

# Short essay question rubric

## WHAT IS THIS RESOURCE?

This is a grading rubric an instructor uses to assess students’ work on this type of assignment. It is a sample rubric that needs to be edited to reflect the specifics of a particular assignment. Students can self-assess using the rubric as a checklist before submitting their assignment. This sample rubric can also be found under the Turnitin tool in Blackboard to facilitate online grading.

## HOW DO I USE IT?

Edit the assignment requirements column, performance level descriptions in each box, and point values to align with a particular course assignment. Distribute the rubric to students when first introducing the assignment. Use the rubric to grade student work. To use the rubric in Blackboard, contact [USC Blackboard support](https://blackboardhelp.usc.edu/) and [CET](http://cet.usc.edu/) for assistance. Also see the CET resource Tips for Designing Rubrics.

Table 1 Short essay question rubric

| **Criteria** | **Excellent** | **Meets Expectations** | **Approaches Expectations** | **Needs Improvement** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Completeness** | Shows a thorough understanding of the question. Addresses all aspects of the question completely. | Presents a general understanding of the question. Completely addresses most aspects of the question or addresses all aspects incompletely. | Shows a limited understanding of the question. Does not address most aspects of the question. | Does not answer the specific central question. |
| **Analysis** | Analyzes, evaluates, compares, and/or contrasts issues and events with depth. | Analyzes or evaluates issues and events, but not in any depth. | Lacks analysis or evaluation of the issues and events beyond stating accurate, relevant facts. | Lacks analysis or evaluation of the issues and events beyond stating vague, irrelevant, and/or inaccurate facts. |
| **Evidence** | Incorporates pertinent and detailed information from both class discussions and assigned readings (when applicable). | Includes relevant facts, examples. and details but does not support all aspects of the task evenly.  | Includes relevant facts, examples, and details, but omits concrete examples, includes inaccurate information, and/or does not support all aspects of the task. | Does not incorporate information from pertinent class discussion and/or assigned readings. |
| **Writing** | Presents all information clearly and concisely, in an organized manner. | Presents information fairly clearly and concisely and may have minor organization problems. | Lacks focus, somewhat interfering with comprehension. | Organizational problems prevent comprehension. |