The language and academic literacies rubrics are designed to assist RMIT teaching staff to give practical advice to students on their language and academic skills. Teachers can use the language and literacies rubrics to provide targeted feedback to students. This feedback aims to support students in the development of their academic writing.

## Why use the language and academic literacies rubric?

The rubric is based on the premise that academic literacies are best developed within contexts that are meaningful and relevant to students. Given that assessment is a key focus for students, the purpose of the rubric is to assist lecturers to support students to understand what is expected of them in their assessments. The rubric is based on the following academic writing ‘inverted triangle mode’ which demonstrates that there is hierarchy of academic literacies in assignment tasks.

## The academic writing hierarchy triangle



Higher order skills: can be supported by the lecturer using the rubric, models, examples and practice activities

e.g. Learning Lab

**Lower order skills:**

mainly a student responsibility, with general feedback from the lecturer

Adapted from UniSA Learning Connection: a guide for staff

The academic writing triangle shows the importance of the higher order skills of understanding and addressing the purpose (i.e. the assignment question), using an acceptable structure, and integrating evidence from appropriate sources. Explicit feedback using the rubric can give students specific advice on their academic writing skills. As feedback is highly valued by students it is anticipated that use of the rubric could support positive GTS scores.

## How to use the rubric to support your teaching

The writing skills rubric can be adapted to any assignment and is intended to be used as a template only. In tutorials or lectures:

* Show students the academic writing triangle and explain the relative importance of each of the academic writing skills areas.
* Show the rubric, how you have contextualised it to your assignment and explain the criteria. Most of your criteria will fit into the first section (Purpose) of the rubric. You may want to add other criteria categories here.
* Highlight to students the resources from the Learning Lab that have models of specific skills (far right column). For example, if you are not sure how to structure an essay look at the [essay structure tutorial](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/essay-structure) on the Learning Lab.

## Academic writing skills rubric – generic

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Task response | Task questions | Good response | ✓ | Links |
| **Purpose**  Understanding and addressing the task | Has the student understood the task and covered the key points? / Does the response adequately address the topic and task? | Appropriate, relevant  Key points covered |  | [Planning an assignment](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/plan-your-assignment) |
| **Structure**   * argument * introduction * conclusion * +paragraphs | Is there a clear structure to the response?  Introduction,  body and conclusion?  Do the paragraphs contain one main idea that is explored using relevant evidence? | Clear argument  Easy to follow  Context , topic and main ideas  Summing up  Paragraphs - 1 main idea (topic sentence)  Linked to overall idea |  | [Essay structure](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/sites/emedia.rmit.edu.au.learninglab/files/essay%20writing.pdf)  [Quicktip](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/sites/emedia.rmit.edu.au.learninglab/files/essay%20writing.pdf)  [Essay structure](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/essay-structuref)  [Tutorial](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/essay-structuref) |
| **Research**  Integrating evidence -Paraphrasing/ synthesising  Referencing, citing | Is there evidence of research?  Is it properly referenced?  Are source materials properly integrated and referenced in-text? | Information paraphrased and synthesised in own words; quotes used sparingly  Information is correctly referenced – in both in-text and in reference list |  | [Paraphrasing](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/what-paraphrasing)  [Paraphrasing tutorial](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/paraphrasing-tutorial)  [Integrating references](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/paraphrasing-tutorial)  [Referencing -](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/integrate-references) |
| **Sentences**  Grammar  Vocabulary  Spelling | Is there a range of vocabulary? Are sentences grammatically correct? Are sentences accurate and complete?  Has a spell check been used?  Is spelling accurate? | Range of sentences  Few errors  Good use of appropriate words  Correct spelling |  | [Sentence construction](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/sentence-construction-0)  [Spelling](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/sentence-construction-0) |
| **Feedback** |  | Writing communicates meaning clearly and achieves purpose of the task |  | [Editing writing](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/sites/emedia.rmit.edu.au.learninglab/files/editing_writing.pdf) |

