

# GENERAL FEEDBACK FOR ESSAYS

## Content (40%)

Your interpretation should be in depth, comprehensive and academic. Always address the asked part. It should be evident in your outline, which should be self-explanatory in nature. Essays/Outlines that give related information without addressing the asked part do not qualify. The whole essay should be relevant. Even if 1-2 arguments are irrelevant the essay will not pass. Distribution of topic should be according to the demand of the topic statement i.e. if there is one scoring point it should be given more weight, if there are 2 or more scoring points all should be given equal weight. All claims made in the essay must be substantiated. Out of 15-17 arguments at least 9-10 should be academically backed with proper references. The rest should be backed by either case studies or generally known information. Evidence must be authentic and come from proper and authentic academic sources. Newspapers do not qualify as an academic source. Illustrations and vague mentions of events do not qualify as academic evidence. Essays that are lacking in evidence do not qualify.

## LANGUAGE (25%)

Focus on enhancing your grammar as any essay with 4-5 grammatical mistakes does not pass. Your essay must be in the tone and tense of the topic statements. Essays that fail to comply do not pass. Your sentence structure should be simple, yet clear and diversified. Vocabulary used should be simple, clear and concise. Expression should always be formal and academic. You are never to write in 1st and 2nd person pronouns. You must always use the given keywords and your topic for your thesis statements and main headings in your outline.

## STRUCTURE (20%)

Your essay must follow the selected pattern and that structure should be maintained throughout. INTRODUCTION: The introduction is the longest paragraph of the essay, at least 200 words. It should start with a hook, must give the glimpse of what's to come and must have a thesis statement. Besides hook, your introduction should not have any sort of information and reference. Avoid definitions in introduction. BODY PARAGRAPHS: Approximately 150 words at most and all the body paragraphs must be consistent in length. Should follow the proper structure of an academic paragraph i.e. it must have a topic sentence, supporting point, evidence and concluding sentence. The topic sentence and concluding sentence must align with each other. There should be no new information in the concluding sentence. One paragraph represents one subheading in the outline and consists of one idea. CONCLUSION: Must start with the concluding phrase. There should be no new information in the conclusion. It should recap the arguments. Conclusion does not have any examples and information. If you are ending it on a hopeful note, remember that solutions and hope are not the same.

## COHERENCE (15%)

## 2.1 Manufactured Authenticity and False Relatability:

### 2.1.1 Construction of a "Relatable" persona:

2.1.1.1 Carefully curated vulnerability and simplicity

2.1.1.2 Behind-the-scenes teams, sponsorships, and editing

### 2.1.2 Deceptive Impact:

2.1.2.1 Audiences mistake performance for sincerity

2.1.2.2 Truth is exploited for persuasion

## 2.2 Disguised Advertising and Covert Marketing:

### 2.2.1 Blurring of Content and Commerce:

2.2.1.1 Sponsored posts presented as personal recommendations

2.2.1.2 Weak or unclear disclosure of paid promotions

## 2.2.2 Consumer Deception:

2.2.2.1 Followers misled into believing advice is unbiased

2.2.2.2 Ethical boundaries violated

## 2.3 Psychological Manipulation and Parasocial Relationships:

### 2.3.1 Emotional Bonding with Followers:

2.3.1.1 One-sided intimacy creates blind trust

2.3.1.2 Influencers perceived as friends, not marketers

### 2.3.2 Manipulative Consequences:

2.3.2.1 Reduced critical thinking

2.3.2.2 Increased susceptibility to persuasion

## 2.4 Promotion of unrealistic Beauty and Lifestyle Standards

### 2.4.1 Use of Filters and Editing:

2.4.1.1 Altered bodies and flawless appearances

2.4.1.2 Normalization of unattainable ideals

*example*  
*deception?*

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## 2.4.2 Social Harm:

