**Explanation of Levels for the**

**Writing Scoring Guide**

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|  | **Exceeds Expectations** | **Meets Expectations** | **Partially Meets Expectations** | **Does Not Meet Expectations** |
| **Unity** | Clear purpose. | Evident purpose. | Unclear purpose. | No evident purpose. |
| Engaging and full development of a clear thesis. | Thesis represents sound and adequate understanding of the assigned topic. | Thesis is weak, unclear, too broad, or only indirectly supported. | Thesis is missing or not discernible. |
| Paper is appropriate for assignment. | Paper is appropriate for assignment. | Paper mostly meets the assignment. | Confusion or misunderstanding of assignment. |
| Above average sophistication and expression of ideas. | Competent and well-developed ideas. | Mostly intelligible ideas. | Ideas are extremely simplistic or poorly defined. |
| Adds significant value to target audience. | Adds adequate value to target audience. | Adds minimal value to target audience. | Adds little to no value to target audience. |
| Effectively anticipates and answers reader’s questions. | Reader’s questions are mostly answered. | Reader is left with questions; more information needed to “fill in the blanks.” | Reader is confused. |
| **Support** | Substantial, logical, and concrete development of ideas. | Solid reasoning. | Less than original reasoning. | Unclear or illogical reasoning. |
| Assumptions are made explicit. | Assumptions are usually recognized and made explicit. | Assumptions are not always recognized or made explicit. | Faulty assumptions, inappropriate or off-topic generalizations, errors of fact. |
| Main points are sufficiently supported with evidence. | Ideas mostly supported with sound, valid, and logical evidence. | Somewhat obvious support that may be too broad. | Simplistic, undeveloped, or cryptic support for ideas. |
| Details are germane, original, and convincingly interpreted. | Details are adequate, mostly relevant, and usually interpreted. | Details are too general, not interpreted, or inappropriately repetitive. | Details are irrelevant to thesis or missing altogether. |
| **Organization** | Logical and effective sequencing. | Mostly logical sequencing. | Some random sequencing or misplaced ideas. | Completely random sequencing. |
|  | Effective paragraph breaks. | Ideas are divided into appropriate paragraphs. | Some ineffective paragraph breaks. | Little, no, or inappropriate paragraph breaks. |
|  | Logical transitions show relationship between paragraphs. | Transitions adequately connect the ideas among paragraphs. | Transitions are weak or ineffective. | Transitions are nonexistent. |
|  | Structure enhances purpose and audience. | Structure matches purpose and audience. | Awkward structure makes understanding difficult. | Structure not recognizable. |
| **Mechanics and Style** | Precise prose style. | Prose style could be refined in a few places. | Prose style is distracting. | Jargon, clichés, or redundancy distracts reader. |
| Varied (but not apparently so) sentence structures. | Varied sentence structures. | Mostly varied sentence structures. | Little variance in sentence style or length. |
| Standard English throughout paper. | Standard English with few exceptions. | Some poor usage of Standard English somewhat inhibits understanding. | Non-Standard English usage inhibits understanding. |
| Correct spelling and accurate punctuation. | Spelling and punctuation are mostly correct. | Noticeable errors in spelling and punctuation. | Frequent spelling and punctuation errors. |
| Grammar and usage are correct and contribute to clarity and style. | Grammar and usage are mostly correct. | Grammar and usage errors are serious but not enough to disguise meaning. | Grammar and usage errors seriously affect flow and meaning. |
| Very little editing necessary. | Some editing necessary. | Moderate editing necessary. | Extensive editing necessary. |
| **Professional Standards** | Uses sources to support, extend, and inform, but not to substitute for writer’s own development of ideas. | Sources are not substituted for writer’s own development of ideas. | Uses sources as gap-fillers or to substitute for original thought. | Lacks sources to support or develop ideas. |
|  | Combines material from a variety of appropriate sources. | Uses adequate number and types of sources. | Uses some relevant sources. | Neglects important sources. |
|  | Uses quotations appropriately. | Doesn’t overuse quotations. | Quotations and paraphrases are too long or inconsistently referenced. | Overuses quotations or paraphrases to substitute for writer’s own ideas. |
|  | Follows style guide at all times. | Follows style guide consistently. | Follows style guide most of the time. | Little to no adherence to style guide is detectable. |
|  | All citations are correct and clear. They appear when needed and refer to an appropriate source. | Most citations are correct and clear. Appropriate citations are present when needed. | Most citations are clear and correct. Citations are present when needed. | Citations are mostly incorrect or missing, or some content is plagiarized. |
|  | Error-free references page. | Few errors on references page. | Several errors on references page. | References page is mostly incorrect or is missing. |
| **Discipline-Specific Elements** | (Professors fill in with applicable criteria.) |  |  |  |

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