

Writing a Body Paragraph

A **body paragraph** supports and develops your thesis statement. Usually an essay will have three to four **body paragraphs** that are placed between your introduction and conclusion. This number will vary depending on your assignment. Each of these **body paragraphs** will have a main idea that must be supported as well. Your development and examples will support the paragraph's main idea.

Elements of a Body Paragraph

1. **The topic sentence:** The topic sentence will introduce the main idea of the following **body paragraph**. It will be the first sentence of your **body paragraph**. The main ideas for each **body paragraph** will support and help develop your thesis statement, located in your introduction paragraph.
 - First, I am attending QCC because it is the number one community college in New England.
2. **The support for your main idea:** Supporting the main idea of your **body paragraph** is important because it tells your reader what your point is. The supporting sentences will differ depending on your main idea. You want enough support to fully develop your idea.
 - Many factors go into why QCC is the number one community college in New England. The faculty here is well educated and they understand the needs of each individual student. The administrative staff is extremely helpful and attentive to questions and concerns that come up in any and all situations. The campus life here is active and engaging for students with all interests.
3. **Examples:** Using specific examples in your **body paragraphs** further develops your main idea. Giving specific examples in the body of your essay illustrates the main idea clearly for your reader.
 - When I was registering for classes, my advisor helped me choose courses that will help build my transcripts. She explained the criteria and the different courses I should be taking and when I should be taking them.
4. **Transitions:** Transitions in the body of your essay help unify the main ideas among the different paragraphs. Using a transitional sentence will help connect the main ideas logically for your reader. A great place to include a transitional sentence is at the end of each **body paragraph**. This sentence will conclude your current idea and introduce the upcoming idea.



Writing Center

Consider the first main idea that we have discussed: QCC is the number one community college in New England. The main idea in the second body paragraph can be: QCC's central, convenient location. The transition sentence will connect these two ideas.

- Not only does QCC have excellent academic standing, but it is very conveniently located making it easy to commute.

In its completed form, your **body paragraph** would look like the following:

First, I am attending QCC because it is the number one community college in New England. Many factors go into why QCC is the number one community college in New England. The faculty here is well educated and they understand the needs of each individual student. The administrative staff is extremely helpful and attentive to questions and concerns that come up in any and all situations. When I was registering for classes, my advisor helped me choose courses that will help build my transcripts. She explained the criteria and the different courses I should be taking and when I should be taking them. The campus life here is active and engaging for students with all interests. Not only does QCC have excellent academic standing, but it is very conveniently located making it easy to commute.

For more on body paragraphs, visit:

University of North Carolina

<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/transitions/>