2.4.2.1 Body dissatisfaction

2.4.2.2 Identity distortion among youth

2.4.2.3 Case Study

## 2.5 Consumer Fraud and Promotion of Harmful Products:

2.5.1 Endorsement of Unverified products:

2.5.1.1 Skincare, supplements, crypto schemes

2.5.1.2 Lack of accountability for harm

2.5.2 Financial and Health Risks:

2.5.2.1 Followers suffer losses

2.5.2.2 Influencers escape responsibility

2.5.2.3 Case Study: Fyre Festival (2017)

## 2.6 Illusion of Meritocracy and Success:

2.6.1 Hustle and Success Narratives:

2.6.1.1 "Anyone can succeed if they try"

2.6.1.2 Visibility equated with merit

2.6.1.2 Hidden Inequalities:

*Not related with 2.2.2*

- 2.6.1.2.1 Algorithmic favoritism
- 2.6.1.2.2 Wealth and networks ignored

### 3. Counter Perspective: Social Media Influencers as an Inspiration

#### 3.1 Influencers Inspire and Motivate people

3.1.1 They encourage self confidence and ambition

3.1.2 They provide role models for youth

#### Rebuttal:

a) Inspiration is often built on illusion and exaggeration

b) False hopes based on deception leads to frustration, not empowerment

#### 3.2 Influencers Democratize Opportunity and Give voice to Marginalized

3.2.1 Anyone can become an influencer

3.2.2 Traditional gatekeepers are bypassed

#### Rebuttal:

a) Algorithms favor sensationalism and wealth

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b) opportunity is selective, not equal

### 3.3 Audiences Are Aware of Influencer Marketing

3.3.1 followers know influencers are paid

3.3.2 Disclosure laws exist

*No. influencers*

#### Rebuttal:

a) Emotional attachment overrides rational awareness

b) Parasocial bonds weaken skepticism

## 4. CONCLUSION

Your outline should not span 6 pages. Structure it properly. The purpose of outline is to guide the examiner on how to follow your essay not confuse him.

## THE ESSAY

In the age of social media, influence is no longer derived from wisdom or expertise, but from visibility and virality - Adapted from Marshall McLuhan. The rapid rise of social media influencers has transformed the digital landscape into a powerful arena of persuasion. Influencers today shape consumer behavior, lifestyle, beauty standards, and even political opinions for millions across the globe. They're often celebrated as role models who inspire confidence, ambition and self-expression. However, behind the bars lies a sophisticated economy where authenticity is staged, truth is monetized, and influence is driven by profit rather than responsibility. This dual reality raises a critical question: are social media influencers genuine source of inspiration, or do they function primarily as agents

Opening sentence does not link to the given context of inspiration and deception regarding the influencers..

of ~~digital deception~~? In this Essay we shall discuss the social media influencers as digital deception.

Short introduction, no proper overview of essay, no proper thesis statement. It should match the one in the introduction.

One of the most deceptive aspect of influencer culture is the deliberate construction of authenticity. Influencers present themselves as "ordinary people" sharing personal experiences, struggles, and daily routines. However, this apparent simplicity is often the result of Careful scripting, professional editing, and strategic branding to gain mass viewership. This manufactured reliability deceives audiences into forming emotional trust. Followers believe influencers are Sincere friends rather than commercial actors; they develop a blind trust on this one sided intimacy keeping in view the example of Pakistan: the most viral videos or posts are the ones where emotional card is used to gain the viewership. A well-written script paired with crocodile tears is

You are not asked that though. What's the most deceptive aspect of influencer culture? You are asked to write how they are a digital deception.

That's their job? If it is not out right lying about something that's not deception.

That's the issue and emotional immaturity of the followers then.

That's not your argument. Also this is not an example.

used by majority of influencers to gain the audience. One such example is of the Pakistani Youtuber Sitora Yaseen who time and again used this tactic and ~~cash~~ her husband's second marriage and gained mass popularity and followers. Thus, the deception lies not in outright falsehood, but in the performance of authenticity itself.

