

Date: _____

Completed for: _____

Client: _____

Completed by: _____

WRITING GUIDE

CONTENT

- [] 1. Confirms relevant facts on which opinion is based.
- [] 2. If appropriate, makes logical assumptions.
- [] 3. Defines the issues.
- [] 4. Outlines briefly the relevant law.
- [] 5. Applies the law to the facts and expresses opinion.
- [] 6. Identifies the client's legal rights or obligations.
- [] 7. Gives reasons for the opinion, qualifying it as necessary.
- [] 8. Identifies and discusses relevant options by:
 - [] (a) if appropriate, briefly outlining correct procedural steps of each option; and
 - [] (b) assessing the advantages and disadvantages of each option.
- [] 9. Makes appropriate recommendations, giving reasons.
- [] 10. Opinion given and options discussed:
 - [] (a) address the client's problem and concerns realistically;
 - [] (b) help the client to make an informed decision;
 - [] (c) do not prejudice the client's interests; and
 - [] (d) deal appropriately with ethical issues, if any.
- [] 11. Avoids internal contradictions and inconsistencies.

COMMENTS

<p>Legend: <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Marginal <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory</p>
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 50

ORGANIZATION

- [] 12. Gives introduction that:
 - [] (a) summarizes the problem;
 - [] (b) identifies client's concerns; and
 - [] (c) states the purpose of the letter.
- [] 13. Keeps text consistent with stated purpose.
- [] 14. Discusses topics in a logical sequence.
- [] 15. Creates smooth transitions within text.

- [] 16. Concludes by:
- [...]
[] (a) briefly summarizing opinion;
[] (b) making recommendations;
[] (c) seeking instructions; and
[] (d) if necessary, requesting additional information.
- [] 17. Uses paragraphing and subparagraphing correctly.
- [] 18. Creates and uses headings and definitions appropriately.
- [] 19. Uses suitable format.

 25

LANGUAGE

- [] 20. Uses correct:
- [] (a) grammar;
[] (b) punctuation;
[] (c) diction; and
[] (d) spelling.
- [] 21. Avoids complex sentence structure.
- [] 22. Is concise (e.g. avoids repetition, wordiness and unnecessary discussion).
- [] 23. Uses precise language and concrete words (avoids ambiguity and vagueness).
- [] 24. Uses consistent language.
- [] 25. Uses active rather than passive voice.
- [] 26. Avoids legal jargon and explains legal terms.
- [] 27. Uses language and tone suitable to the letter and the reader.
- [] 28. Revises (e.g. proofreads and edits) the letter.

 25