



How to create a rubric?

A rubric is pretty easy to develop although it will require some investment of time. It calls for you to identify the necessary elements of the assignment and then the criteria for achievement.

In creating the rubric pay attention to the following:

- Determine what you are assessing, for instance is it critical thinking?
- Decide on the characteristics of what you are assessing (e.g., are you looking for your students to be able to determine appropriate use of evidence or should they be able to recognise the inclusion of logical fallacies?)
- Provide a description of the qualities of the best work you could expect using these characteristics. This will constitute the most outstanding response and therefore the top category.
- Provide a description of the worst acceptable response. This would be a description of the lowest level of achievement.
- Provide a description of an unacceptable response. This would be a description of a response that is completely unacceptable.
- Provide descriptions for intermediate-level responses and assign them to intermediate categories.
- Develop a scale that runs from 1 to 5 (unacceptable, marginal, acceptable, good, outstanding), 1 to 3 (novice, competent, exemplary), or any other set that is meaningful.
- Review your rubric by soliciting the help of colleagues to critique it and perhaps apply it to some products or behaviours and revise as needed to eliminate ambiguities.

NB: If necessary contact the CETL for help in developing your rubric.

Does your feedback feedforward?

There is growing interest in feedforward and in fact, there is much being written about feedforward in the pedagogical literature. When we talk about feedforward we are in fact concerned with providing information to our students about their work that will be helpful to them in the future or as they contemplate the course of action to pursue following our comments given as we examined their work and returned it to them.

So in a real sense, feedforward is feedback that provides meaningful guidance for refinements and revision of the assignment or the ongoing work. It presents information that has a built-in connection between diagnosis and the remedial action to be taken. The good thing about feedforward is that it lets students know what they should be doing or could be doing differently next time. For instance, if feedforward is provided on a specific assignment, the advice given will be very specific as what should be done differently next time. The advice will offer meaningful suggestions about changes that would allow the student to really improve the assignment. Feedforward sets the student on the right path to success; it provides information exclusively about what a student should do in the future to improve.

How might we provide feedforward to students, for instance final year students who might not be able to benefit from feedback from an exam? We might provide exemplars of essay question answers.

Use PowerPoint to Prompt Engaging Learning Activities During Class

PowerPoint presentations can be done in ways that engage your class meaningfully. Sometimes the PowerPoint slides are full of content. You can and should include slides that will cause your students to engage in learning activities. This could be a slide promoting classroom discussion, or some other learning activity and certainly offering opportunities for deep learning. Your learning activity might be a slide that poses a question to determine the level of understanding of a key or critical concept. This could be a pair-share activity. You might ask students to apply a model or a principle to a specific application. You should allow some time for students to think through the activity. In fact, you might add an interesting game or indicate that students will do a brief worksheet which you will provide as a handout. There are times when a minute paper or the muddiest point classroom activity might be appropriate.

The learning activity should be short and soon after you will want to wrap up the exercise and refocus attention on the content that triggered the learning activity. Determine whether misconceptions have emerged from the body of responses discussing or summarizing the concept and spend some time defusing the misconceptions. If you had asked for the application of a model discuss and evaluate the application proposed looking for both strengths and weaknesses. If the activity was for opinions on a controversial issue, spend some time discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the different positions at large.

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