errors.
12. Respect the basic conventions for writing academic papers (as illustrated by the books selected). Specifically:
  - use a reader-friendly font, in a not-too big nor too-small size (such as Times New Roman size 12 or the one used in this document, Palatino Linotype size 12);
  - separate lines sufficiently (line spacing in this document is 18 pt);
  - separate paragraphs;
  - as a general rule, write short sentences;
  - punctuate sentences appropriately;
  - remove unnecessary or redundant words;
  - identify in the text your sources of information;
  - be plain in your writing...

13. Justify paragraphs: align the text to the right (as in this document) so that all lines (except perhaps the last one) have the same length.
14. The essay should be organized in four sections, numbered 1 to 5. There is no minimum nor maximum length for sections.
15. Section 1 summarizes the main ideas in each book, focusing on the issues addressed, solutions offered, insights provided or arguments developed. One page per book ought to be enough for the summary.
16. Section 2 connects the ideas presented in Section 1, with the aim of conducting a critical analysis. Do the ideas in some book contradict some idea from another book? Do the messages in the books reinforce each other? Are the ideas flawed? Do they confront well with empirical evidence? Are the arguments used to support the ideas well-founded? Do recent events contradict those ideas or are consistent with them? The critical analysis, which could rely on additional bibliographical sources, should be 'objective', in the sense of relying on logical, conceptual, empirical, factual... reasons. Maybe ideas, concepts or results presented in class could be used to develop the critical analysis. As a suggestion, Section 2 could be expected to be around twice the length of Section 1.
17. Section 3 presents the author's view on what has been developed in Sections 1 and 2. Which ideas are found convincing? Which ones weak? Can additional arguments be suggested in favour or against them? Is anything in the books missing or wrong or unquestionable? As a reference, Section 3 could be shorter than Section 1.
18. Section 4 is a brief conclusions section (one, two, three paragraphs), where the main messages, contributions, conclusions, findings or lessons of the essay are summarized.
19. Section 5 (entitled 'References') lists, following standard academic conventions, all the bibliographical sources cited in the text. This section must include, at least, the books selected.

#### **D. Suggestion**

20. It is not necessary to read each book fully. The reading should be focused on getting quickly the main ideas, concepts, issues, proposals, messages, arguments... in each book. As a rule, the initial and final section of a book (if both exist) summarize the essence of the book.