Again your argument is not emotional manipulation, your argument is editing undermining authenticity and parasocial relation of fans with influencer.

Similarly, 4 influencer marketing blurs the boundary between personal opinion and paid promotion. Sponsored content is often embedded with lifestyle narratives making advertisements appear as genuine recommendations. Although disclosure laws exist, they're inconsistently enforced and frequently ignored. This covert advertising misleads consumers into believing that endorsements are based on personal experience rather than financial incentive. According to the reports by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), a significant

*Inconsistent detail*

number of influencers fail to properly disclose paid partnerships. Thus, advertising is disguised as friendship, eroding informed consumer choice.

One reported instance involved Pakistani influencers endorsing products such as burgers or factory visits for brands like McDonald's or Haleeb Foods, where their promotions were initially presented as ordinary personal content, but later it were revealed to be coordinated brand campaigns. In such cases, influencers didn't properly disclose that the content was sponsored, misleading the followers into believing the endorsement was purely personal. This practice is highly criticized by the Competition Commission of Pakistan as potentially deceptive marketing.

Another serious problem is the psychological manipulation of cultivating one-sided emotional bonds

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Body paragraphs are unnecessarily long. You go on a tangent irrelevant to the discussion.

known as parasocial relationships.

Followers feel personally connected to influencers who don't know them in return. This illusion of intimacy significantly lowers critical thinking.

Once trust is established, followers are more likely to adopt opinions, purchase products, or emulate lifestyles without rational evaluation. One such example is the mass popularity gained by an international influencer **Wizzard Lizz**.

**Wizzard Lizz** and her husband were idealized as an ideal couple and she gained popularity and massive views when she uploaded a video showing how her husband cheated her, and

masses especially the females went all out to support her as they were emotionally connected to her. Similarly,

in the **Ducky Bhai aka Saad-ur-Rehman's case**, his supporters were constantly engaged with him despite the fact, he was jailed and came back after 100 days. While he was

A body paragraph should not be more than 150 words. Preferably between 100-120

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behind the bars, he gained massive followers and hit 9 Million subscribers on Youtube; all because of the emotional attachment the general public have towards these influencers.

As Noam Chomsky observed, "The most effective form of persuasion is the one that doesn't look like persuasion". Influencers exploit the psychological vulnerability, making manipulation subtle yet powerful.

Similarly, another dilemma lies with the influencers frequently promoting idealized images of beauty, success, and happiness through filters, editing tools, and selective representation.

Such portrayals normalize unattainable standards and distort perceptions of reality. Numerous studies link influencer culture to declining mental health among young people. One such example is an Arabian Instagram influencer, Sahar Taban,

Too long for a topic sentence, point is not clearly addressed. Too many unnecessary details for a topic sentence.

Topic is not effect of deception on people., you are to discuss how are they a deception.

who became viral around 2017 for her drastically altered images resembling actress Angelina Jolie. It was widely reported that she underwent numerous cosmetic procedures - media claimed as many as 50 surgeries in a bid to emulate Jolie's facial features.

Similarly in Pakistan, majority of influencers are promoting whitening injections, botox, lip fillers and other cosmetic procedures thus raising the bars high for unrealistic beauty standards.

The Royal Society for Public Health (UK) found that Instagram, contributes to anxiety, depression, and body dissatisfaction. By presenting illusions as normality, influencers deceive audiences into believing that perfection is achievable and failure is abnormal.

Additionally many influencers endorse unverified or harmful products, including dubious skincare items, dietary supplements and cryptocurrency schemes.

The problem lies when they hide the fact that they have had surgery, if they disclose it, it's not deception.

