The Writing Centre’s Guide to Paragraph Structure
Paragraph Structure

There are three parts to a paragraph
1. The Topic Sentence
2. The Body
3. The Concluding Sentence
The Topic Sentence

• This is the first sentence in your paragraph.
• It contains the **Topic + Controlling Idea**
  - Names the main/central idea of the paragraph
  - Limits/controls/restricts what the paragraph is going to say
• It focuses the information written about the topic in the paragraph so that it has unity.
The Body

• The body provides supporting points

• It shows the development of the topic according to the controlling idea

• Each main point is explained according to the controlling idea: this creates unity.
The Concluding Sentence

• This signals the end of the paragraph

• Usually begins with a speech marker to indicate this
  – For example: In summary, As a result, To conclude

• This acts a summary of the main points and ideas of the paragraph

• It can also act as a transition to the next paragraph
The passing of an anti-smoking law in Toronto bars and restaurants is beneficial to the city. When restaurants and bars have a reputation for being clean, more people frequent them. Banning smoking in restaurants would boost sales. When people go out to eat, they would much rather go to a restaurant that is not filled with smoky haze that leaves their clothes smelling awful for days. Also, when people eat dinner they prefer not to have an ashtray beside them. Banning smoking would make restaurants more aesthetically pleasing, and more people would visit. The smell of smoke also causes people to lose their appetites. If the city were to ban smoking in restaurants, sales would go up because patrons would eat more. Therefore, banning smoking in restaurants would encourage sales.
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Paragraph

Topic Sentence:
Topic + Controlling Idea

Body:
Supports and develops the topic and controlling idea

Concluding Sentence:
A summary of the main points
You’re finished!

**If you found this helpful, please speak to one of our Writing Centre tutors on ways to view these slides on your own time.**