



# **HOW TO WRITE A BOOK**

**Dr Rachel Killean, Queen's  
University Belfast**

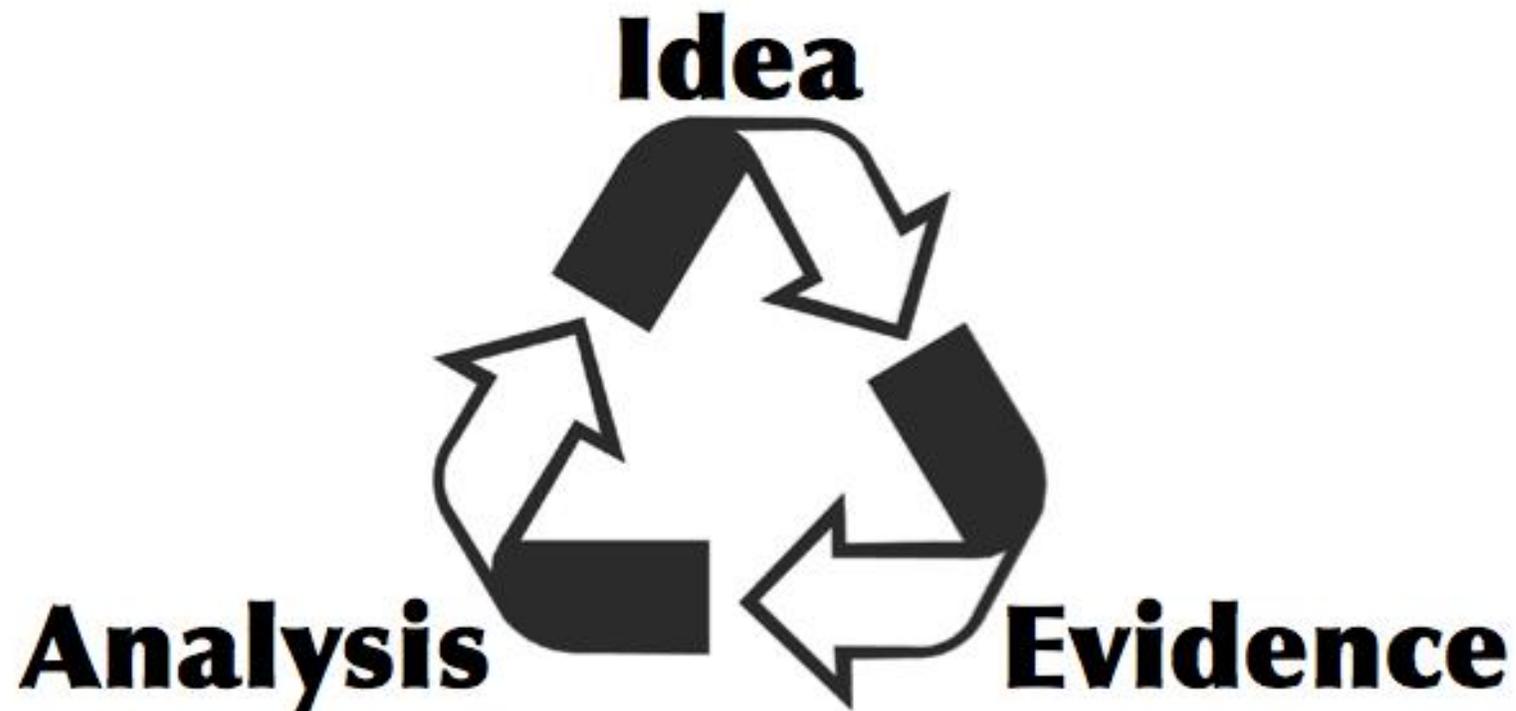
**Royal University of Law and  
Economics, 9th February 2022**

# OVERVIEW

- **Developing and refining your argument**
- **Structuring your book**
- **Avoiding academic offences**
- **Writing styles and guides**



# DEVELOPING YOUR ARGUMENT



# REFINING YOUR ARGUMENT

- Why does your argument matter? Keep asking yourself throughout the writing process.
- What evidence do you have to support your argument? Make sure your argument is grounded in scholarship.
- How does your analysis advance your argument? Think about how you can make the book a coherent text.



# STRUCTURING YOUR BOOK



- Aim for 100,000 – 120,000 words for academic monograph (including references and bibliography)
- Keep chapters roughly equal length with slightly shorter introduction and conclusion
- ‘Traditional’ approach: introduction -> literature review -> methods/approach -> findings -> discussion -> conclusion. Doesn’t work for everyone!

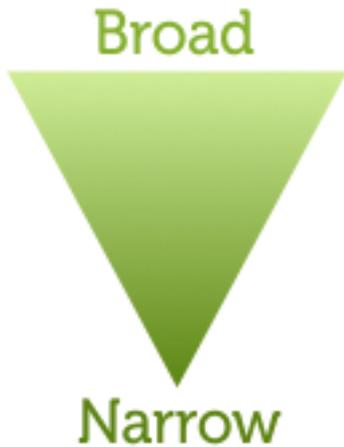
# STRUCTURING YOUR BOOK: THE REVERSE OUTLINE METHOD



- Once you have a draft, create an outline of your book using your chapter titles and section headings. Add a sentence explaining each section of a chapter.
- Read this and ask:
  - Does each chapter have a key idea?
  - Do the key ideas make sense in this order?
  - Do they key ideas add up to a convincing argument?
  - Is there anything missing?
  - Does any chapter have too much in it?

# STRUCTURING YOUR BOOK: INTRODUCING AND CONCLUDING

## Introduction



1. Introduce the **topic/context**
2. Outline your **main points**
3. State your **argument (thesis)**

## Conclusion



1. Restate **argument**
2. Sum up **what was covered**
3. State **what this means** in relation to the broader topic or 'big picture'

**AVOIDING  
ACADEMIC  
OFFENCES:**

**MAINTAIN  
ACADEMIC  
INTEGRITY**

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**Honesty**

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**Trust**

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**Fairness**

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**Respect**

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**Responsibility**

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**Courage**

See: [The International Center for Academic Integrity](#)



# **AVOIDING ACADEMIC OFFENCES**

- **Keep an up-to-date list of all your sources while you are conducting initial research**
- **Include full references to sources in your drafts, even in your rough notes**
- **Make sure you clearly identify when you are using a quote and when you are paraphrasing someone else**
- **Be careful when editing. If you move text, make sure you also move the reference.**
- **Remember: your book's reviewers will be experts in your field and will spot other people's ideas! So acknowledge them openly.**

# WRITING STYLE TOP TIPS

## GOOD PRACTICE

- Formal, emotionally neutral language
- Clearly stating your argument
- Nuance and specificity
- Over-use of quotations
- One complete idea per paragraph

## BAD PRACTICE

- Emotional or hyperbolic language
- Using rhetorical questions
- Generalisations or over claims
- Well-referenced paraphrasing
- Too short or too long paragraphs

# RESOURCES FOR ENGLISH ACADEMIC WRITING

[The Academic Phrasebank](#)

[Queen's University Academic Writing Guide](#)

[Lund University Academic Writing in English](#)