THE OFFICIAL ASFP RUBRIC

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WHAT

This is the official rubric used by the Application Statement Feedback Program (ASFP) to guide the consistent and effective editing of psychology PhD application statements. We have developed this rubric over multiple years of training hundreds of editors to provide thousands of pieces of feedback to many hundreds of applicants. This rubric is current as of October 27, 2023. As graduate schools and their application processes change, this rubric may change as well! Check www.asfp.io for the most up-to-date version.

HOW

There are multiple ways to edit an application statement. This rubric facilitates feedback that is *high-level*, *actionable*, and is spread across *multiple distinct and critical components* of the application statement, all within a 30-minute timeframe for editors. ASFP Editors prioritize feedback in the areas that would most improve the statement.

IMPORTANT CAVEATS

No one editor's feedback is intended to cover everything that could be improved about a statement, nor be the final word on the statement. Applicants should remember their common sense, get multiple opinions, and respond both to individual editors' feedback, and to patterns in feedback that may emerge *across* editors. This rubric is also tailored for psychology PhD admissions processes in clinical, developmental, cognitive, and social programs - your mileage may vary with respect to other degrees and other domains. Additionally, while this rubric is the result of the accumulated experiences & perspectives of the people behind ASFP, we cannot guarantee that the rubric reflects what individual graduate mentors and programs look for. Finally, this rubric is only a small part of the training ASFP Editors receive and the work that ASFP does to ensure all applicants receive uniformly excellent and supportive feedback, and so will not be enough on its own to ensure effective, supportive, concrete editing support.

RUBRIC ORGANIZATION

The rubric organizes feedback into six important features of an application statement: introduction, organization, readiness & skills, fit, voice & style, and language, clarity, and technique. Below, you'll find "description" and "goal" notes for each of these six features that provide brief summaries of each feature and what it intends to achieve.

Good luck from all of us at ASFP!

INITIAL COMMENTS

- *Overview of feedback and any helpful context for interpreting feedback.*

STATEMENT INTRODUCTION

- *Description:* First 1-2 paragraphs of document.

- *Goal:* To immediately engage the reader, establish your main research interests, and create a narrative or framing for the statement as a whole to establish your goals as a psychological scientist (and clinician, if applicable).

- *Specific feedback:*

ORGANIZATION

- *Description:* How topics covered in the document are ordered and how clearly they're organized.

- *Goal:* To move the reader through the statement logically and thoughtfully (e.g., chronologically or thematically), with each topic/subsection clearly communicated to the reader.

- *Specific feedback:*

CONTENT: READINESS & SKILLS

- *Description:* The topics covered in the statement relevant to the applicant's prior training, experiences, and skill development.

- *Goal:* To highlight relevant experience/interests/skills with concrete examples and specific experiences. To clearly and effectively communicate the applicant's maturity, capacity, skills, prior experiences, prior products, and talents. *For Clinical Only*: This should include evidence that the applicant is prepared for the program's clinical requirements (e.g., coursework, clinical work, , and clinical research).

- *Specific feedback:*

CONTENT: FIT

- *Description:* The topics covered in the statement relevant to the applicant's fit with the program and mentor.

- *Goal:* To demonstrate understanding of and your fit with the specific school, mentor, and/or area of research. *For Clinical Only*: This should include evidence that the applicant is aware of, enthusiastic about, and a good fit for the program's clinical requirements.

- *Specific feedback:*

VOICE AND STYLE

-*Description:* How the applicant's story is communicated. The nuances of word choice, narrative, and vision.

- *Goal:* To provide the reader with a sense of you as a potential graduate student and scientist in a way that feels authentic and comfortable to you.

- *Specific feedback:*

LANGUAGE, CLARITY, & WRITING TECHNIQUE

-*Description:* The statement's spelling, grammar, word choice, and phrasing.

- *Goal:* To communicate clearly and effectively to your reader (e.g., avoid clichés/colloquialisms that may be unclear to broad audiences, use active language, avoid errors that may distract from comprehension, avoid vague statements).

- *Specific feedback:*

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- *Anything that doesn't fit into the categories above*