# Superintendent’s Memo #311-20

[](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/index.shtml)  
**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA   
Department of Education**

DATE: November 20, 2020

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT: *Emergency Guidelines for the Use of Local Performance Assessments to Verify Credits in Writing* *for the 2020-2021 School Year*

The Virginia Board of Education approved the [*Emergency**Guidelines for the Use of Local Performance Assessments to Verify Credits in Writing* *for the 2020-2021 School Year*](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/local_assessments/lpa-verify-credits-20-21/emer-guide-perf-assessment-eocw.docx)at its meeting on November 19, 2020. These *Emergency Guidelines* provide additional flexibility to local school divisions by temporarily revising the requirements for the location in which students complete their writing samples and in the specifics regarding who can score an individual student’s writing sample. These *Emergency Guidelines* are meant to supplement the *Guidelines for the Use of Local Performance Assessments to Verify Credits in Writing*, which remain in effect for the purpose of awarding verified units of credit before and beyond the 2020-2021 school year.

The *Emergency Guidelines* generally apply to one writing sample collected during the 2020-2021 school year for inclusion in a student's collection of evidence (also “body of evidence”) used to verify a credit in writing. As an exception to this provision, school divisions that were unable to collect a writing sample during the spring 2020 semester due to the emergency school closures may collect no more than two writing samples during the 2020-2021 school year under the flexibility extended by these *Emergency Guidelines.*

The [Verified Credit Plan form for End-of-Course Writing](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/local_assessments/lpa-verify-credits-20-21/verified-credit-plan-form.docx) has been updated to reflect these *Emergency Guidelines* and may be used by school divisions during the 2020-2021 school year. School divisions that have previously completed a Verified Credit Plan for End-of-Course Writing for 2020-2021 must update their plan if they elect to adhere to the *Emergency Guidelines*, or they may choose to continue to adhere to the *Guidelines for the Use of Local Performance Assessments to Verify Credits in Writing* and maintain the previously developed plan for 2020-2021.

School divisions that previously indicated their intent to use the End-of-Course Writing Standards of Learning test to verify credits during the 2020-2021 school year that would now like to exercise the option to use performance assessments under the provisions of the *Emergency Guidelines* should contact student assessment staff at [student\_assessment@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:student_assessment@doe.virginia.gov) for assistance in updating this information.

Visit the [Local Performance Assessment](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/english/index.shtml#local) section of the [English SOL](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/english/index.shtml) web page for the list of resources designed to support school divisions in the implementation of performance assessments for verified credits in writing. A new section that includes the documents related to these *Emergency Guidelines* has been added for convenience.

Questions about the guidelines should be addressed to the student assessment staff at [student\_assessment@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:student_assessment@doe.virginia.gov) or by phone at (804) 225-2102.  Questions or comments about the sample assessment tasks or the common rubric referenced in the guidelines should be addressed to Jill Nogueras, English Coordinator, at [jill.nogueras@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:jill.nogueras@doe.virginia.gov) or by phone at (804) 225-2227.

JFL/SLR/as