



AP[®] Research Academic Paper 2016 Scoring Guidelines

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AP Research Performance Task Rubric: Academic Paper

Content Area	Performance Levels		
1 Understand and Analyze Context	The paper identifies the topic of inquiry. 2	The paper identifies the topic, and describes the purpose and focus of the inquiry. 4	The paper explains the topic, purpose, and focus of the inquiry and why further investigation of the topic is needed by connecting it to the larger discipline, field, and/or scholarly community. 6
2 Understand and Analyze Argument	The paper identifies or cites previous works and/or summarizes a single perspective on the student’s topic of inquiry. 2	The paper summarizes, individually, previous works representing multiple perspectives about the student’s topic of inquiry. 4	The paper explains the relationships among multiple works representing multiple perspectives, describing the connection to the student’s topic of inquiry. 6
3 Evaluate Sources and Evidence	The paper uses sources/evidence that are unsubstantiated as relevant and/or credible for the purpose of the inquiry. 2	The paper uses credible and relevant sources/evidence suited to the purpose of the inquiry. 4	The paper explains the relevance and significance of the used sources/cited evidence by connecting them to the student’s topic of inquiry. 6
4 Research Design	The paper presents a summary of the approach, method, or process, but the summary is oversimplified. 3	The paper describes in detail the approach, method, or process. 5	The paper provides a logical rationale by explaining the alignment between the chosen approach, method, or process and the research question/project goal. 7
5 Establish Argument	The paper presents an argument, conclusion or understanding, but it is simplistic or inconsistent, and/or it provides unsupported or illogical links between the evidence and the claim(s). 3	The paper presents an argument, conclusion, or new understanding that the paper justifies by explaining the links between evidence with claims. 5	The paper presents an argument, conclusion or new understanding that acknowledges and explains the consequences and implications in context. 7
6 Select and Use Evidence	Evidence is presented, but it is insufficient or sometimes inconsistent in supporting the paper’s conclusion or understanding. 2	The paper supports its conclusion through the compilation of relevant and sufficient evidence. 4	The paper demonstrates a compelling argument through effective interpretation and synthesis of the evidence and through describing its relevance and significance. 6
7 Engage Audience	Organizational and design elements are present, but sometimes distract from communication or are superfluous. 1	Organizational and design elements convey the paper’s message. 2	Organizational and design elements engage the audience, effectively emphasize the paper’s message and demonstrate the credibility of the writer. 3
8 Apply Conventions	The paper cites and attributes the work of others, but does so inconsistently and/or incorrectly. 2	The paper consistently and accurately cites and attributes the work of others. 4	The paper effectively integrates the knowledge and ideas of others and consistently distinguishes between the student’s voice and that of others. 6

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9 Apply Conventions	The paper's use of grammar, style and mechanics convey the student's ideas; however, errors interfere with communication and/or credibility.	The paper's word choice and syntax adheres to established conventions of grammar, usage and mechanics. There may be some errors, but they do not interfere with the author's meaning.	The paper's word choice and syntax enhances communication through variety, emphasis, and precision.
	1	2	3

NOTE: To receive the highest performance level presumes that the student also achieved the preceding performance levels in that row.

ADDITIONAL SCORES: In addition to the scores represented on the rubric, readers can also assign scores of **0** (zero).

- A score of **0** is assigned to a single row of the rubric when the paper displays a below-minimum level of quality as identified in that row of the rubric.