**Opinion Paper Guideline**

The assignment of writing an Opinion Paper aims at developing the academic writing skills of the student, as well as their ability to discuss issues that have various angles and don’t have any definitive answer. Consequently, the author should be able to discuss various facts and arguments and debate the issue, even if there is unclear, incomplete evidence. An opinion paper is not just a statement of the author’s opinion, the aim is to present arguments from both sides and support the final educated opinion by a thorough explanation.

**Steps for writing an opinion paper:**

1. Choose the topic from the provided list. Please, bear in mind, that the topics are very broad, so you will need to narrow the topic. E.g. if you choose the topic of national security, it is advised that you either try and narrow it to a certain state, region and/or challenge and policy, that states are facing. In the latter case, you can discuss the issue across the nations, whereas in the former you will be able to outline the challenges, the attacks which have occurred, main tendencies, their ethics etc. Any new ideas outside of the provided list are welcome.
* Security and Strategy
* National Cyber Security (Establishment, Development, Privacy and Security, Threats, Defense and Deterrence)
* Intelligence and Counterintelligence in Cyber
* Homeland Cybersecurity (National Cyber systems around the world)
* Cyber-attacks and attribution
* Terrorism and Counterterrorism
* Transatlantic and Collective Cyber Security (International Cooperation in Cyber)
* Cyber Security and Hacktivism
* Ethics, privacy and security in national cyber security
* Public-Private Cooperation and cyber threats
* Cyber Military Power
* Case Study: Cyber attacks

**The topic of the paper shall be approved before the mid-term.**

1. Once the topic is agreed upon, you should start your research. You can use any material for your research, including academic papers, book chapters, internet, news, speeches, etc. Considering that an opinion paper is an academic paper, please be aware of the trustworthiness of the source and the author. In this regard, not all Youtube and internet materials are reliable.
2. Once you have gathered the information you can move to writing process. Any academic paper shall have the following structure:
3. The paper shall have a 200-500 word abstract. The abstract is a short summary of the paper (is normally written after the paper is completed).
4. The introduction – the introduction is the part where you set the problem and outline the importance of the issue. You can also introduce the context for the research topic. The introduction should include your hypothesis, your opinion on the matter, which will later be confirmed or disproved.
5. The body – The body is mostly divided into sub-chapters, but it’s mainly the authors’ decision. It is important to note that the body should be at least logically divided and coherent. The body includes factual circumstances of the issue, as well as arguments for and against the problem and/or presents the various positions on the issue.
6. The conclusion – The conclusion reviews the paper in short and offers a conclusion your opinion on the hypothesis. Once again, please note that the conclusion shall be strengthened by arguments presented in the body.
7. After the conclusion, you should include a bibliography, where all the used and cited materials will be included.
8. Every graph or photo shall be numbered: Photo 2., graph 3 etc. You should also number the chapters. E.g.: 1. Introduction; 2. Security Dilemma: 2.1 Review of the Dilemma etc.
9. Formatting: The paper shall be 2000-4000 words (including the references). The paper shall be either in Times New Roman or Sylfaen, size 11, 1.5 or double spacing.

Any source that you use, any idea that is not your own, and any text that you cite shall be referenced in a proper manner. You can use any referencing system as long as it is coherent. Advise: You can use reference managers, like Mendeley Cite, Word’s own reference manager etc. [Different styles & systems of referencing - Citing references - LibGuides at University of Reading](https://libguides.reading.ac.uk/citing-references/referencingstyles)

* Basic “Do” comments for writing an opinion essay:
	+ Write in a formal style
	+ Introduce the topic clearly
	+ Provide a unique and biased opinion
	+ State clear topic sentences
	+ Present support for the arguments
	+ Stay on topic
	+ Avoid redundancies
	+ Be professional and diplomatic
* Basic “Don’t” comments for writing an opinion essay:
	+ Don’t write in the first person
	+ Don’t use colloquial expressions
	+ Don’t use short forms
	+ Don’t use emotive vocabulary
	+ Don’t use over-generalizations
	+ Don’t use statistics without proper referencing
	+ Don’t give personal examples