

100 Assessment Project – Proficiency Descriptions

Excellent Writing (4) shows all of these characteristics:

	Line of Thought - Reasoning	Analysis	Essay Form and Structure	Grammar, Style, Etc.	Documentation Conventions	Source Use and Integration
4	Superior control of purpose and direction; provides very effective cues to readers. Rigorously reasoned with logical progression. Identifies and explains all necessary and even less apparent concepts. Lucidly explains even less apparent connections between evidence and purpose.	Writer shows superior, sustained and consistent level of critical engagement with the text/sources, advances complex and comprehensive opinions and provides strong reasoning throughout.	All major points effectively developed into coherent, well-supported paragraphs. Thesis clear and skillfully delivered, whether direct or implied. Points effectively and logically connected with clear transitions. No digressions. Articulate and engaging introduction and conclusion related to main purpose	Word choice is precise and usage is accurate; The paper is virtually free of common grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors. Any errors are clearly editing oversights and stand out as exceptions rather than a pattern. Writing shows control of a variety of sentence patterns.	Both in-text and bibliographic citations follow conventions of particular style (APA, MLA, etc.) and are virtually free of format errors. All sources listed in bibliography are correctly used in the text and all sources cited in the text correctly appear in the bibliography.	Careful, effective use of relevant sources, displaying correct integration and insightful analysis of the source/quote.

Strong Writing (3) has characteristics of excellent writing, but shows one or more of the following:

	Line of Thought - Reasoning	Analysis	Essay Form and Structure	Grammar, Style, Etc.	Documentation Conventions	Source Use and Integration
3	Clear purpose and direction; provides generally effective cues to reader. Well reasoned with generally logical progression. Identifies and explains most relevant concepts. Clearly explains connection between evidence and purpose.	Writer shows a competent level of critically engaging ideas from the text/sources, explores issues in some depth and advances reasonable opinions although some weakness or omissions may be present.	Major points generally developed into coherent, well-supported paragraphs. Thesis effective. Points generally and logically connected with generally clear transitions. Digressions minimal. Effective introduction and conclusion related to main purpose.	There may be several minor errors and/or less precise word choice and/or word order. However, these errors are non-disruptive: They do not focus the attention of the reader. Some lack of variety in sentence structure and complexity.	Some format errors (e.g., incorrect use of lower/upper case in titles, italics/underlining problems, if using APA, year not placed after author's name, etc.) but these are more exceptions than the rule. All sources listed in bibliography are correctly used in the text and all sources cited in the text correctly appear in the bibliography, but with some errors.	Mostly effective use of relevant sources. Good quote integration. Adequate analysis/interpretation of source/quote.

Satisfactory writing (2) may have characteristics of strong and excellent writing, but shows one or more of the following as well:

	Line of Thought - Reasoning	Analysis	Essay Form and Structure	Grammar, Style, Etc.	Documentation Conventions	Source Use and Integration
2	Reasonably clear purpose and direction; provides some cues to reader. Satisfactory reasoning, but may lack clear progression. Identifies and explains relevant concepts, although fails to address some. Explains connection between evidence and purpose with minor lapses.	Writer's analysis is sound but lacks depth and/or detail. The evidence used may not correlate with the opinion of the student writer.	Most major points adequately developed into coherent, well-supported paragraphs. Thesis adequate. Points adequately connected with generally appropriate transitions. Minor digressions. Adequate introduction and conclusion.	Although generally free of serious grammar errors, errors are more noticeable and may demonstrate patterns, i.e., S/V agreement, Verb tense issues, etc. Although noticeable, they do not impede comprehension nor do they call into question the writer's ability to reasonably control standard written English (SWE). Words are occasionally misused and tend to the mechanical and/or vague. Sentence structure tends to simplistic, but is correct.	Format errors are noticeable. One or two correlation errors between bibliography and in-text citations or vice versa.	Clumsy" use of sources, with incorrect source set-up (i.e., "In Cedric's story, he uses ..." or "According to Jodi Kantor's article, the article states ..."). Excessive dependence on quotes. Poor quote integration. Limited sense of source/quote import with little further analysis.

Poor writing (1) may have characteristics of other writing, but also has one or more of the following:

	Line of Thought - Reasoning	Analysis	Essay Form and Structure	Grammar, Style, Etc.	Documentation Conventions	Source Use and Integration
1	Recognizable but limited or scattered purpose and direction; provides limited cues to reader.	Writer understands ideas from the text/sources, but some responses are incomplete, inaccurate, or illogical. Writer relies extensively on oversummarization or paraphrasing.	Paragraphs lack coherence and/or support. Thesis vague. Largely ineffective in connecting points. Some major digressions. Inadequate introduction and/or conclusion.	Frequent errors in grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. Errors are disruptive. Heavy reliance on simple sentences, vague phrasing, noticeably limited vocabulary, and/or consistently misused words. The writer has problems controlling SWE	Same as 2, but format errors are more common, although not totally dominant.	Inadequate or irrelevant source use. Sources lack reliability/credibility. Incomplete or ineffective source integration (i.e., mentioning a partial source: "On a recent CNN news broadcast ...").
0	Unclear; provides no cues to reader. Lacks appropriate reasoning or provides simplistic responses. Fails to identify or address relevant concepts. Fails to explain connection between evidence and purpose.	Writer does not appear to understand topic. Writer doesn't appear to understand the ideas introduced in the text/sources. Responses merely repeat ideas without interpretation.	No apparent thesis. No organization of major points into paragraphs. No logical transitions between paragraphs. Major digressions. Ineffective introduction and conclusion.	Excessive errors in grammar and usage. The writer lacks control of SWE.	No in-text and/or bibliographic citations supplied. Or, in-text citations and/or bibliographic citations have numerous format errors – these are dominant. Or, many in-text citations do not match citations in bibliography. Or vice versa.	No ascertainable use of external sources or plagiarism/source boundary problems.