## Essay writing rubric

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Task response | Good response | ✓ | Satisfactory response | ✓ | Unsatisfactory response | ✓ | Links |
| **Purpose**  Understanding and addressing the task | Appropriate, relevant  Key points covered |  | Understands the task and the information but not all key points are included or fully developed |  | Not demonstrated an understanding of the topic  Information often inaccurate or irrelevant |  | [Planning and assignment](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/plan-your-assignment) |
| **Structure**   * argument * introduction * conclusion * paragraphs | Easy to follow   * Clear argument * Context, topic and main ideas * Summing up * One main idea (in a topic sentence); linked to overall idea |  | Not always easy to follow   * Evidence of an overall argument, * does not address the three main areas adequately * Conclusion attempted but does not appropriately sum up the argument presented; main idea not always clear |  | Difficult to follow   * argument attempted but * does not fully address the context, topic and main ideas * no clear conclusion * lacks a main idea |  | [Essay structure](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/sites/emedia.rmit.edu.au.learninglab/files/essay%20writing.pdf)  [Quicktip](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/sites/emedia.rmit.edu.au.learninglab/files/essay%20writing.pdf)  [Essay structure](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/essay-structuref)  [Tutorial](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/essay-structuref) |
| **Research**  Integrating evidence Paraphrasing/ synthesising  Referencing  citing | Paraphrases and synthesises information in own words; Quotes used sparingly  Information is correctly referenced –in-text and in reference list |  | Some ability to express ideas in own words  Aware of required system and how it should be used |  | Relies heavily on words and passages copied from texts  Referencing requirements not followed |  | [Paraphrasing](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/what-paraphrasing)  [Paraphrasing tutorial](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/paraphrasing-tutorial)  [Integrating references](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/paraphrasing-tutorial)  [Referencing -](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/integrate-references) |
| **Sentences**  **Grammar**  **Vocabulary**  **Spelling** | Range of sentences  Few errors  Good use of appropriate words  Correct |  | Some errors but do not interfere with meaning  Vocabulary adequate for the task occasional errors. Some difficulty with subject-specific words, terms  Generally correct, some errors |  | Errors are frequent, making understanding difficult  Limited vocabulary, words often incorrect or incorrectly used  Numerous errors, spell check not used |  | [Sentence construction](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/sentence-construction-0)  [Spelling](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/sentence-construction-0) |
| **Feedback** | Writing communicates meaning clearly and achieves purpose of the task |  | Writing generally communicates effectively but logic and meaning not always clear |  | Logic and meaning not clear |  |  |

## Report rubric

| Task response | Good response | ✓ | Satisfactory response | ✓ | Unsatisfactory response | ✓ | Links |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Purpose**  Understanding and addressing the task | Appropriate, relevant  Key points covered |  | Understands the task and the information but not all key points are included or fully developed |  | Not demonstrated understanding of the topic  Information often inaccurate or irrelevant |  | [Learning Lab reports](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/reports-tutorial)  [Sample report](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/example) |
| **Structure**  Uses appropriate report structure | Uses appropriate report structure |  | Uses report structure but not all appropriate |  | Does not use appropriate report structure |  |  |
| **Format**  Sections | Appropriate sections with headings |  | Sections generally appropriate but some gaps |  | Does not address all sections adequately |  |  |
| **Executive summary**  Summarises whole report -all main sections | Format generally consistent  Summarises whole report |  | Format generally consistent but gaps  attempts to summarise whole report with some gaps |  | Format inconsistent  does not summarise whole report  does not cover all main sections |  | [Executive summary and introduction](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/beginning) |
| **Introduction**  outlines context, introduces topic, states purpose | Context, topic and purpose |  | Does not address the three main areas (context, topic and purpose)  adequately |  | Does not address the context, topic and purpose |  |  |
| **The main section/s:** findings, discussion, etc. | Clear sections in paragraphs with appropriate subheadings |  | Information in sections with some lack of clarity or accuracy in paragraphs and subheadings |  | Insufficient structure and clarity in sections and subheadings |  | [Results/discussion- paragraphs, analysing and integrating evidence](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/resultsdiscussion) |
| **Conclusion** | Sums up report |  | Conclusion attempted but does not appropriately sum up findings |  | No clear conclusion |  | [Conclusion and recommendations](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/conclusion-2) |
| **Recommendations** | Clearly outlines further actions |  | Outlines further action but needs clarity and/or not linked to the conclusion |  | Does not clearly outline appropriate further actions |  |  |
| **Paragraphs** | One main idea in each paragraph (in a topic sentence); linked to overall idea |  | Main idea of paragraph not always clear; |  | Lacks a main idea in most paragraphs; sections with wrong information |  | [Results/discussion- paragraphs, analysing and integrating evidence](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/resultsdiscussion) |
| **Research**  Integrating evidence: paraphrasing/ synthesising | Paraphrases, synthesises information in own words; quotes used sparingly |  | Some ability to express ideas in own words |  | Relies heavily on words and passages copied from texts |  |  |
| **Referencing,** citing | Information is correctly referenced – both in-text and in reference list |  | Aware of required system and how it should be used; some inaccuracies |  | Referencing requirements not followed |  | [Integrating references](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/integrate-references) |
| **Sentences**, grammar | Range of sentences  Grammar appropriate to communicate meaning clearly; few errors - do not detract from meaning |  | Grammar generally appropriate to communicate meaning clearly; some errors |  | Errors are frequent, making understanding difficult |  | [Sentences](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/writing-sentences) |
| **Vocabulary,**  spelling and punctuation | Uses appropriate vocabulary  Spelling and punctuation accurate; carefully checked |  | Vocabulary adequate; occasional errors using subject-specific words/terms  Spelling and punctuation generally accurate; some errors requiring more careful checking |  | Limited vocabulary, words often incorrect or incorrectly used  Numerous errors, spell check not used |  | [Academic word list tool](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/academic-word-list-tool)  [Spelling](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/spelling-tutorial) |
| **Feedback** | Writing communicates meaning clearly and achieves purpose of the task |  | Writing generally communicates effectively but logic and meaning not always clear |  | Logic and meaning not clear |  |  |

