

Allen College APA Editorial Style Grading Key for 7<sup>th</sup> Edition  
Adapted from Daggett (2008)<sup>1</sup>

Grading Code	Type of Error	Explanation	APA Section
<b>Structural Elements</b>			
S1	Running head	Not required for student papers unless otherwise specified. Abbreviated version of paper title, maximum of 50 characters, upper case, flush left, opposite page number. Do not include abbreviations, but an ampersand (&) may be substituted for "and." Need not include exact words from full paper title, and words need not be in same order as words in full title. May consist of full title if it is 50 characters or less.	2.8
S2	Page numbers	Inserted in the header using word processing function, not typed using key board; positioned flush right typed in same font and font size as the rest of the paper; title page is page 1.	2.18
S3	Margins	1 in. on all sides.	2.22
S4	Spacing lines	Lines of text should be double-spaced throughout. The word processor's "Space before" and "Space after" settings should be set at 0 point to avoid extra space between paragraphs, before and after headings, elements of the title page, and reference list entries. Include one double-spaced line between title and byline on title page. See exceptions for tables, figures, footnotes, and equations.	2.21
S5	Typeface (font)	Use the same font consistently throughout the paper. Recommended Sans serif options: <b>11-point Calibri, 11-point Arial, 10-point Lucida Sans Unicode</b> Recommended Serif options: 12-point Times New Roman, <b>11-point Georgia</b> , or normal (10-point) Computer Modern.	2.19
S6	Paragraphs <sup>1</sup>	Format paragraphs flush left (left aligned) with a 0.5 in. first-line indent; do not use full justification. Use tabs or the paragraph indent formatting function of word processing software to create paragraph indents; do not use spaces to create indent. Refer to section 2.24 for indentation exceptions and expectations. A paragraph should not exceed 1 page in length, and single-sentence paragraphs should be used sparingly.	2.23, 2.24, 4.6
S7	Page order	The first page is the title page, numbered p. 1. The text of the paper begins on p. 2, unless an abstract is required, in which case the abstract is p. 2 and the text would begin on p. 3. The reference list begins on a new page immediately following the last page of text. The word "References" should be centered on the first line of the first page of the reference list, formatted bold. Tables and figures may be inserted in the body of the paper after being referred to, or they may be inserted on separate pages after the reference list. Appendices are inserted after tables and figures, if any; otherwise they are inserted after the reference list.	2.17
S8	Headings	Although not considered a heading, the first line of text preceding the first paragraph of the paper should be the title of the paper, centered, typed in title case (i.e., major words and words of four or more letters capitalized), formatted bold, and identical to the title on the title page. "Introduction" should NOT be used as a heading to the first paragraph of the paper. When appropriate, or if required, organize the paper with precise headings and subheadings. Use of headings should follow the conventions of outlining, as specified in section 2.26. Use bold and italic formatting for the five levels of headings as described in the APA manual (Table 2.3).	2.26, 2.27, Table 2.3, Figure 2.5
S9	Introduction and conclusion	Unless otherwise specified, academic papers should begin with an introduction to the problem or topic that will be covered in the paper and should end with a conclusion that brings the paper to a logical close. "Introduction" should not be used as a heading to the first paragraph of the paper.	Sample paper, p. 61.
S10	Author Note and Abstract	Student papers do not typically include an author note or an abstract unless requested by the instructor	2.7, 2.9
<b>Title Page Elements</b>			
T1	Title of paper	Title should consist of words that concisely and precisely reflect the content of the paper. "Title should be in title case (see §6.17), bold, centered, and positioned in the upper half of the title page (e.g., three or four lines down from	2.3, 2.4 <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rules of thumb for paragraphs: Length ≤ 1 page; avoid one-sentence paragraph

