

Appendix I

Institutional Writing Scale

Writing 0 (No Proficiency) No functional writing ability.

Writing 0+ (Memorized Proficiency) Writes using memorized material and set expressions. Can produce letters. Can write numbers and dates, own name, address, etc., on a form. Otherwise, ability to write is limited to simple lists of common items or a few short sentences. Spelling and even representation of letters and numbers may be incorrect.

Writing 1 (Beginning Proficiency) Can write to meet limited practical needs. Can create by writing statements and questions on topics very familiar to him/her. Writing vocabulary is inadequate to express anything but elementary needs; writes in simple sentences making continual errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Writing tends to be a loose collection of sentences (or fragments) on a given topic and provides little evidence of conscious organization. Examples of topics that are "very familiar" include phone messages, excuses, notes to service people and simple notes to friends.

Writing 1+ (Beginning Proficiency, Plus) Can write comprehensible sentences and short paragraphs to meet most survival needs and limited social demands. Can express present and future tenses accurately and some past verb forms but not always accurately or with correct usage. Can relate personal history, discuss topics such as daily life, preferences and very familiar material. Shows good control of elementary vocabulary and some control of basic syntactic patterns but major errors still occur when expressing more complex thoughts or using more complex grammatical structures. Dictionary usage may yield incorrect vocabulary or terms. Can write simple letters, summaries of biographical data and work experience with fair accuracy.

Writing 2 (Limited Working Proficiency) Able to write routine social correspondence and prepare documentary materials required for most limited work requirements. Has writing vocabulary sufficient to express himself/herself simply with some circumlocutions. Can write simply about a very limited number of current events or daily situations. Still makes common errors in spelling and punctuation but shows some control of the most common formats and punctuation conventions. Elementary constructions are usually handled quite accurately, and writing is understandable but uses a limited number of cohesive devices (e.g., introduction, transitions, conclusion).

Writing 2+ (Limited Working Proficiency, Plus) Shows ability to write with some precision and in some detail about most common topics. Can write about concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows fluency and ease of expression but under time constraints and pressure language may be inaccurate and/or incomprehensible. Generally strong in either grammar or vocabulary but not in both. resulting

in occasional miscommunication. Areas of grammatical weakness range from simple constructions such as plurals, articles, prepositions and negatives to more complex structures such as tense usage, passive constructions, word order and relative clauses. Uses dictionary to advantage to supplement vocabulary. Can take fairly accurate notes on material presented orally and handle with fair accuracy most social correspondence. Writing is understandable though style may still seem simplistic, repetitive, or awkward. Topics may be one-dimensional, claims repeated instead of developed, and support for claims may be inconsistent.

Writing 3 (General Professional Proficiency) Able to write effectively in most formal and informal settings on practical, social and professional topics. Can write reports, summaries, short library research papers on particular areas of interest or on special fields with reasonable ease. Control of structure, spelling, and general vocabulary is adequate to convey his/her message accurately, but style may still be awkward or tone inappropriate. Errors virtually never interfere with comprehension. Punctuation and grammar are usually correct even in compound and complex sentences. Relationship of ideas is consistently clear but argumentative structure may remain simplistic. Ideas often not explored deeply enough but support for claims is drawn mostly from credible sources.

Writing 3+ (General Professional Proficiency, Plus) Able to write in a few prose styles pertinent to professional/educational needs. Phrasing is generally effective, but not always tailored precisely to suit audience. Weaknesses may be in poor control of complex structures, vocabulary, or the ability to express subtleties and nuances. Organization may suffer due to lack of variety in organizational patterns or in variety of cohesive devices. Introduction, conclusion, and transitions are present but formulaic.

Writing 4 (Advanced Professional Proficiency) Able to write precisely and accurately in a variety of prose styles and on topics pertinent to professional/educational needs. Errors of grammar are rare including those in complex structures. Consistently able to tailor language to suit audience and able to express subtleties and nuances. Expository prose is clearly, consistently and explicitly organized with a logically evident argumentative structure. Claims are well supported by valid, reliable sources. The writer employs a variety of organizational patterns, uses a wide variety of cohesive devices such as ellipses and parallelisms, and subordinates in a variety of ways. Breadth of vocabulary used enhances expression of all his/her experiences and ideas.

Writing 4+ (Advanced Professional Proficiency, Plus) Able to write the language precisely and accurately in a wide variety of prose styles pertinent to professional/educational needs. May have some ability to edit but not in the full range of styles. Has some flexibility within a style and shows some evidence of skilled use of stylistic or rhetorical devices.

Writing 5 (Exemplary Proficiency) Has writing proficiency equal to that of a well-educated college graduate or graduate student. No errors of structure, spelling, style, or vocabulary and

can write and edit both formal and informal correspondence, official reports and documents, and professional/ educational articles including writing for special purposes which might include legal, technical, educational, literary and colloquial writing. In addition to being clear, explicit and informative, the writing and the ideas are also significant, intellectually challenging and imaginative. The writer employs a very wide range of stylistic devices, using adept management of voice and tone and apt word choice.