

Assessment guidelines

ENG4429 Life writing in English

The form of assessment is a term paper of approximately 10 pages (a standard page consists of 2,300 characters), plus references and bibliography. The term paper must follow further guidelines distributed in Canvas (“How to create a strong thesis statement” and “Term paper guidelines”). Note that the thesis statement must be approved *in advance* by the teacher of the course (mandatory assignment submitted by a given date).

Grading criteria

Term papers will be marked holistically, with no specific percentage of marks for any one aspect. Instead, the marker will be making an overall judgement of the quality of the piece of work as a whole. Weaknesses in one area of the criteria may be compensated for by particular skill in another, and vice versa.

Good:

1. Work at the highest levels will present a precise and sophisticated thesis statement backed up by relevant evidence and logical and convincing argumentation.
2. The paper has a clear structure from beginning to end. The argument progresses logically from one paragraph and section to the next, until it reaches a conclusion. The various points made are relevant to the thesis statement and problem under consideration.
3. The student engages in detailed analysis, developing a critical and independent argument about the topic, problematic, or question(s) announced in the initial thesis.
4. The essay discusses relevant secondary literature and theory, with due references, as part of an independent and critical argument.
5. Written in a scholarly prose style of a high standard, with no mistakes of grammar or spelling.
6. References to primary and secondary literature are given in a correct and consistent format, with complete footnotes/in-text references and bibliography.

Average:

1. Includes a central thesis, which assumes the form of an argument and is for the most part sustained throughout.
2. The essay adopts a clear structure and the points made are relevant to the problem under consideration throughout.
3. The essay engages in analysis, and presents and to some extent develops the student’s own ideas.
4. The essay demonstrates some awareness of relevant criticism and theory.

5. For the most part written in correct English, with only minor mistakes of grammar or spelling.
6. The references and bibliography are, for the most part, correctly formatted and sufficiently detailed.

Poor:

1. The thesis statement and overall argument are excessively general or vague, or lack substantiating evidence.
2. The structure lacks logic, and the points made are occasionally irrelevant to the overall argument or problem under consideration.
3. The essay rarely engages in analysis, limiting itself to paraphrases of the texts or theories in question.
4. There are very few references to relevant secondary literature, and there may be inaccurate or incomplete presentation of others' ideas.
5. There are errors in grammar and spelling, though these do not prevent understanding of the essay text.
6. The bibliography and references are incorrectly formatted or lack essential information.

Unacceptable:

1. The essay lacks a thesis statement.
2. The structure is illogical and confusing. The points made lack relevance.
3. The essay lacks analysis, simply providing more or less adequate paraphrases of the texts in question.
4. The essay does not engage with relevant secondary literature.
5. The essay is poorly written with numerous errors of grammar and spelling.
6. The bibliography and references are non-existent or incomplete.