<sup>2</sup> See also Lee (2012), "Title Case and Sentence Case Capitalization in APA Style," on the APA Style Blog: <http://blog.apastyle.org/apastyle/2012/03/title-case-and-sentence-case-capitalization-in-apa-style.html>

		the top margin of the page)" (p. 32, section 2.4). Title can be positioned higher to accommodate the author note.	
T2	Byline	Author first name, middle initial (if applicable), and last name should be centered two double-spaced lines below the paper title (i.e., there should be one double-spaced line between the title and the byline).	1.22, 2.5
T3	Affiliation	The affiliation is "Allen College," centered one double space below the byline. The departmental affiliation may be included before institutional affiliation, with the two entities separated by a comma. (e.g., Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program, Allen College; Medical Lab Science Program, Allen College).	2.3, 2.6
T4	Course	Include the course number and name, centered one double space below "Allen College," and in the institutional format (e.g., AC 306 Professional Communication).	2.3
T5	Instructor name	Include the instructor's name one double space below the course number. Spell it correctly and in the form specified by the instructor.	2.3
T6	Date	Include the paper due date, centered, one double space below the course name. Format the month as a word rather than a number, using the format style of your country. Examples: September 16, 2020 or 16 September 2020	2.3
T7	Author note, running head, key words	Not required on title pages for student papers unless otherwise specified in assignment instructions.	2.3, 2.7
<b>Writing Style</b>			
W1	Anthropomorphism	Avoid attributing human actions to inanimate objects or non-human beings. An article cannot <i>do</i> or <i>be</i> a study. Authors or researchers can do studies and write articles. However, many acceptable constructions in widespread use do not constitute anthropomorphism because they do not impede understanding or mislead readers (e.g., "this section addresses" or "the results suggest")	4.11
W2	Third person	Avoid use of third person to describe actions that <i>you</i> carried out. For example, instead of writing "The author did a literature review" write "I did a literature review." If you coauthored the paper, use the pronoun <i>we</i> instead of <i>authors</i> to describe actions carried out by the authors of the paper. If one coauthor did something that other coauthors did not do, then third person can be used to describe the coauthor's actions.	4.16
W3	Editorial "we"	Avoid use of the pronoun <i>we</i> to describe broad or general notions or actions. For example, instead of writing "We understand that people have diverse needs," write "It is generally understood that people have diverse needs" or simply, "People have diverse needs."	4.17
W4	Singular "they"	Always use the singular "they" to refer to a person who uses "they" as their pronoun. Also use as a generic, third-person, singular pronoun to refer to a person whose gender is unknown or irrelevant to the context.	4.17
<b>Mechanics</b>			
M1	Spelling	Use spell check to detect misspelled words, but keep in mind that spell check is no substitute for careful proofreading. Proofreading is necessary to detect correctly spelled but misused words (e.g., to, two, too; there, their; led, lead, etc.). To check spelling, use Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary ( <a href="https://www.merriam-webster.com">https://www.merriam-webster.com</a> ) or APA Dictionary of Psychology ( <a href="https://dictionary.apa.org">https://dictionary.apa.org</a> ). Grammarly will also check spelling.	4.30; 6.11
M2	Capitalization	Capitalize words beginning a sentence; major words and words of four or more letters in titles of books, articles, book chapters, and other publications when used in the body of the paper; proper nouns, adjectives, and trade names; job titles and positions when they precede the name of the person who carries the title/position; levels 1-5 headings; and the first letter of the first word following a colon in a two-part title.	6.13-6.21
M3	Italics	Italicize titles of books, periodicals, documents, movies, webpages, genera, species, anchors of a scale; letters, words, or phrases followed by definitions; volume numbers in reference list citations; and statistical symbols ( <i>p</i> , <i>f</i> , <i>t</i> , <i>d</i> , $\chi^2$ ).	6.22
M4	Abbreviations	Abbreviations must be defined before subsequent use, unless they are formally defined in the dictionary (e.g., RN, US, AIDS). Example: "A recent report released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates that . . ." Avoid defining an abbreviation that will not be used at least three more times in the paper. Latin abbreviations (e.g., vs., i.e., etc.) do not require definition, but should be used only inside parentheses. Avoid the use of abbreviations in the title.	6.24-6.31, 2.4
M5	Numbers	Express numbers less than 10 using words. Numbers 10 or above may be expressed as numerals, unless they begin a sentence. Do not begin a sentence with a numeral (write it as a word or revise the sentence to avoid beginning it with the number). Numbers less than 10 can be written as numerals if they precede a unit of measure (in., cm, mg, mEq, etc.) or time	6.32-6.37

