**Virginia Board of Education Guidelines for the Use of Local   
Performance Assessments to Verify Credits in Writing:   
Implementation Support for 2018-2019**

On September 20, 2018, the Virginia Board of Education approved [*Guidelines for the Use of Local Performance Assessments to Verify Credits in Writing*](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/32322/638047186913170000), as announced in [Superintendent’s Memo #266-18](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/37945/638060879330300000). Based on questions received on implementation for the 2018-2019 school year, additional guidance for administering and scoring the local performance assessments used to verify credits in writing has been developed to assist school divisions that have chosen this option.

# Student Completion of Work Samples:

The [*Guidelines for the Use of Local Performance Assessments to Verify Credits in Writing*](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/32322/638047186913170000) state:

All writing samples collected for the purpose of verifying a credit in writing must be completed at school under the supervision of school personnel. Writing samples must be completed independently by the student.

Any writing sample included in a student’s body of evidence to be scored for a verified credit must have been completed independently by the student, without assistance from any person. Assistance includes, but is not limited to, teacher and/or peer feedback on a rough draft.

During classroom instruction, students should receive constructive feedback as part of the writing process and as *preparation* for completing the writing samples used for verified credit. Much like taking an exam after receiving classroom instruction and teacher feedback on previously completed work, the student will write and revise independently each writing sample that will be considered in determining whether the student will receive a verified credit. Any feedback provided that is then used by the student to edit or improve the draft would mean the student is not completing the task independently; as such, writing samples that have been revised after receiving feedback would not be included in the body of evidence used to verify a credit in writing.

The research process is not evaluated using the writing rubrics, so it may be completed in a collaborative setting or with teacher guidance and feedback. However, if students are demonstrating their ability to effectively apply research for this assessment, they must independently embed into their writing the information gathered during the research process. They may bring and use their research/annotated passages to the performance assessment to complete the task.

If a student’s work sample does not meet expectations, a teacher might use that sample to provide feedback and continued instruction. The student may then complete another task on a similar or different topic. The new task could be related to the research or background work the student completed so the student can utilize previously compiled research or information, but it must not be the original task.

# Testing Conditions:

Testing conditions for the performance assessment will vary, and conditions will be different than traditional, standardized Standards of Learning (SOL) testing conditions. For instance, it is not expected that curricular materials be removed from the test setting or that students complete all writing samples within a single testing window or class period. Students may use spell check or dictionaries. The school division and individual school staff will determine what conditions will best ensure that students complete their writing samples independently while at school and under the supervision of school personnel.

School divisions must determine the processes and procedures they will use to ensure that the guidelines and expectations for the local performance assessments used to verify credits in writing are followed with fidelity, including that students are not being provided assistance or working outside the school environment.

# Scoring Tasks and Bodies of Evidence for 2018-2019:

Each piece of evidence to be included in the body of evidence used to verify a credit in writing must be scored by a trained and qualified scorer. A teacher may not score work completed by students under his or her supervision or instruction. Teachers who do not qualify as scorers should not be permitted to assign scores independently; if used as scorers, they are to be paired with qualified scorers, or a qualified scorer may check their scores.

[Understand Scoring](https://va.scoring.pearsonassessments.com/understandscoring/) is a web-based application that is provided for use by Virginia educators and should be used to train and qualify scorers. To create a profile and access the application, use the Sign Up option at the top right of the opening screen and enter the keyword *Virginia*.

Individual tasks will be scored according to the EOC Writing Rubric for the 2010 SOL. The student’s final body of evidence is evaluated according to the EOC Writing Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs) to determine if a verified credit is awarded. The rubric scores on individual writing samples and the PLD determination are independent, as there is no numerical score on the rubric that correlates with a Pass/Proficient or Advanced/College Path performance level from the PLDs.

Ninth and tenth grade classes starting their body of evidence with persuasive samples this year should also follow the guidelines above. Persuasive papers completed by ninth or tenth graders in the 2018-2019 school year for the body of evidence should also be scored this year using the 2010 EOC Writing Rubric by scorers who are trained on [Understand Scoring](https://va.scoring.pearsonassessments.com/understandscoring/).