

WEBSTER UNIVERSITY WORLDWIDE
Rubrics: An assessment-based grading system

What follows is an example of a rubric based on a scale of 1 - 4 with the relevant criteria in the left-column.

Figure 1. Instructional Rubric for an Essay

Criteria	Gradations of Quality			
	(4) Very effective	(3) Effective	(2) Ineffective	(1) Very ineffective
The claim	I make a claim and explain the different arguments that make it controversial.	I make a claim but don't explain the background for its controversy.	My claim is ambiguous, unclear.	The claim is implicit and not stated clearly.
Reasons in support of the claim	I provide evidence or data in support of my claim.	I give partial reasons to support of my claim, however, leave important explanations out.	The reasons for my claim are weak or disconnected from the primary argument.	There is no justification or reasons to support my claim.
Reasons against the claim	Counter-arguments are addressed and the strength of the claim is made clear.	I only partially address some of the counter-arguments. The claim is somewhat called into question.	Counter-arguments are acknowledged but remain undiscussed.	Counter arguments are neither acknowledged nor discussed.
Organization	My writing has a compelling organizational structure and satisfying conclusion.	My writing has an identifiable beginning, a middle, and an end but lacks persuasiveness.	My organization is rough but amendable to change. Deviations from the topic are apparent.	The writing lacks a focus and coherence in terms of structure.
Voice and tone	The writing conveys a sense of personal investment in the argument.	The tone is moderate; the paper lacks an identifiable voice and position.	The writing is bland, mundane.	The writing is uninteresting and lacks a captivating balance between the formal and informal moments.
Word choice	An intriguing word choice is employed; the rhythms are natural, varied, vivid.	Word choices are sometime routine, sometimes refined, sometimes interesting.	The word choice lacks creative imagination and application.	Repetitious word choice combined with vague or ambiguous terms.
Sentence fluency	Sentence lengths vary.	Sentences are well-constructed. The essay completes the task but doesn't dance with mastery of writing style.	Sentence structures are awkward, run-ons, or fragments.	Sentences represent run-ons and fragments.
Conventions	Grammar, punctuation and spelling are used correctly.	Some errors need to be fixed but, in general, correct conventions are used.	Errors in the essay are distracting.	The paper is littered with errors.

