

Position Paper

A Grade 10-Level Reading Material for Grade 12 EAPP

Focus: choosing an issue, defending a stand, using evidence, answering the other side, and following the full outline.



Big idea

A position paper defends a stand on an issue. It is not only an opinion. It is an opinion that has been explained, supported, and made fair.

Competency Focus

Learners should understand

- topic, issue, and position
- claim, reason, evidence, and explanation
- counterargument and rebuttal
- balanced and objective tone

Learners should be able to write

- a clear stand
- two supported arguments
- a fair counterargument
- a rebuttal and recommendation

Required path

Issue -> Position -> Arguments -> Evidence -> Counterargument -> Rebuttal -> Conclusion. The paper should move in this order so the reader can follow the writer's reasoning.

What Is a Position Paper?

A position paper is an academic text that presents and supports a clear stand on an issue. It asks the writer to defend one side using reasons and evidence.

Question	What the paper should answer
What issue is being discussed?	Name the debatable question.
What side does the writer defend?	State the position clearly.
Why is that side reasonable?	Give reasons that support the position.
What evidence supports the reasons?	Use facts, examples, observations, sources, or simple data.
What might the other side say?	Present a reasonable counterargument.
How can the writer answer the other side?	Write a fair rebuttal.
What should happen next?	End with a conclusion or recommendation.

Position paper is not a rant

A rant attacks or complains. A position paper explains, supports, and responds. It can be firm without being disrespectful.

Topic, Issue, and Position

These three words are connected, but they are not the same.

Term	Meaning	Example
Topic	The broad subject.	learner safety
Issue	The debatable question.	Should every class have a visible guide on where to report safety concerns?
Position	The side the writer defends.	Every class should have a visible reporting guide because students need clear and safe ways to ask for help.

Weak

Bullying in schools

More bounded

Should schools strengthen anti-bullying reporting systems even if some students fear false reports?

Bounded issue rule

A bounded issue is specific, arguable, appropriate for school discussion, possible to support with evidence, and connected to students' school stay or learning experience.

Writing a Clear Position

A clear position directly answers the issue. It should name the action or belief the writer supports.

Weak position	Stronger position	Why stronger?
Bullying should stop.	Schools should strengthen anti-bullying reporting systems because students need safe and clear ways to ask for help.	It names the action and gives a reason.
Student safety is important.	Every class should have a visible safety reporting guide because some learners may not know where to report concerns.	It answers what should be done.
Mental health matters.	Schools should include short mental health check-ins in advisory classes because stress can affect attendance and output completion.	It connects the issue to learning.

Position frame

_____ should / should not _____ because _____. This frame helps students avoid vague positions like 'This is good' or 'I agree.'

Argument in Academic Writing

In academic writing, argument does not mean fighting. An argument is a reasoned explanation that supports a position.

Argument chain

Claim

Reason

Evidence

Explanation

Part	Meaning	Question it answers
Claim	The point the writer wants to prove.	What do I believe?
Reason	Why the point makes sense.	Why should the reader agree?
Evidence	The support for the reason.	What proves or supports the reason?
Explanation	The writer's discussion of the evidence.	How does the evidence support the position?

Important

A reason without evidence may sound unsupported. Evidence without explanation may feel like a list. A strong argument needs both evidence and discussion.

Reasons, Evidence, and Explanation

A reason explains why the position makes sense. Evidence supports the reason. Explanation tells the reader what the evidence means.

Element	Example
Position	Every class should have a visible reporting guide for learner safety concerns.
Reason	Students may stay silent when they do not know where to report a concern.
Evidence	A class survey may show that some students do not know the proper reporting steps for bullying, harassment, or safety concerns.
Explanation	This matters because unclear reporting steps can delay help. A visible guide can make the first step easier to understand.

Weak use of evidence

Some students do not know where to report. That is why reporting guides are good.

Stronger use of evidence

If students do not know where to report safety concerns, they may delay asking for help. This supports the need for a visible reporting guide because the guide can show the first person or office to approach.

Evidence Quality

Evidence should be relevant, specific, credible, and explained.

Strong evidence may include

- teacher-approved sources
- school rules or official materials
- direct observation
- simple class data
- a short anonymous survey
- a checklist
- a current article provided by the teacher

Weak evidence may include

- rumors
- unsupported complaints
- personal attacks
- many people say
- unrelated facts
- copied material without explanation

If the argument is about...	Useful evidence may be...
learner safety	policy excerpts, class survey, reporting process, advisory discussion notes
school facilities	facility checklist, observation, photos if permitted, student feedback
AI use	teacher guidelines, output comparison, AI-use declaration, class experience
work immersion	guidelines, student reflection, partner feedback, task checklist

Counterargument and Rebuttal

Counterargument

A reasonable opposing view. It answers: What might someone on the other side say?

Rebuttal

A fair response to the opposing view. It explains why the writer's position still stands.

Counterargument example

Some may argue that a reporting guide is not enough because students still need actual support from teachers and guidance staff. A guide may become useless if no adult responds properly to the concern.

