

Appendix A: Holistic Rubric for General Field Qualifying Exam

To implement the General Field Qualifying Exam holistic rubric, each committee member first rates each question as *unsatisfactory*, *satisfactory*, or *excellent* based on the five factors within the holistic rating system. Second, each committee member will consider their ratings across questions to make a judgment of whether the overall work is *unsatisfactory*, *satisfactory*, or *excellent*.

Factor	Definition
Knowledge of the literature	The student's response demonstrates: • grounding in the professional literature (e.g., empirical research, policy, theory, case law) • accurate description of the professional literature • acknowledgement of conflicting findings across studies
Innovation	The student's response demonstrates: • understanding of gaps in the literature • understanding of how their work or another researcher's work contributes to the field of special education • original and novel ideas
Critical thinking and reasoning	The student's response demonstrates: • independent thinking • depth and complexity of thinking • justification of ideas
Writing Quality	The student's response demonstrates: • clear explanation of ideas • organized and logical sequencing of ideas • command of academic language
Use of appropriate APA style	The student's response demonstrates knowledge and skill in using APA style

