

LDL Qualifying Exam Literature Review Rubric Supplement

The following is a high-level checklist to help you self-assess your work prior to submission for all review cycles.

This checklist does not repeat everything found on our website, but it includes the most common reasons works are sent back.

Process

Work Submission and Review Process	Ensure that you follow the Work Submission and Review process at each step, as outlined on our website; review the steps each time. <i>This checklist document does not repeat everything found on our website</i>
Feedback	Heed advisor and/or peer feedback. Include change notes, while not line by line, but sufficient descriptions to help us to know what has changed since the last submission.
Re-Submission	Wait to resubmit until after peer feedback has come in. You can continue working on your next milestone while you wait.

Sources

Source Selection	Avoid cherry-picking sources to satisfy your agenda or assumptions.
Grouping sources by Theme	Do not pre-select theories and themes; instead allow the literature to reveal what these should be.
Primary Sources	Prioritize primary sources unless there is a specific reason to cite the second sources; instead, read the secondary source to make it become the primary source.
Sufficient number of sources	While we provide a minimum, don't stop there. If you are struggling to find sources, reach out to the Education librarian.
Study Context and Evidence	Elaborate on the context of the studies being cited. What, why, who, how? What were they examining? What was their purpose? Who were the participants and how many? How did they collect their data? What was the evidence/data that led to the claims being made?
Everything is cited	Avoid your readers needing to ask "Who said this?"
Avoid overuse of sources	Diversify your sources, especially within a given paragraph
Citing authors within the body of your work	Always check the latest version of APA, but it isn't necessary to spell out their full name (unless there are duplicate last names) nor is it necessary to state where they work or the name of the journal from which the source comes

Words

Evidence-based verbs	Refer to the Academic Phrasebook and our website for suggestions as well as words to avoid
Connecting Sources	Use relevant connecting words to link multiple sources together; Do not jump from one source to the next.
Word diversity	Avoid overuse of particular words, especially within the same paragraph
"Literature Reviewed"	When referring to the literature or existing research, always include the parameter of "the literature reviewed", this conveys that you are not generalizing beyond what you have read or have cited.
Acronyms	Avoid stand-alone acronyms unless you've received a waiver to use a particular one When using an acronym, you still need to spell it out each time.
Work Focus Terminology	Refer to the milestone at hand (i.e. General Field) and not "my study" or "my dissertation" until it becomes relevant to do so (later in the sequence) and <i>avoid your tentative research question or focus of the work being on a specific "side" of your topic, potentially indicating a closed mindset.</i>
Literature Review Terminology	This work is a literature review and not "a paper". During the early stages, it is not your dissertation. And while things will evolve, Chapter 2 will always be a literature review.
Third person or passive voice	Do not use first person; You can use third person or passive voice to avoid using first person
Eliminate unnecessary words	Avoid unnecessary words such as "in a study by...". Instead, you can simply say Source (year) examined....
Tables and Figures Naming Convention	Recommendation is to use chapter-based numbers (i.e. Figure 2.1, Figure 2.2, etc.) for ease of maintenance, but the key is to be consistent

Sentences

Topical Sentences	Include objective section and paragraph topical sentences to help your readers know the focus of a given section or paragraph. By focusing on what was examined (rather than what was found) you leave yourself open to all sides of the topic. Objectives means to avoid uncited claims. If you need to generalize as a part of your topical sentence, it must be followed by several specific examples. <i>Avoid the generalization of findings as much as possible, as this may indicate that you have cherry-picked your sources to present a finding that you agree with.</i>
Write in the Voice of the Literature	Avoid your voice being too prominent in the Literature Review; make sure it is always clear who is speaking - the literature or the student. Example: Source (year) claims...
Minimize Generalizations	If you must generalize, ensure proper evidence or justification follows and always use the parameter of "the literature reviewed"
Limited Usage of Direct Quotes	Direct quotes from sources are okay, but reserve them for things that truly can't be said any other way. Also avoid long lists copied and pasted.
Avoid your own judgment, assessment, opinion, or assumptions	Rely on what the literature has revealed. It is not necessary for you to comment on what the literature or has said or make a judgment of the literature.

Paragraphs

Start with a topical sentence	Start with topical sentences to help inform your reader of the purpose of the paragraph <i>See above</i>
Diversity of Sources	Avoid paragraphs dedicated to a single source
Synthesize the findings from your sources	Aim to be concise; avoid this feeling like an annotated bibliography
Establish relationships between multiple sources	Include connecting words to demonstrate the relevant relationship between sources; do not jump from source to source.
Voice of the Literature	Focuses on what the literature reveals, not what you want to say

Sections

Structure Tool	Sections and subsections should exist in Scholar to keep your work organized and to help your readers. Include placeholders for future main sections that will be relevant as you progress through the sequence. <i>Refer to the Work Submission and Review guidelines for specific requirements</i>
Topical Sentences	Start with topical sentences to help inform your reader of the purpose of the section
Note to Reviewers	Placed prior to the official start of your manuscript. Provides some background for your readers.
Change Notes	Placed prior to the official start of your manuscript. Provides a descriptive summary of what has changed since your last revision.
Word Document	Separate section in Scholar to attach the Word version of your manuscript.

Overall Manuscript

Proofread	Ensure that you and at least one other person has proofread your work. Check for overall writing quality, word choices, grammar, and overall flow. Procure a copy editor, if necessary.
Length	Word count alone is not used to evaluate your submissions but check the length and thoroughness of your work. (The Main body of the work is where the word count matters). Be thorough enough to represent the field, theory, or methodology.
Titles	Word document and Scholar titles follow our requested naming conventions, as found in the Work Submission and Review Guidelines
Focus	Ensure that the purpose of the current work is clear and is maintained throughout the work.
APA Style	Follow the latest APA style guide, especially for common items such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrative Citations vs. Parenthetical Citations (variation for authors, years, etc.) Article and Book Titles capitalization Italicize Journal Titles & Volumes (<i>remember: Scholar doesn't retain formatting</i>)