

Grading Quickmarks

I'll use this series of abbreviations for marking your written work. When you receive your graded written work back, I encourage you to take some time to review the marks and any comments and plan for how you will improve on subsequent assignments. Feel free to schedule an appointment with me to review your work and your plan for improving. Recall that I have posted various resources addressing writing philosophy essays:

- [Reading and Writing Resources](#)
- [Grading Rubric for Philosophy Essays](#)

I also encourage you to consider visiting [YCP's Writing Center](#).

Higher Order Matters

T	Thesis	Your essay lacks a clear and well-defined thesis or your thesis is not appropriate to the specific writing task. Philosophical writing should be thesis-driven and it's usually a good idea to state your thesis early in your essay. The thesis should address the main issue of the writing scenario and is generally clearly presented in the introduction of the essay.
D	Develop	You're making a good point that needs to be further developed. Your ideas may be expressed too elliptically to be fully intelligible. Don't rush from one point to another without fully developing your ideas.
IS	Issue	You have strayed from the assigned issue. Keep your core issue in mind, as defined by your thesis, and consider whether the point you are making is relevant to that issue.
S	Support	A claim you have made is not acceptable at face value and may need support in the form of a subargument or further clarifying claims. What is your evidence for a claim? Is there additional support you might bring to bear on this point?
W	Weak	An argument that you have made is weak and not persuasive; the claims are either unacceptable or provide little support for your thesis.
B	Begs the question	A claim you have made begs the question, simply reiterating in slightly different language the thesis of your essay. Are you really advancing your argument in this case? It is not uncommon for beginning arguers to simply restate their thesis in different words, rather than present evidence in support of their thesis.
NO	No	A claim that you have made is wrong. You have made a factual error or misunderstood what a philosopher has said or a philosophical theory claims. Review the source material and your notes and make sure you are being accurate.
R	Relevance	You have not demonstrated how a claim or argument is relevant to your thesis or the argument you should be developing.

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I	Inconsistent	You have made inconsistent or contradictory claims that don't hang together properly. Our writing should be free of both explicit and implicit inconsistencies.
Q	Questions	You raised a good question (or questions), but you haven't attempted an answer. Don't argue by simply raising questions. Make claims and develop arguments.
E	Elaborate	You need to elaborate on a point you are making.

Writing Matters: These areas might indicate that you should work with a tutor in the Writing Center.

You should strive to present your ideas clearly and concisely, avoiding vague and ambiguous language and using well-defined terms and examples. Your essay should be virtually free of problems related to spelling, punctuation, grammar, and syntax.

O	Organization	What is the overall structure of your essay? Consider the order of points you are making and whether your essay might be revised to improve the logical flow of your ideas. A good philosophy essay will have an introduction that states the thesis and briefly provides an overview of the argument, a body that logically develops the key arguments, and a conclusion that ties everything together.
Sp/G	Spelling and or Grammar Errors	Your paper has one or more spelling or grammatical errors that you should have identified and corrected. You might wish to use to Writing Center services to review these matters.
UC	Unclear	A claim or passage in your essay is vague or ambiguous or confusing. If it is vague you should use more precise and direct language. An ambiguous phrase or passage needed to be rewritten in order to be less clear. If it is confusing, consider how you might have simplified or rephrased the passage to clarify the train of thought.
C	Condense	A section or passage of your essay could have been condensed. Are the points you are making in this passage necessary? Do they serve some purpose in terms of your core argument?
Sum	Summarizing	This section of this essay may be too heavy on summary. Remember, the goal of a philosophical essay is to argue, not summarize or explain. Don't devote a substantial portion of your writing to summarizing plot or other people's arguments.
AKW	Awkward	You are employing an awkward sentence structure or writing style that deviates from standard English.
RP	Repetitious	You are repeating unnecessarily a claim or argument.
INT	Introduction	You have written a good, solid introduction to your essay.