

Professional Reference Letter Rubric

Score	Criteria	Description
1	Poor	The letter is generic, lacks relevant details, and does not clearly articulate the candidate's qualifications or achievements. Contains grammatical errors or inappropriate tone.
2	Fair	The letter provides some relevant information but lacks specificity. Describes the candidate in a general manner with few concrete examples. May have minor errors or inconsistencies.
3	Average	The letter adequately describes the candidate's qualifications and includes some specific examples. The tone is appropriate, but the letter may not be particularly compelling.
4	Good	The letter is detailed and specific, providing clear and relevant examples of the candidate's achievements and qualifications. The tone is positive and professional, with no errors.
5	Excellent	The letter is highly detailed and specific, offering compelling examples and evidence of the candidate's qualifications and impact. The tone is exceptionally positive, professional, and engaging. No errors present.

Detailed Breakdown

1 - Poor

- **Relevance:** Information provided is mostly irrelevant or not aligned with the candidate's field or position.
- **Specificity:** Lacks concrete examples or specifics about the candidate's achievements or qualifications.
- **Tone:** May come across as unenthusiastic, overly casual, or inappropriate.
- **Grammar/Style:** Contains multiple grammatical errors or awkward phrasing.

2 - Fair

- **Relevance:** Contains some relevant information but much of it is too general or not directly related to the candidate's goals.
- **Specificity:** Few specific examples, mostly generic statements.
- **Tone:** Generally appropriate but may lack enthusiasm or conviction.
- **Grammar/Style:** Minor grammatical errors or stylistic issues.

3 - Average

- **Relevance:** Provides adequate information relevant to the candidate's qualifications and position.
- **Specificity:** Includes some specific examples but may still have general statements.
- **Tone:** Positive and professional but not particularly compelling.
- **Grammar/Style:** Mostly free of errors, clear and readable.

4 - Good

- **Relevance:** Clearly relevant to the candidate's goals and the position they are applying for.
- **Specificity:** Provides specific and relevant examples of the candidate's achievements and qualifications.
- **Tone:** Positive, professional, and conveys confidence in the candidate.
- **Grammar/Style:** Free of grammatical errors, well-written and engaging.

5 - Excellent

- **Relevance:** Highly relevant, clearly aligned with the candidate's career goals and the specific position.
- **Specificity:** Detailed and specific, with compelling examples and evidence of the candidate's impact and qualifications.
- **Tone:** Exceptionally positive, professional, and highly engaging, showing strong support and confidence in the candidate.
- **Grammar/Style:** Perfectly free of errors, eloquently written, and highly persuasive.

Professional Reference Example

[Your Name]
[Your Position]
[Your Institution/Organization]
[Address]
[City, State, ZIP Code]
[Email Address]
[Phone Number]
[Date]

[Graduate School Name]
[Graduate School Address]
[City, State, ZIP Code]

Dear Members of the Nursing Graduate Program,

I am writing to provide my strong recommendation for [Applicant's Name] in support of their application to the nursing graduate program at the University of Maine. I have had the pleasure of working with [Applicant's Name] in my capacity as [Your Position] at [Your Institution/Organization] for the past [Number] years, and I can confidently attest to their exceptional qualifications and suitability for advanced studies in nursing.

During their time at [Your Institution/Organization], [Applicant's Name] has consistently demonstrated a deep commitment to the field of nursing and an unwavering dedication to patient care. Their clinical skills are outstanding, marked by a comprehensive understanding of medical procedures and an ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings. [Applicant's Name] has always approached their responsibilities with a high level of professionalism and empathy, ensuring that each patient receives the highest standard of care.

One of the most impressive qualities that [Applicant's Name] possesses is their ability to remain calm and composed under pressure. In numerous instances, I have observed them manage challenging situations with poise and efficiency, always prioritizing the well-being of their patients. Their excellent communication skills enable them to effectively collaborate with colleagues and clearly convey critical information to patients and their families.

In addition to their clinical competencies, [Applicant's Name] has shown a strong inclination towards continuous learning and professional development. They have actively participated in various training sessions, workshops, and seminars to enhance their knowledge and skills. Their proactive approach to learning and their curiosity about advancements in the nursing field make them an ideal candidate for your graduate program.

[Applicant's Name] also possesses exemplary leadership qualities. They have often taken the initiative to mentor new staff and nursing students, providing guidance and support to help them acclimate to the demands of the profession. Their ability to lead by example and inspire others has significantly contributed to the positive and collaborative work environment at [Your Institution/Organization].

I have no doubt that [Applicant's Name] will excel in the nursing graduate program at [Graduate School Name]. Their strong academic background, combined with their practical experience and

passion for nursing, uniquely position them to contribute meaningfully to your program and the broader nursing community.

Please feel free to contact me at [Your Phone Number] or [Your Email Address] if you require any further information or have any questions regarding [Applicant's Name]'s application.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Position]

[Your Institution/Organization]