Often lacking expertise, influencers prioritize sponsorship revenue over consumer safety. In Pakistan's influencer ecosystem, there are cases where beauty influencers label themselves as cosmetologists or skin specialists without clear evidence of accredited professional qualifications. For instance, a beauty blogger named Zarpush Khan advertised aesthetic services and skincare advice alongside clinical contacts, but there is no public verification of formal medical or cosmetology credentials associated with these claims - a practice that followers may accept at face value due to their online popularity. Another notable example is the Fyrz Festival (2017), which was aggressively promoted by top influencers as a luxury experience. The event turned out to be fraudulent, causing massive financial losses. This case highlights how influencer endorsements can facilitate large-scale deception without accountability.

Influencers also promote the idea that success is easily ~~un~~attainable through hustle and creativity. Followers are told that "anyone can make it" with enough effort. However, this narrative conceals structural advantages such as wealth, early algorithmic boosts, and elite networks. Some Pakistani based influencers also portray the notion that education or having a formal degree is of no use due to scarcity of aptitude based jobs. This has brainwashed the children's so much so that they no longer want to pursue a career or attain a professional degree. Today's Generation Alpha is largely victimized and they just look upto influencers and they just desire for overnight success and easy money without any hustle or bustle. Influencers also propagate a false meritocracy. When followers fail to achieve similar success, they internalize blame rather

No paragraph structure, no argumentation. This is incoherent.

than recognizing systemic barriers.  
This deceptive narrative fuels **frustration**  
and **unrealistic expectations**.

While the preceding discussion highlights the multiple ways in which social media influencers manipulate perception, commodify authenticity, and mislead audiences through curated content and undisclosed endorsements, it is important to recognize that the phenomenon isn't entirely one-sided. It is also argued that social media influencers also provide motivation, inspiration, and opportunities for self-expression, especially for younger demographics. To evaluate the issue comprehensively, the following section examines the **counter arguments** with necessary rebuttals.

expression  
It is rightly said that influencers inspire and motivate people, they boost their confidence, encourage

~~creativity, and motivate individuals~~  
 to pursue goals. The **Rebuttal** is that while inspiration exists, it is frequently built upon **exaggerated success stories** and curated realities. Motivation based on illusion leads to **disillusionment** rather than empowerment. Inspiration rooted in deception can't be considered genuine. There's no concept of overnight success; one has to go above and beyond to acquire a dream life.

It's also argued that **removes traditional gatekeepers** and allows anyone to gain influence and earn a handsome amount. The **Rebuttal** is that in practice, **algorithm** favors **sensationalism**, wealth, and existing popularity. Visibility isn't equally distributed. Thus, opportunity is selective and conditional, not democratic.

Additionally, it is claimed that follo-

No consistency in paragraph length.  
 All paragraphs must be approximately equal in length.

were understand influencers are paid and can make informed choices. The Rebuttal is that awareness doesn't neutralize emotional influence. Parasocial bonds operate subconsciously, reducing Skepticism. As behavioral studies show, emotional persuasion remains effective even when manipulation is recognized.

In conclusion, while social media influencers are often celebrated for their ability to inspire, motivate, and create aspirational lifestyles, the underlying dynamics of their digital presence reveal a pervasive pattern of deception. By carefully curating their personal narratives, manipulating perceptions of authenticity, and promoting products or lifestyles without proper disclosure, influencers frequently blur the line between reality and performance. Their reliance on parasocial relationships and algorithmic engagement further

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amplifies their psychological influence, leading followers to trust and emulate them unquestioningly. Moreover, the propagation of unrealistic beauty, wealth, and success standards fosters dissatisfaction, comparison, and in some cases, risky behavioral choices. Even when counterarguments emphasize empowerment, democratized opportunities, or audience awareness, the structural and commercial incentives embedded in influencer culture demonstrate that deception often overshadows genuine inspiration. Consequently, recognizing the subtle manipulation inherent in this ecosystem is essential for promoting digital literacy, ethical regulation, and conscious consumption, ensuring that admiration and influence are grounded in truth rather than performance or profit.

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