# Self-Assessment: Research Topics Grading Criteria

| **Criteria** | **Needs Work** | **Satisfactory** | **Exceptional** | **Comments** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Research Topics Evaluation Tool** | | | | |
| 1. **The research topic identifies, using well-focused terms appropriate to the field, the key concepts or a phenomenon to be investigated.** | The key concepts or phenomena are unspecified or not specified in field-appropriate terms. | The key concepts of the topic are stated, are field-appropriate, but need further focusing. | All elements are present and field-appropriate, well-focused, and concisely stated. |  |
| 1. **\*If more than one concept is to be investigated, the research topic specifies the relationship among the key concepts (if any).** | The relationship among concepts to be investigated is not stated. | The relationship among concepts to be investigated is stated, but is unclear. | The relationship among concepts to be investigated is clearly stated. |  |
| 1. **\*If only one phenomenon is to be investigated, the type of phenomenon is specified clearly.** | The type of phenomenon (experience, case, process, etc.) is not specified. | The type of phenomenon (experience, case, process, etc.) is specified, but needs clarification. | The type of phenomenon (experience, case, process, etc.) is clearly specified. |  |
| 1. **The research topic names the target population.** | The target population is not named. | The target population is named, but imprecisely or too broadly. | The target population is named and is well-defined and clear. |  |
| 1. **Grammar, usage, and mechanics are correct, with fewer than two errors in the document.** | The document contains more than two errors of grammar, usage, or mechanics. | The document contains one or two errors of grammar, usage, or mechanics. | The document contains no errors of grammar, usage, or mechanics. |  |
| 1. **Document format conforms to APA 6th Edition rules.** | The document has more than two errors in APA formatting. | The document contains one or two errors of APA formatting. | The document contains no errors of APA formatting. |  |
| 1. **There is a full APA-formatted reference list.** | There is no reference list, some items are missing, or it does not conform to APA format. | There is a full reference list and it conforms to APA format, with one or two errors. | There is a full reference list and it conforms to APA format with no errors. |  |

**Note:** If #2 (more than one concept is to be investigated) is applicable to the research topic, then #3 (only one phenomenon is to be investigated) is not applicable. If #3 is applicable to the research topic, then #2 is not applicable.