Rebuttal example

This concern is valid because a guide cannot replace real action from school personnel. However, the guide can still serve as the first step by helping students know where to go and what to do. If the guide is supported by advisers and guidance staff, it can become a useful part of a wider learner protection system.

Useful pattern

Some may argue that _____. This concern is valid because _____. However, _____. Therefore, _____.

Balanced and Objective Writing

A position paper should sound firm but fair. The writer takes a side, but still treats the issue carefully.

Concept	Meaning	Example
Firm	The writer clearly defends one side.	Schools should include learner orientation for ESMLE implementation.
Fair	The writer recognizes reasonable concerns from the other side.	Some may worry that another orientation will reduce class time.
Objective	The writer avoids unfair, emotional, or unsupported claims.	The orientation should be short and focused so it supports safety without taking too much lesson time.

Subjective

This rule is useless and everyone hates it.

More objective

This rule may be difficult for students to follow if the purpose and steps are not clearly explained.

Tone reminder

Objectivity does not mean the writer has no position. It means the position is supported by reasons, evidence, and fair language.

Required Full Position Paper Outline

Use this full outline only. It keeps the paper complete and easy to follow.

Part	What to write
1. Title	Name the issue and position clearly.
2. Introduction and issue background	Introduce the issue and explain why it matters.
3. Clear position or stand	State what side you defend.
4. First argument with evidence	Give your first reason, evidence, and explanation.
5. Second argument with evidence	Give your second reason, evidence, and explanation.
6. Counterargument	State the opposing view fairly.
7. Rebuttal	Respond to the opposing view and return to your stand.
8. Conclusion and recommendation	End with a final judgment, recommendation, or call to action.

Why the full outline matters

The full outline prevents the paper from becoming only opinion. It forces the writer to introduce the issue, defend a position, recognize the other side, answer it, and end with a clear recommendation.

How Each Part May Sound

The examples below use one issue: visible reporting guides for learner safety concerns.

Part	Sample content
Introduction	Student safety is an important part of learning. When learners experience bullying, harassment, or other safety concerns, they need to know where to ask for help.
Position	Every class should have a visible guide on where to report learner safety concerns because students need clear and safe ways to ask for help.
Argument 1	Clear reporting steps may help students ask for help earlier. If learners do not know who to approach, they may delay reporting.
Argument 2	A visible guide can also support a safer classroom environment because it reminds students to use proper reporting channels.
Counterargument	Some may argue that a reporting guide is not enough because students still need actual support from school personnel.
Rebuttal	This concern is valid, but the guide can still serve as the first step when supported by advisers and guidance staff.
Conclusion	The guide is worth using because it is simple, realistic, and connected to learner protection.

Sample Position Paper Snapshot

This is not a full paper. It shows how the main parts connect.

Element	Sample
Title	Why Every Class Needs a Visible Learner Safety Reporting Guide
Issue	Should every class have a visible guide on where to report safety concerns?
Position	Every class should have a visible reporting guide because students need clear and safe ways to ask for help.
Argument 1	Clear reporting steps may help students ask for help earlier.
Evidence and explanation	When students do not know who to approach, they may delay reporting. A visible guide can make the first step easier to understand.
Argument 2	The guide can support a safer classroom environment.
Counterargument	Some may say that a guide is not enough without real adult support.
Rebuttal	This is valid, but the guide can still be useful as a first step when supported by advisers and guidance staff.
Conclusion	The guide is worth using because it is simple, realistic, and connected to learner protection.

Useful Sentence Frames

Sentence frames help begin writing. Students should replace the blanks with specific details from their chosen issue.

Purpose	Frame
Issue	The issue discussed in this paper is _____.
Background	This issue matters because _____.
Position	This paper argues that _____ should / should not _____ because _____.
First argument	The first reason is that _____.
Evidence	This can be supported by _____.
Explanation	This evidence shows that _____.
Counterargument	Some may argue that _____ because _____.
Rebuttal	This concern is valid because _____. However, _____.
Conclusion	Overall, _____ should / should not _____ because _____.
Recommendation	The school, students, parents, or community should _____ so that _____.

Final reminder

A position paper is strongest when it sounds reasoned. It takes a side, but it still treats the issue fairly.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

Mistake	Weak	Better
Only choosing a topic	Mental health	Should schools include mental health check-ins in advisory classes?
Vague position	This is important.	Schools should include mental health check-ins because stress can affect attendance, output completion, and classroom behavior.
Unsupported claim	Everyone wants this rule.	Some students may support this rule if it is clearly explained and applied fairly.
Unfair counterargument	People who disagree do not care about students.	Some may disagree because the proposal may require extra time, training, or supervision.
No explanation	There is a survey, so the idea is good.	The survey result matters because it shows whether the issue affects students directly.

Remember the complete set

A clear issue, direct position, strong arguments, relevant evidence, explanation, fair counterargument, clear rebuttal, and practical conclusion make the paper complete.