

7.4 Qualifying a claim

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 13 marks

Objective

Build the skills to **qualify your own claim** without losing it.

You must be able to:

- add a limiting clause that names a real condition
- place the qualification where it does most good
- decide how much qualification the audience requires
- avoid stacking qualifications until nothing is claimed

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ A real condition

Write the condition you could actually name: "where the school controls its own timetable", not "in appropriate cases". If you cannot state the condition, you do not yet have a qualification.

■ Placement

Qualifying **after** the claim lets the claim land first; qualifying **before** it protects a hostile reader from rejecting it outright. Choose by audience.

■ How much

One qualification that excludes something real usually beats three that do not. Ask what the reader will actually challenge and answer that.

■ Stacking

"This may, in certain circumstances and subject to funding, sometimes help." Nothing has been claimed. Stacking is the standard failure and is easy to spot in your own drafts.

2 Practice

2.1 State the test of whether you have a real qualification.

[2]

2.2 State how placement of a qualification depends on the audience. [2]

2.3 Claim: "Free public transport increases use."

(a) Add a real qualifying clause. [2]

(b) State what your clause excludes. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 "In appropriate cases" fails as a qualification because it [1]

- **A** is too long
 - **B** names no condition
 - **C** is placed late
 - **D** concedes too much
-

3.2 Placing a qualification before the claim is most useful with [1]

- **A** a sympathetic audience
 - **B** a hostile audience likely to reject it outright
 - **C** an expert audience only
 - **D** no audience
-

3.3 Rewrite to remove stacking, keeping one real qualification: "This might, under some conditions and possibly, occasionally reduce delays." [4]

4 Go further

- work through the **7.4 Qualifying a claim** lesson on the **Learn** page;
- read the **Qualifying Arguments, Syntax, and Conventions** section of the AP English Language handout on the **Know** page.

Solutions

2.1 can you name the condition; if not, it is a hedge rather than a qualification.

2.2 after the claim for a sympathetic audience, so the claim lands first; before it for a hostile one, so they keep reading.

2.3 (a) a nameable condition, e.g. "where services already run frequently enough to be usable". (b) the cases the clause rules out, e.g. areas with infrequent services.

3.1 B. no condition is named, so nothing is excluded.

3.2 B. an early limit prevents outright rejection.

3.3 removes the stacked hedges; retains one real, nameable condition; the claim remains definite.