		(e.g., min, hr, etc.), or represent dates, ages (e.g., years, weeks), scores, or statistical or mathematical functions. <sup>3</sup>	
M6	Series, parallel structure	Include a comma prior to the conjunction that precedes the last item in a series of three or more items (or use a semicolon if the items in the series contain commas). Example: "Participants performed running, swimming, and singing activities." Use semicolons to separate items in a series when the items contain commas. Example: "Participants could choose to jog or run; to swim the breaststroke, backstroke, or dog paddle; and to hum, sing, or chant." Items in the series should be expressed in parallel form. Examples: "Participants ran, swam, and sang," not "Participants ran, did swimming, and sang." Use lowercase letters enclosed in parentheses to denote items in an in-text series. A list of serial items that are complete sentences or paragraphs should be numbered. A list of items that are phrases should be lettered or bulleted. Use a bulleted list to avoid implying consecutive order or priority of items.	4.24, 6.50-6.52
<b>Crediting Sources</b>			
C1	Paraphrasing	Paraphrasing information from sources should be sufficient while also accurately representing the source text. The source(s) of the borrowed information should be properly credited with narrative or parenthetical citations. Although not required, it is permissible to include a locator (e.g., page number) when citing paraphrased material. Repeated citation of the same source in a long paraphrase can be avoided with judicious boundary marking.	8.11, 8.23, 8.24
C2	Quoting	Quotations should be built into sentences of your own words or introduced with an introductory phrase. Excessive quoting should be avoided; there must be a good reason to quote. Quotations must accurately represent the source text and should include a locator in addition to a citation. Short quotations (≤ 39 words) should be enclosed in quotation marks. Long quotations (≥ 40 words) should be formatted with a 0.5 in. block indent, quotation marks omitted. Omission of words from quoted material should be denoted with three spaced ellipsis points or the ellipsis character created by word processing software when a space is followed by three consecutive periods and a space. Addition of words to quoted material should be denoted with brackets.	8.11, 8.25-8.28, Table 8.2, 8.29-8.33
C3	Locators	Locators must be included in the citation of a quotation but are optional in the citation of paraphrased information. When the source is paginated (i.e., has page numbers), use the page number as a locator. In the absence of page numbers, include a heading or section name and/or paragraph number in the citation.	8.28
C4	In-text citations, use of <i>et al.</i>	When citing a source with one or two authors, both names should be included each time the source is cited. When the source has three or more authors, include only the first author followed by <i>et al.</i> Include a period after <i>al.</i> If the citation of two or more sources with the same publication year would make it difficult to determine which source is being cited, more names should be included in the citation before truncating with <i>et al.</i>	8.17, 8.18
C5	Use of "and" or "&" in in-text citations	For in-sentence (i.e., narrative) citations, use the word <i>and</i> prior to the second or last author's name. Example: "Stevens and Jones (2012) stated . . ." In parenthetical citations, an ampersand (&) should be used instead of <i>and</i> . Example: "Holistic care is the hallmark of professional nursing practice (Stevens & Jones, 2012)."	8.17
<b>Grammar and Writing Style</b>			
G1	Subject-verb agreement	A singular subject (e.g., alumnus, finding) requires a singular verb (attends, shows). Plural subjects (e.g., alumni, findings) require plural verbs. Examples: "The study findings show positive outcomes" not "The study findings show positive outcomes" and "The alumnus attends the reunion every 5 years" not "The alumnus attend the reunion every 5 years."	4.15, 6.11
G2	Pronouns	Singular pronouns (she, he, him, her) may be used to refer to a person whose gender is known and relevant to the context. Plural pronouns (they, their, them, themselves) must be used to refer to plural subjects. Plural pronouns should also be used to refer to singular persons (they, them, their, themselves) who do not identify as "he," "she," "him," or "her." For singular non-human subjects that are gender-neutral or genderless, "it," "that," and "which" are appropriate. Pronouns must be appropriate for the gender of the subject. <i>Who</i> is used to refer to humans, and <i>that</i> , <i>which</i> , or <i>it</i> are used to refer to non-humans. Example: "The patient received the medication from the nurse <i>who</i> administered it," not "The patient received the medication from the nurse <i>that</i> administered it." <i>Who</i> is used as the subject of a verb, whereas <i>whom</i> is used as the object of the verb. Examples: "Do not administer antihypertensive	4.16-4.20

