

Admission Essay Rubric

The admission form requests the following from applicants: In an essay of 500-750 words, please explain your interest in the program for which you are applying, what you hope to achieve by completing the program, and how your personal or professional background relates to your interests and goals. The essay's content and the clarity of writing will be assessed as a part of the admission process.

	Lacks Substance 1 Points	Room for Improvement 2 Points	Meets Expectations 4 Points	Exceeds Expectations 5 Points
Directions	No attempt was made to follow directions.	Few directions were followed.	Most directions were followed.	All directions were followed.
Organization/Structure	Ideas seem to be randomly arranged. No effort was made at logical paragraph organization.	The essay is a little hard to follow. The author's introduction, supporting paragraphs, and conclusion are difficult to identify.	The essay is pretty well organized. The author's introduction, supporting paragraphs, and conclusion are evident.	The essay is very well organized. One idea follows another in a logical sequence with clear transitions.
Focus on Questions Asked	No attempt has been made to relate the essay to the questions asked. The reader learns little if anything about the author.	Some of the essay is related to the questions asked, but the reader does not learn much about the author.	Most of the essay is related to the questions asked. The essay may wander at times but the reader can still learn something about the author.	The entire essay is related to the questions asked, and allows the reader to get to know the author.
Mechanics	The essay has more than five spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, or usage errors.	The essay has four or five spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, or usage errors.	The essay has two or three spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, or usage errors.	The essay has zero to one spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, or usage error.
				Total Points 20

15-20 pts. = acceptable, this admission criterion is met.

14 points and lower indicates that this criterion for admission is borderline or not met. If the essay is of such low quality to make the program director consider not admitting the student, then the program director can either deny admission outright or can refer it to the dean for a second opinion. A low essay score could also lead to provisional acceptance, which requires approval by the program director and his/her dean.

Advising notes: If there is content in the essay that causes concern (for example, the student's goals are not achievable in the program he/she is applying for, please provide this information to the graduate recruiter for follow-up or follow-up with the student yourself. If the student is admitted but there are concerns with his/her writing skills, please refer the student to the Writing Center for assistance.