

Written Communication

Assessment Rubric

Definition

MAC Written Communication courses support the development and expression of ideas in writing. Effective written communication is deeply dependent on context, involves adapting different genres, styles, and formal features to address varied audiences and purposes, and benefits from repeated engagement in processes of writing, receiving feedback, and reflecting.

Framing Language

A course approved in the Written Communication competency can appear in any discipline, as writing is an essential part of learning content in all fields. Assignments for written communication allow students to develop transferable writing capacities, including engaging in invention and revision, adapting writing for specific audiences and purposes, and attending to considerations of arrangement and style. Assignments provide writers with opportunities to adjust their writing in response to feedback.

Glossary

Audience – the person or people with whom one wants to communicate

Contextual Factors – elements of a situation that directly and/or indirectly influence decisions about communication

Genre – a category or type of writing, such as “memo” or “lab report,” that writers use to address repeated situations. Genres are helpful shorthands for addressing audience, context, and purpose.

Purpose – the goal of the written communication

Revision – a writer’s effort to move a text toward closer alignment with what is known about context, audience, and purpose; revision can encompass large-scale reimagining and small-scale editing and proofreading changes.

Textual Features – characteristics of writing that facilitate communication for a writer's intended purpose and audience

Rubric Key

Dimension – A dimension expresses a fundamental aspect of a given Student Learning Outcome.

Level – The levels of learning describe progressive achievement, moving from Developing (Level 1) to Sophisticated (Level 4). Basic Competence in this MAC competency is achieved at Level 2. Students should be given opportunities to develop further levels of achievement in their upper-level, program-specific courses, after their initial introductory-level exposure to its fundamentals in a MAC-designated course.

SLO – A Student Learning Outcome (SLO) expresses the core learning goals of a curriculum. This rubric presents the SLOs for this MAC competency. Any course designated to deliver this competency is expected to state these SLOs verbatim in the course syllabus and to foreground them in its design and delivery.

SLO #1: Analyze written texts to understand how they relate to particular audiences, purposes, and contexts as a way to inform one's own writing and/or revision.				
Dimensions	Sophisticated competence (Level 4)	Emerging competence (Level 3)	MAC (Basic) competence (Level 2)	Developing competence (Level 1)
Analysis of the audience, context, and purpose addressed by a written text	The writer assesses and anticipates considerations of audience, context, and purpose so as to adapt writing accordingly. Demonstrates a keen awareness of purpose as derived from a piece of writing and its textual features. Such analysis may inform the writer's drafting and/or revision.	The writer assesses and anticipates considerations of audience, context, and purpose so as to adapt writing accordingly, demonstrating consistency and basic clarity. Demonstrates an adequate awareness of purpose as derived from a piece of writing and its textual features. Such analysis may inform the writer's drafting and/or revision.	The writer demonstrates an inconsistent, if emerging, ability to assess and anticipate considerations of audience, context, and purpose, suggesting that they are unlikely to adapt their writing accordingly. May overlook important relationships between purpose, context, and audience that are necessary for appropriate adaptation or revision.	The writer treats audience concerns in superficial or formulaic ways as part of simplistic analysis. Identifies contextual factors, but these may be obvious, irrelevant, or mischaracterized. Demonstrates minimal ability to discern the purpose of a piece of writing from its textual features.

SLO #2: Create and revise written texts for particular audiences, purposes, and contexts.

Dimensions	Sophisticated competence (Level 4)	Emerging competence (Level 3)	MAC (Basic) competence (Level 2)	Developing competence (Level 1)
Consideration of audience, purpose, and context in the creation of written text	Skillfully tailors written texts for a specified audience, even when encountering complex or unfamiliar audiences. Comprehensively orients all features of a given text toward its audience, purpose, and context. Demonstrates facility with available structures, including genre, organization, content, and language choices.	Tailors written texts for a specified audience but may overlook some critical considerations or write for a more familiar audience. Demonstrates an understanding of audience, purpose, and context into most, but not all, of a given text. Demonstrates consistent ability with available structures, including genre, organization, content, and language choices.	Somewhat tailors written texts for a specified audience but understanding of the audience is broad or overly simplified. Basic features of a given text are oriented toward, and suitable for, a specified audience, purpose and context. Demonstrates a basic ability with available structures, including genre, organization, content, and language choices.	May attempt to write for a specified audience but understanding of the audience is broad or inaccurate. Written features of a given text show minimal consideration of the specified audience, purpose, and context. Demonstrates a developing but minimal ability with available structures, including genre, organization, content, and language choices.
Revision and response to feedback about one's writing	Thoughtfully incorporates comments and suggestions into later drafts of work, integrating feedback that enhances the writing based on considerations of audience and purpose. Recognizes when a complete revision of the work is needed.	Incorporates essential revisions into later drafts of work and some suggestions, generally discerning those that enhance the writing in relation to considerations of audience and purpose. May make some significant revisions to the work. Shows capacity to use different language and style for different contexts.	Incorporates revisions and some suggestions into later drafts of work. Revisions may not be integrated well. Identifies some strategies for revising a text, though these may be insufficiently connected with audience, context, or purpose.	Minimally responds to feedback by making necessary revisions that are explicit in the feedback. Struggles to identify strategies for revising or misapplies formulaic strategies or rigid rules for revision suggestion.

SLO #3: Through oral or written reflection, demonstrate awareness of one's writing choices as well as how one's own writing contributes to ongoing conversations.				
Dimensions	Sophisticated competence (Level 4)	Emerging competence (Level 3)	MAC (Basic) competence (Level 2)	Developing competence (Level 1)
Reflection on choices made in light of audience, context, and purpose of writing	Precisely and insightfully identifies writing choices made regarding purpose with respect to audience and context. Locates these choices as part of the writing process and through characteristics of a text.	Identifies several significant writing choices made regarding purpose, audience, and context. Acknowledges these choices either as part of the writing process or through characteristics of a text.	Recognizes some writing choices or processes. Connects these writing choices in minimal or partial ways to considerations of audience, context, and purpose.	Demonstrates a minimal ability to communicate about writing choices that account for audience, purpose, context. Primarily reflects acontextual notions of "good" or "bad" writing or little understanding of how a piece of writing has developed.

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