

Carson-Newman University Doctoral Writing Screener Rubric

Applicant Name _____

Directions: Score each criterion using the descriptors below. This rubric may be used for admissions review, conditional admission decisions, or diagnostic placement for writing support.

Criteria	Does Not Demonstrate Readiness (7 points)	Developing Readiness: Significant Support Needed (8 points)	Approaching Readiness: Minor Support Needed (9.5 points)	Demonstrates Readiness (10 points)	Points
1. Professional Writing	Tone is unclear, informal, or not appropriate for doctoral-level review.	Emerging professional tone is evident, but major revision is needed in clarity, focus, word choice, or academic expression.	Professional tone is evident. Minor revision is needed for precision, maturity, or consistency of voice.	Writing is clear, polished, professional, and appropriate for doctoral-level work.	
2. Organization and Coherence	Structure is unclear. Ideas are difficult to follow or insufficiently developed.	Some structure is present, but major revision is needed in development, sequencing, transitions, or coherence.	Organization is generally clear. Minor revision is needed for transitions, paragraph focus, or flow.	Writing is well organized and coherent. Ideas progress logically.	
3. Grammar, Mechanics, and Usage	Frequent errors interfere with meaning and weaken credibility.	Recurring errors are noticeable. Major revision is needed in grammar, punctuation, mechanics, usage, or sentence control.	Errors are present but do not substantially interfere with meaning. Minor editing is needed.	Grammar, mechanics, punctuation, spelling, usage, and sentence structure are controlled and polished.	
4. Critical Thinking and Analysis	Response relies on description, summary, or unsupported opinion. Analysis is limited.	Some reasoning is evident, but major revision is needed to strengthen analysis, depth, evaluation, or application.	Sound reasoning and some analyses are evident. Minor revision is needed for depth, nuance, or application.	Response demonstrates strong critical thinking, analysis, evaluation, and application.	
5. Research Skills and Source Use	Limited readiness is shown in using scholarly sources, evidence, attribution, or source evaluation.	Emerging research readiness is evident, but major revision is needed in evidence use, attribution, planning, or source evaluation.	Developing research readiness is evident. Minor revision is needed in evidence use, attribution, questions, or source evaluation.	Response shows readiness to use scholarly evidence, attribute ideas responsibly, form researchable questions, and evaluate sources.	
6. Doctoral Readiness	Response does not yet show readiness for doctoral writing, reading, research, revision, or persistence.	Potential is evident, but major support is needed in writing, scholarly habits, or readiness for advanced work.	General readiness is evident. Minor support may be needed in writing, research habits, or revision.	Response shows strong doctoral readiness, including maturity, reflection, scholarly discipline, and readiness for revision.	

Comments: _____

TOTAL POINTS: _____

Suggested Score Interpretation

Total Score	Average Score	Suggested Interpretation
57-60	9.5-10	Pass: Applicant demonstrates readiness for doctoral-level writing expectations.
48-56.5	8.0-9.4	Progressing: Applicant may be admitted with recommended or required writing support.
42-47.5	7.0-7.9	Does Not Pass: Applicant does not yet demonstrate sufficient doctoral writing readiness.

Note. To determine the average score, divide the total points by 6.