<sup>3</sup> There are numerous exceptions to the rules for expressing numbers. See sections 4.31-4.4.38 in the APA manual.

		medications to patients <i>who</i> have abnormally low blood pressure” and “A patient for <i>whom</i> antihypertensive medication is prescribed should not be given the medication if his or her blood pressure is abnormally low.”	
G3	“That” vs. “Which”	“That” should be used in a clause that is essential to the meaning of a sentence. A clause that is essential to the meaning of the sentence is called a restrictive clause. It is appropriate to use “which” in <i>non-restrictive clauses</i> , which are not essential to the meaning of the sentence. Non-restrictive clauses provide additional information and are set off with commas.	4.21
G4	“While” vs. “Although” and “Since” vs. “Because”	“While” and “since” are terms used when describing time. “While” should be used when writing about events that occur simultaneously. “While” should not be used as a substitute for “although,” despite, “and,” or “but.” Example: “While one group of participants swam, the other groups ran or sang.” “Since” should be used when describing an event that occurred at some point in time following a previous event. Example: “The physical and mental benefits of both running and jogging and any form of swimming have since been confirmed by three recent studies.” “Since” should not be used as a synonym for “because.”	4.22
G5	General	Follow guidelines for continuity and flow (transitions, noun strings), conciseness and clarity (wordiness, redundancy, length, tone, contractions, colloquialisms, jargon, logic, anthropomorphism), grammar and usage (verb tense, active and passive voice, mood, subject-verb agreement), pronouns, and sentence construction. Use Grammarly to automatically check grammar (and spelling) in your work.	4.1-4.24
<b>Punctuation</b>			
P1	Comma	Include a comma after the second-to-last item in a series (i.e., Oxford comma) prior to the conjunction that precedes the last item in the series), before and after nonrestrictive clauses, between two independent clauses linked with a conjunction, and prior to the year in parenthetical citations.	6.3
P2	Semicolon	Include between two closely-related independent clauses not linked by a conjunction. Use to separate items in a series when those items contain commas (i.e., when presenting a series of series). Use prior to a conjunctive adverb (e.g., however, therefore, nevertheless) that connects two independent clauses. Use to separate multiple parenthetical citations. A semicolon is not a substitute for a colon.	6.4
P3	Colon	Use a colon to punctuate a complete introductory clause, to separate the parts of a two-part title, and to express ratios and proportions. Examples: “Participants could choose from among the following physical activities: running, jogging, or power walking.” The title of the study is “Physical and Mental Benefits of Three Psychomotor Activities: Running, Swimming, and Singing.”	6.5
P4	Dashes	Use an em dash to separate the parts of a two-part title—as an alternative to the colon—or to offset information that interrupts the flow of the sentence and/or is not necessarily essential to the meaning of the sentence (i.e., like information that could be enclosed in parentheses). To create an em dash, type two consecutive hyphens—word processing software may automatically convert two consecutive hyphens to an em dash—or use the keyboard combination [Ctrl.+ Alt + the number pad hyphen]. An en dash is used to connect two words in a compound adjective and in numerical ranges (e.g., page or date range). An en dash is created by typing [Ctrl + the number pad hyphen]. Omit spaces before and after dashes. Dashes and hyphens are not synonymous.	6.6
P5	Quotation marks	Use quotation marks to enclose short quotations; to refer to words, letters, or phrases as linguistic examples; to introduce invented, slang, or ironic terms; to introduce a label; and to denote the title of a book chapter or article in a periodical when mentioned in text—not in a reference list entry. In general, avoid quoting a quotation; however, when quoting information that contains terms or phrases enclosed in double quotation marks, convert the double quotation marks in the quoted material to single quotation marks.	6.7
P6	Parentheses	Use to enclose information in a sentence that is non-essential to the meaning of the sentence, in-text citations, introductions of abbreviations, and letters denoting items in a series presented in a sentence. Do not use parentheses within parentheses (use brackets within parentheses). Do not present back-to-back parenthetical material; enclose the parenthetical material within the same set of parentheses separated with a semicolon.	6.8; 6.50
P7	Brackets	Use brackets to enclose parenthetical material that is within parenthetical material. Enclose words added to a quotation in brackets. Use to enclose a description of form for some works.	6.9; 8.31; 9.21
P8	Hyphens	Hyphenate compound (i.e., multi-word) adjectives and compound words that precede the words they modify (e.g., follow-up visit, self-administered survey, one-way street). Consult a dictionary to identify permanent compound words	6.12, Tables 6.1–6.3

