

M.Ed. Curriculum and Instruction, Reading Education

Writing Sample Requirements for GRE Alternative Admissions

Student seeking alternative admission to the M.Ed. in Curriculum & Instruction – Reading Education may choose to submit transcripts for two program-required courses indicating an earned grade of B+ or better in lieu of submitting GRE scores. The required courses are *EDIS 7700: Reading Foundations for Diverse Learners* and *EDIS 7720: Understanding the Code*. A writing sample is required from every applicant seeking admission through this alternative procedure.

The writing sample is designed to demonstrate your ability to work in an academic graduate program. It must be your own original and independent work. You may adapt your sample from work that you have already written for one of your prerequisite courses. If you are new to academic writing, or out of practice, you may find [this resource from the UVA library website](#) helpful. If you have questions about the writing sample or the alternative admissions process to the Reading M.Ed. program, please contact Emma Pearson (ecp4ey@virginia.edu).

Instructions:

Compose a 3-4 page essay that discusses your position on a current issue in the field of reading that affects your teaching. The writing sample should briefly describe the issue, critically analyze both sides of the issue, and clearly espouse a point of view. You must support your viewpoint with appropriate vocabulary, details, and sources.

Writing Sample Specifications

1. APA Style (7th edition): typed, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman font, appropriate headings, etc.
2. Title page
3. Body (3-4 pages)
4. No abstract
5. In-text citations (minimum of 4)
6. References list (at least 4-6 sources). You should select quality resources that are credible and appropriate for your topic. With the exception of optionally including one seminal resource that may be more dated, your resources should also be recent (generally from about the past 10 years or so).

Writing Sample Rubric

Criteria	Meets High Expectations	Meets Expectations	Approaching Expectations	Below Expectations
Academic Writing Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing is consistently strong, with engaging and compelling voice, tone, language, sentence fluency, grammar, mechanics, organization, and transitions. • Writing reflects nearly flawless use of APA style. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing is generally strong, with effective voice, tone, language, sentence fluency, grammar, mechanics, organization, and transitions. • Writing includes relatively few/minor APA style errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing needs minor improvement in one or more areas including voice, tone, language, sentence fluency, grammar, mechanics, organization, and transitions. • Writing includes several APA errors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing needs significant improvement in one or more areas including voice, tone, language, sentence fluency, grammar, mechanics, organization, and transitions. • Writing includes numerous APA errors or does not attempt to use APA style.
Content/Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controversy/issue is clearly described and explicitly connected to the field of reading • Critical analysis thoroughly details both sides of the issue. • Argument is explicitly stated and consistent throughout. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controversy/issue is described and relates to the field of reading. • Critical analysis details both sides of the issue. • Argument is stated and is generally consistent throughout. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controversy/issue is generally described; connection to the field of reading is somewhat unclear. • Critical analysis includes some details from both sides of the issue. • Argument can be easily inferred, but may be somewhat inconsistent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controversy/issue is not clearly described or related to the field of reading. • Critical analysis is underdeveloped or focuses mainly on a single side of the issue. • Argument is unclear or inconsistent.
Argument/Evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas are well-supported throughout, reflecting strong critical thinking. • Connection between ideas and evidence is clear and explicit. • Evidence is synthesized from across variety of several appropriate, recent, and credible sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas are consistently supported with evidence, reflecting critical thinking. • Connection between ideas and evidence is clear or can be inferred. • Evidence is drawn from a variety of sources that are recent, appropriate, and credible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some ideas need additional supporting evidence or reflect minor flaws in critical thinking. • Connection between ideas and evidence is sometimes unclear. • Evidence is drawn from multiple sources, some of which are a bit dated or may have questionable credibility or appropriateness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas are generally underdeveloped, lack sufficient supporting evidence, or reflect major flaws in critical thinking. • Connection between ideas and evidence is often unclear. • Evidence is drawn from a limited number of resources or from resources that are mostly outdated or otherwise inappropriate.