



As a crucial task in the editing process, a self-assessment is a thorough and careful review of the elements of your completed essay. Its purpose is to determine if your draft satisfies the expectations for college-level academic writing. The insights gained from this task then direct the rewriting that should follow.

To complete a self-assessment, writers look for and evaluate concrete components in their drafts: purpose, focus, thesis, topic sentences, paragraph structure, logical development, format, etc. They actually mark these elements on their drafts to confirm strengths, identify weaknesses or oversights, and establish a purposeful rewriting plan before submitting their final copies.

The Assignment

- In what way does the paper fulfill the assignment's purpose? Does it adhere to stated guidelines?
- Does the paper satisfy the expected length?

Focus, Structure & Development

- **Box the introduction.** Does the intro begin with an engaging opening sentence or hook, provide an overview of the ideas to follow, and contain a clear, concrete and specific thesis statement? **Underline the thesis.** What claim, position, or stance does the thesis present on the focused subject?
- **Box the conclusion;** underline the echo that reminds readers of the essay's thesis.
- **Circle the topic sentence** of each major section or paragraph in the body. On the back of the essay, list the main points or ideas presented in the paper. Then confirm that each topic sentence addresses an aspect of the thesis.
- Are the main ideas of the essay **organized in a logical and effective sequence?** What is that sequence?
- **Count the number of body paragraphs.** Count the number of sentences in each paragraph. Are these numbers proportional or dis-proportional? An essay should contain a sequence of paragraphs varying

Assessing an APA *Final Draft*

in length that creates a sense of balance among the major ideas. Should some paragraphs be combined? Should some paragraphs be broken into separate paragraphs?

- Does each paragraph develop its main idea with **concrete and specific evidence?** Does each paragraph **clarify how its main point** supports the thesis?
- **Check the transitions,** the bridges that connect ideas within and between paragraphs.

Format

- Is the essay printed on good quality 8-1/2" by 11" white paper? Is it produced in a standard font (New Times Roman or Helvetica) in the appropriate size (11 or 12)?
- Have you left **one-inch margins** on all sides of the page? Have you **aligned the text on the left margin?**
- Have you **double spaced** the title page, the abstract, the body, the quotations, and list of references in the essay?
- Is each paragraph indented 5 spaces (1/2 inch)?
- Does the **title page** have a proper APA running head that contains an abbreviated title with no more than 50 characters? Is the header all capitalized? For example — Running head: STAGES OF ADULT DEVELOPMENT (for page 1), then just use the abbreviated title.
- Is the running APA running head flush with the **left margin** on the title page?
- Is the **page number** (starting on the title page) in the header flush with the **right margin?**
- On your **title page,** is your title centered in the top half of your title page?
- Have you **capitalized the title** (except for *a, an, the,* prepositions such as *to, from,* and *between* or coordinating conjunctions such as *and, but, or*)?
- Is your name centered below the title? Is **Gateway Community College** centered below your name?
- Do you have an **Abstract** if required? This is a brief, comprehensive summary of your research essay and comes after the title page.