

WKU Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

Academic Writing Sample Scoring Rubric

Student Name:

Scorer:

Instructions: Review the student’s writing sample and score each of the subcategories by circling or shading the appropriate boxes relative to the quality of the student’s writing. Total the scores at the end of each column.

Category	Sub	Proficient – 2 pts each	Developing – 1 pt each	Unacceptable – 0 pts each
ORGANIZATION	USE OF APA TO ORGANIZE	Unless directed otherwise, the paper is organized with proper APA-formatted headings and subheadings.	The paper has lapses in the use of proper APA formatting and subheadings.	The paper is not organized into sections or headings and subheadings are not appropriate for the topics of the sections.
	PARAGRAPH TOPICS	Generally, one idea is expressed in each paragraph.	In some paragraphs, the main idea is not clear. Some paragraphs feature multiple ideas.	Paragraphs often have no discernible main idea.
	INTERPARAGRAPH ORGANIZATION	Paragraphs are organized to build larger overarching ideas expressed in each section.	Some paragraphs seem disconnected to the larger idea of the section.	Paragraph arrangement fails to lead to a coherent overarching idea for the section.
	TRANSITIONS	Transition sentences or paragraphs link ideas and sections to one another.	Some paragraphs and sections are introduced without transitions.	The paper lacks transitions between paragraphs, sections, and ideas throughout.
	INTRODUCTION AND CONCLUSION	Generally, each paragraph, subsection, section, etc., includes an introduction and conclusion. Intros provide a clear thesis/rationale and/or preview of the main points to follow.	Some paragraphs and sections lack a clear introduction and conclusion. Intros may have lapses of clarity in thesis/rationale or preview of main points to follow.	Paragraphs and sections are missing introductions and conclusions throughout.

Category	Sub	Proficient – 2 pts each	Developing – 1 pt each	Unacceptable – 0 pts each
SUPPORT FOR IDEAS	DEMARCATON OF IDEAS	The paper always makes clear which ideas are the author's and which are the ideas or views of someone the author is citing.	The paper has lapses in clarifying which ideas are the author's and which are the ideas or views of someone the author is citing.	It is often unclear to the reader when the author is expressing their own ideas versus those of other authors.
	SYNTHESIS OF IDEAS	When writing about multiple authors, the paper always makes clear which author's ideas or study is being described.	The paper has lapses in clarifying among multiple authors whose ideas and studies are described.	The paper is often unclear about which ideas and studies are attributable to which authors.
	SUPPORTING OPINIONS	All opinions or contestable ideas are supported with citations and/or evidence.	Some opinions or contestable ideas are presented without citation or evidence.	The paper makes no effort to support opinions or contestable ideas with citations or evidence.
	QUALITY OF SOURCE	High-quality, peer-reviewed, and relevant, respected practitioner-related sources are used throughout the paper.	Some sources used in the paper are lacking quality. Many citations are not from peer-reviewed sources or respected practitioner-related sources.	Citations, when used, are often from non-peer reviewed sources or respect, practitioner-related sources.
	RELEVANCE & TIMELINESS OF SOURCES	Generally, sources are recent in origin, unless the paper is citing the founder of an idea or theory who wrote long ago, but whose ideas are still important to the field, or if a study foundational to the field is being cited. All sources are relevant to the topic.	Some sources are dated or inappropriate for the topic.	Many sources throughout the paper are out of date and do not support the overall topic.
	AUDIENCE AWARENESS	Generally, there is a clear sense the author of the paper has an awareness of their audience.	The paper indicates some lapses in audience awareness.	The paper reflects no awareness of audience.

Category	Sub	Proficient	Developing	Unacceptable
Writing Style and Mechanics	GRAMMAR	Grammar and spelling are correct throughout the paper.	Lapses of correct grammar and/or spelling appear throughout the paper.	The paper includes extensive grammar and/or spelling mistakes.
	APA	APA citations and formatting are correct throughout the paper.	Some APA errors appear in the paper.	The paper does not follow APA conventions or includes APA errors throughout.
	-tone	Tone of the paper is formal and academic.	Writing includes various informalities, including slang words and contractions. Portions of the paper may be written below a college reading level.	Paper is excessively informal and written in a conversational style well below a college reading level throughout.
	CLARITY	Sentences are direct, clear, and to the point.	Sentences are sometimes unclear, excessively wordy, or attempt to sound erudite	The meaning of many sentences is unclear and include word choice errors that obscure the meaning of the sentence.
	VOICE	Generally, the paper is written in active voice.	Paper sometimes lapses into unnecessary passive voice.	Much of the paper is written in passive voice.
	USE OF ANECDOTE	Personal examples are rare and used to illustrate a point or describe the writer's positionality, context, or biases.	Paper includes some unnecessary personal examples.	Paper includes many unnecessary personal examples.
	PRONOUNS	When the writer references themselves, they use the first-person pronoun "I."	The writer shows some signs of understanding the proper use of point of view in academic papers.	The writer is inconsistent in the use of first- and second-person point of view.
Column Totals				

Total all three columns and indicate overall score here: _____

Writing sample is unacceptable: 0-9 total points [student should not be considered for admission]

Weak writing sample: 10-27 points [student may be considered for admission if strong in other areas]

Strong writing sample: 27-36 points [student should be considered for admission if strong in other areas]