## Oral presentation rubric – Structure

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Task response | Good response | ✓ | Satisfactory response | ✓ | Unsatisfactory response | ✓ | Links |
| **Structure and content** | Appropriate structure and organisation |  | Generally appropriate structure and organisation some parts difficult to follow |  | Structure and organisation not appropriate –difficult to follow |  | [Oral presentations](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/oral-presentations-tutorial) |
| **Introduction** | Outlines context, topic and content |  | Outlines context, topic and content but not all clear |  | Does not outline context, topic and content |  | [Oral presentation structure](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/structure) |
| **Body** | Main ideas logical & clear |  | Main ideas generally clear  Some lack of clarity |  | Does not clearly address main ideas |  |  |
| **Conclusion** | Sums up topic well |  | Generally sums up topic well |  | Does not sum up – no clear conclusion |  |  |
| **Evidence** | Appropriately paraphrases & references |  | Generally appropriately paraphrases & references |  | Relies on information copied from texts; not appropriately referenced |  |  |

## Oral presentation rubric – Delivery

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Task response | | Good response | ✓ | Satisfactory response | ✓ | Unsatisfactory response | ✓ | Links |
| **Use of notes / slides** | Notes used well | |  | Notes / slides used more than necessary |  | Overuse of notes  Read rather than talked |  | [Oral presentations- presenting](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/presenting) |
| **Volume and clarity of expression** | Clear, easy to hear and understand; appropriate expression for oral presentation | |  | Mainly clear ; appropriate expression – errors do not detract from meaning |  | Difficult to understand; inappropriate words and expression for oral presentation |  |  |
| **Timing** | Timing enhances meaning, suitable pauses | |  | Mostly well timed; could pause |  | Too fast/slow; timing detracts from meaning |  |  |
| **Eye contact & body language** | Eye contact consistent | |  | Eye contact but not necessarily inclusive |  | Little eye contact with audience |  |  |
| **Audience engagement** | Confident and enthusiastic presentation | |  | Lack of confidence affects audience engagement |  | Audience not engaged |  | [Engaging the audience](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/engagement) |
| **Use of visual aids** | Enhance the presentation | |  | Enhance the presentation; occasionally distracting |  | Not relevant – distract rather than add to the presentation |  |  |

## Reflective journal rubric

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Task response | Good response | ✓ | Satisfactory response | ✓ | Unsatisfactory response | ✓ | Links |
| **Purpose**  Understanding and addressing the task | Understood and addressed task  Information is appropriate and relevant  Key points organised to illustrate points being made |  | Has understood the task but points selected are not always relevant or fully discussed |  | Has not understood the nature of the task. Relies on information copied from texts |  | [Reflective journal](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/reflective-journal) |
| **Structure and content** | Well structured, easy to follow  Addressed the task |  | Some structure but information not always presented in a logical order |  | Information randomly presented  No sense of structure |  | [Reflective journal .pdf](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/sites/emedia.rmit.edu.au.learninglab/files/Reflective%20journal.pdf) |
| **Introduction** | Context and purpose – identified and clearly described |  | Context and purpose introduced but need further clarification |  | Context and purpose – not clear |  |  |
| **Paragraphs** | Main ideas expressed in clear topic sentences  Theory integrated to demonstrate how it informed practice |  | Main ideas not always clear or fully supported  Evidence of research but its applicability and value flawed |  | Main ideas not clearly defined  Relevant research - not used to inform analysis |  | [Paragraphs](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/paragraphs)  [Integrating references](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/integrate-references) |
| **Conclusion** | Learning and the benefit of reflection well summarised |  | Basic summary of the benefits of the reflection |  | Reflection lacks evidence of personal growth |  | [Conclusion](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/conclusion-1) |
| **Reflection** | Theory well integrated to indicate how it has and will inform behaviour and thinking |  | Evidence of research and thinking |  | Evaluation of experience lacking |  | [Reflective journal](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/reflective-journal) |
| **Sentences**  **Grammar** | Range of sentences  Few errors |  | Errors do not interfere with meaning |  | Errors are frequent, often making understanding difficult |  | [Sentence construction](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/sentence-construction-) |
| **Vocabulary** | Demonstrated knowledge of key vocabulary |  | Vocabulary adequate for the task  Subject specific vocabulary not fully utilised |  | Limited vocabulary, no use made of specialised course vocabulary |  | [Academic word list tool](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/academic-word-list-tool) |
| **Spelling** | Correct |  | Occasional errors |  | Numerous errors  Spellcheck not used |  | [Spelling](http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/spelling-0) |
| **Feedback** | Reflection structured and clearly written  Has reflected on the experience and indicated its implications for the future |  | Has benefitted from the experience but not adequately used learning and research  Shown some insight into future relevance |  | Writing does not show evidence of personal learning  Ideas not clearly expressed  Structure lacking |  |  |