P9	Apostrophe	Use an apostrophe to denote possession (e.g., The nurse's hours were long. The nurse attended to the patients' physical and spiritual needs.). An apostrophe is also used to create a contraction; however, use of contractions should be avoided in academic papers. Do not use an apostrophe to denote plurality (e.g., RNs, not RN's; the 1980s, not the 1980's).	4.8, 6.11, 6.26, 6.39
P10	Ellipsis points	Use ellipsis points to denote the omission of words from a quotation. Ellipsis points can be typed as three periods with spaces before and after each, or use the ellipsis character provided by word-processing software when you type three periods with a space before and after (e.g., . . . or ...)	8.25, 8.31
P11	Spacing after punctuation	Type one space after end-of sentence punctuation. Space once after commas, colons, semicolons, periods within reference list entries and periods following initials of a person's name. Do not space after internal periods in abbreviations that contain them (e.g., U.S.A., p.m.).	6.1
<b>Reference List</b>			
R1	Format	Starts on a new page, is double-spaced, and is in a hanging indent format. "References" appears on the first line, centered, and in bold font.	2.12, 9.43
R2	Authors	Provide last names and initials for up to 20 authors. Type a comma followed by a space after last names. Include middle initials if available. Insert a space after the internal periods of author initials. Include an ampersand prior to the last author's name when there are two to 20 authors. For sources with more than 20 authors, include the first 19 followed by three ellipsis points and the last author. Arrange reference list entries alphabetically according to the first author's last name. Never change the order of authorship (i.e., to alphabetize) on a publication that has two or more authors. Omit author credentials and titles (e.g., MD, RN, PhD, etc.)	9.8–9.12
R3	Publication date	Include the year of publication. If the year of publication is not provided, use "n.d." For non-journal periodicals, include the month and day of publication in addition to the year. Include only the year of publication for journal article entries. The "last updated" date on a webpage may be used as the publication date.	9.13–9.15, 9.17
R4	Titles	When typing article, book, and book chapter titles, capitalize only the first letter of the first word of the title, any proper nouns, and the first letter of the first word following a colon or dash in a two-part title. Capitalize all major words of periodical names. Do not capitalize non-major words (e.g., of, and). Italicize periodical names and book titles.	6.17, 9.18–9.22
R5	Volume and issue numbers	Always include the volume number in reference list entries for articles published in journals and other periodicals. Italicize the volume number. Include the issue number in parentheses immediately after the volume number and follow the closing parenthesis with a comma. Do not italicize the parentheses, issue number, or comma.	9.25
R6	DOI	If a DOI has been assigned to the publication, include it in the reference list entry. If the article is retrievable from the internet, provide the URL that leads directly to the article. Type all DOIs in this format: <a href="https://doi.org/xxxx">https://doi.org/xxxx</a> , where xxxx refers to the DOI alpha-numeric string. Use this format even if your source presented the number in an older form.	9.34, 9.35
R7	Hanging indent	Format reference list entries double spaced and with a hanging indent. Use the word processor's hanging indent tool to form the hanging indent rather than using paragraph returns and tabs.	9.43
R8	Citing chapters in an edited book.	If information in the paper was borrowed from a chapter or chapters in an edited book, the reference list should include an entry for the specific chapter or chapters, not just the entire book. In-text citations should represent the chapter authors, not the book editor.	10.3

<sup>1</sup> Daggett, L. M. (2008). A rubric for grading or editing student papers. *Nurse Educator*, 33(2), 55-56.  
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