

Department of English Assessment Grid

English Essay Rubric	Thesis	Organization	Ideas, Support, & Development (Evidence)	Research Skills (if applicable)	Diction and Tone	Grammar and Mechanics
A (5) Excellent	Thesis indicates original and engaging argument with evidence of development strategy. Nuanced response to assignment.	Sequence of ideas is consistently clear, logical, and relevant to thesis. Paragraphs unified; transitions effective.	Complete mastery of text. Assertions supported with well-chosen textual evidence. Appropriate quotations with necessary and full explication.	Effective integration and documentation of ideas and sources.	Distinctive word choice; approach to material greatly enhances argument with intended audience.	Presents ideas in well-crafted, varied, engaging, virtually error-free sentences.
B (4) Skilled	Thesis competent but lacks originality. Good response to assignment.	Sequence of ideas reasonably clear and logical, although parts of argument may not be explicitly connected to thesis. Some digressions. Paragraphs reasonably coherent but could be better connected.	Good understanding of text. Sufficient but predictable textual evidence. Good use of quotations but too many or too few and lacking careful explication.	Well-integrated and documented ideas and sources.	Appropriate word choice. Effective awareness of intended audience.	Conveys ideas with effective and varied sentence structure. Few errors at word and sentence level.
C (3) Able/Average	Thesis too broad. Adequate understanding of assignment.	Ideas could be more logically arranged. Significant parts don't explicitly advance thesis. Paragraphs not tightly unified or related to each other. Unclear or missing transitions.	Adequate but predictable understanding of basic ideas in text. Insufficient use of textual evidence. Quotations insufficient, ill-chosen, misplaced, or lacking explication.	Awkward integration of ideas and sources; documentation reflects some errors.	Inconsistent choice of words. Portions of the essay interfere with comprehension of intended audience.	Clear but basic expression of ideas—little variation in sentence form; some errors at word and sentence level.
D (2) Developing	Thesis unclear and vague. Does not fully respond to assignment.	Difficult to determine how arrangement of ideas contributes to argument. Parts of the argument do not hold together—jumps around. Paragraphs disorganized and unconnected.	Insufficient understanding of text. Little useful textual evidence for an argument. Lacks appropriate quotations or quotes heavily without purpose or explication.	Ideas and sources reflect numerous errors in documentation.	A pattern of using words inappropriately. Shows little awareness of intended audience.	Many basic errors at word and sentence level, but sense of ideas conveyed.
F (1) Unsatisfactory	No controlling idea. Poor or mistaken response to assignment.	No clear sense of an evolving argument or logical arrangement of ideas; haphazard. Paragraphs incoherent, undeveloped, and unrelated.	Misses the point of the text. Lacks support for claims. Essay is incomplete. No quotations or inappropriate quotations, not integrated in the essay. No clear plan.	Poor or missing integration and documentation of sources.	Frequent misuse of words. Ignores needs of intended audience.	Multiple errors in arrangement, punctuation, and sentence structure undermine sense— incoherent.