The automated scoring of the ETS® Proficiency Profile essays is based on essay scores produced by human raters scoring sample essays according to the 0–6 criteria listed below:

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<th>Score</th>
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| 6     | **A typical essay in this category:**  
  • presents a thoughtful and well-developed position on the issue  
  • explores the complexities of the issue  
  • develops the position with apt reasons and/or well-chosen examples  
  • is well focused and well organized  
  • uses effective vocabulary and sentence variety  
  • demonstrates strong control of grammar, mechanics and sentence structure |
| 5     | **A typical essay in this category:**  
  • presents a clear and developed position on the issue  
  • demonstrates some understanding of the complexities of the issue  
  • develops ideas with appropriate reasons and examples  
  • is focused and well organized, connecting ideas appropriately  
  • expresses ideas clearly, using appropriate vocabulary and sentence variety  
  • demonstrates control of grammar, mechanics and sentence structure |
| 4     | **A typical essay in this category:**  
  • presents a reasonably clear position on the issue  
  • develops ideas with reasons and examples  
  • is adequately focused and organized  
  • expresses ideas with reasonable clarity  
  • generally demonstrates control of grammar, mechanics or sentence structure, but may have some errors |
| 3     | **A typical essay in this category exhibits ONE OR MORE of the following characteristics:**  
  • is vague or limited in presenting a position on the issue  
  • makes poorly supported generalizations and/or fails to provide sufficient reasons and examples to support its position  
  • is poorly focused and/or organized, lacking connections between ideas  
  • has problems in the use of vocabulary and sentence variety that interfere with clarity  
  • contains errors in grammar, usage or sentence structure that can interfere with meaning |
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| 2     | A typical essay in this category exhibits ONE OR MORE of the following characteristics:  
- is unclear in presenting a position on the issue  
- is disorganized and undeveloped  
- relies on unsupported generalizations  
- provides few, if any, relevant reasons or examples  
- has serious problems with vocabulary and/or sentence structure  
- contains frequent errors in grammar, mechanics and sentence structure that interfere with meaning |
| 1     | A typical essay in this category exhibits ONE OR MORE of the following characteristics:  
- provides little or no evidence of the ability to understand the issue or present a position on the issue  
- provides little or no evidence of the ability to develop an organized response to the issue  
- has persistent problems with vocabulary and/or sentence structure  
- contains pervasive errors in grammar, mechanics and sentence structure that result in incoherence |
| 0     | A typical essay in this category:  
- is off topic (i.e., provides no evidence of an attempt to address the assigned topic)  
- is in a foreign language  
- merely copies the topic  
- consists of only keystroke characters  
- is illegible or nonverbal |

NS – The essay response is blank.