

What is a rubric?

- An assessment guide used to evaluate learning.
- A scoring guide, a set of criteria for grading assignments.
- "...coherent set of criteria for students' work that includes descriptions of levels of performance quality on the criteria" (Brookhart, 2013, p. 4).
- Rubrics allow instructors to distinguish between levels of student performance on a given activity and give feedback accordingly.
- Rubrics are used for learning as well as for grading.

What are the components of a rubric?

1. **Performance criteria (rows):** factors being measured (e.g., Organization of Essay, Thesis Statement, etc.)
2. **Performance levels (columns):** (e.g., Poor, Acceptable, Good, Excellent)
3. **Performance level descriptors:** observable characteristics of performance

How do rubrics help instructors?

Rubrics assist instructors with providing:

- Clear guidelines.
- Meaningful feedback that is clear, directed, and focused on ways to improve learning.
- Consistency in evaluation.
- Objectivity in grading.
- To reduce uncertainty and complaints about grades.
- Assistance in adjusting instruction.
- Additional resources based on the overall performance of an entire class.
- Reducing the amount of time spent grading.

How do rubrics help students?

Rubrics assist students with:

- Gaining a better understanding of the course and assignments.
- Clarifying an instructor's expectations on an assignment.
- Understanding how the assignment aligns to the course objectives.
- Offering useful and targeted feedback.
- Improving performance.
- Evaluating one's own work.



What are the characteristics of good rubrics?

- Consist of 3-5 performance levels.
- The labels for the criteria should be distinct, clear, and meaningful.
- The performance level descriptors are observable and measurable.

What are the different types of rubrics?

There are 3 types of rubrics:

1. Holistic
2. Analytic
3. Single Point

Holistic Rubric

- a one-dimensional assessment scale
- all the evaluation criteria are considered together
- the instructor assigns a single score based on an overall judgment of the student's work

Advantages:

- Saves time by minimizing the number of decisions made
- Can be used consistently across raters, provided there has been training

Disadvantages:

- Does not provide specific feedback for improvement
- Can be difficult to choose a score when student work is at varying levels across the criteria

Analytic Rubric

- two dimensional
- insights on areas of strengths and weaknesses
- more time to develop
- descriptions of what each criteria looks like for each level of performance.
- each of the criteria is scored individually

Weighted Rubric

A weighted rubric is an analytic rubric in which certain concepts are judged more heavily than others.

TIP: You can assign different values to different criteria and conclude to the overall achievement score by adding up achievements of various criteria.

Single Point Rubric

- only two levels of assessment
- "Yes/No" or "Achieved/Not-Achieved" model
- easy to use and quicker to analyze

Advantages:

- Less language
- Not restricted (students don't tend to follow the details)

Disadvantages:

- More writing on the teacher's part

TIP: Using checklists also helps in reaching more consistent grading decisions over multiple times. For instance, all teachers know what the top performances look like and what the poor performances look like. But the middle is always unclear.

What are the steps of creating a rubric?

- Step 1: Define outcomes and goals for the rubric
- Step 2: Choose the rubric type
- Step 3: Define the assessment criteria
- Step 4: Define the performance levels
- Step 5: Write performance descriptions for each level of rubric
- Step 6: Revise

As Stevens & Levi note, “labeling the levels on the scale can be a delicate matter. We need to be clear about expectations and about failures as well as successes, yet we also try to avoid overly negative or competitive labels. These can discourage students” (p. 41).

Sample Scale Ratings

Three Levels

- Weak, Satisfactory, Strong
- Beginning, Intermediate, High
- Weak, Average, Excellent
- Developing, Competent, Exemplary
- Low Mastery, Average Mastery, High Mastery

Four Levels

- Unacceptable, Marginal, Proficient, Distinguished
- Beginning, Developing, Accomplished, Exemplary
- Needs Improvement, Satisfactory, Good, Accomplished
- Emerging, Progressing, Partial Mastery, Mastery
- Not Yet Competent, Partly Competent, Competent, Sophisticated
- Inadequate, Needs Improvement, Meets Expectations, Exceeds Expectations
- Poor, Fair, Good, Excellent

Five Levels

- Poor, Minimal, Sufficient, Above Average, Excellent
- Novice, Intermediate, Proficient, Distinguished, Master
- Unacceptable, Poor, Satisfactory, Good, Excellent

Six Levels

- Unacceptable, Emerging, Minimally Acceptable, Acceptable, Accomplished, Exemplary

How do I design a rating scale?

- Each assignment type might require different grading scales and different levels.
- Decide how many different levels work for each assignment.
- You may also consider whether to list the highest possible level of achievement first or last.

TIP: start with the criteria and think about the different levels of work that students might present.

What are well-written descriptors?

- describe observable and measurable behavior.
- use parallel language across the scale.
- indicate the degree to which the standards are met.

What are some leading practices for creating rubrics?

- develop a different rubrics for different levels of assignments
- be transparent
- revise
- try it out on a sample of student work
- ask students to use the rubric to evaluate their own work.
- ask students to use the rubric for peer review
- create the rubric in eClass

TIP: consider co-creating rubrics with your students!

Examples of Criteria

Unique Criteria

- Artistic representation of work
- Control of Syntax and Mechanics
- Innovative Thinking Novelty or uniqueness (of idea, claim, question, form, etc.)
- Bias
- Originality
- Attractiveness
- Neatness

Written Criteria

- Answering the Question
- Organization
- Spelling and Grammar
- Voice
- Word Choice
- Use of Figurative Language
- Presentation
- Label Diagrams
- Purpose

Performance Criteria

- Speak Clearly
- Use of Visuals
- Engaging
- Play / Sing Correct Rhythm / Notes
- Accuracy of Factual Information
- Ask Relevant Questions
- Follow Steps in Experiment
- Video / Audio Editing

Behavioral Criteria

- Respect for others (debate)
- Follow Directions
- Work Well with a Group
- Use Kind Words
- Listen to Others
- Raise Hand to ask Question
- Stay on Task

Examples of Rubrics

Although this resource has provided steps and examples for each step to choose from, there is much more to think about to compose a rubric. You do not need to start from scratch. Reviewing examples of rubrics in your discipline or related to the skill or type of assignment, can give you ideas, particularly related to the criteria and performance descriptors. A simple internet search for rubric examples related to your assignment will be fruitful. Some helpful rubric banks to start:

- [Rubric Examples from Florida International University](#) – organized by discipline
- [AAC&U VALUE Rubrics](#) – organized by learning outcome
- [Examples of Rubrics by the Eberly Center at Carnegie Mellon University](#) – organized by assignment type



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