CREATING A RUBRIC

FEBRUARY 2022

Purpose

This job aid outlines the rationale and benefits of using a rubric and will provide guidance on how to develop a rubric.

Background

What is a rubric?

Rubrics are an assessment tool which makes instructor's expectations clear for an assessment. A rubric explicitly describes an instructor's expectations for the assignment and can be used by students to guide them in completing the assessment as well as to inform their own self or peer assessment (Carnegie Mellon University, n.d.).

Why use a rubric?

- Makes marking more objective, unbiased, and consistent.
- Reduce the time spent grading.
- Helps to make marking more systematic and by using a pre-defined scheme the subjectivity becomes more objective.
- Communicates the expectations of the instructor to the students.
- Gives students useful feedback that can be used for future assignments.
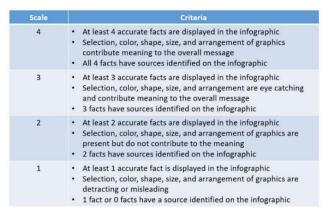
Analytic and Holistic Rubrics

Holistic

- Holistic rubrics group several different assessment criteria and classify them together under grade headings or achievement levels.
- Performance descriptions can be written in paragraphs and usually in full sentences.
- If when creating an analytic rubric, you realize that there is a lot of overlap between your criteria, an holistic rubric might be the most appropriate for the assessment.
- These are quick to use but do not give students a lot of information about their performance.
- Could be used for small assessments.

Analytic

Analytic rubrics separate different assessment criteria. Most rubrics have row describing the criteria to be assessed and columns describing levels of achievement described by a number, a letter grade, or by a descriptor such as amateur to professional.
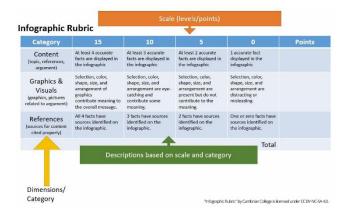

Figure 1 Infographic Holistic and Analytic Rubric Comparison

"Infographic Holistic and Analytic Rubric" Comparison by Assiniboine Community College is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0. And is derivative of "Infographic Holistic Rubric" and "Infographic Rubric" by Cambrian College.

How To

Creating an Analytic Rubric

An analytic rubric identifies:

1. Criteria – the aspects of the assessment which will be assessed.
2. Performance levels – rating scale that identifies students level of mastery for each criterion
3. Descriptors – descriptions objective characteristics associated with each criterion at each level of performance.

Infographic Rubric

Category	15	10	5	0	Points
Content (topic, references, argument)	At least 4 accurate facts are displayed in the infographic	At least 3 accurate facts are displayed in the infographic	At least 2 accurate facts are displayed in the infographic	1 accurate fact displayed in the infographic	
Graphics & Visuals (graphics, pictures related to argument)	Selection, color, shape, size, and arrangement of graphics contribute meaning to the overall message.	Selection, color, shape, size, and arrangement are eye-catching and contribute some meaning.	Selection, color, shape, size, and arrangement are present but do not contribute to the meaning.	Selection, color, shape, size, and arrangement are distracting or misleading.	
References (sources for content cited properly)	All 4 facts have sources identified on the infographic.	3 facts have sources identified on the infographic.	2 facts have sources identified on the infographic.	One or zero facts have sources identified on the infographic.	
				Total	

Levels of Performance

Descriptors

Criteria

To create a rubric, follow these steps:

1. *Create criteria*

   The criteria are what you will be measuring in this assignment. This criteria might include content, organization, analysis, or something like mechanics or grammar. When choosing the criteria for your assessment consider the following:
   - What outcome are you assessing?
   - What can I observe that shows the student has met the outcome?
   - Why do you choose this as an assessment?
   - What skills, knowledge, and behaviors are students demonstrating in this assignment?
   - What is the difference between an excellent and terrible assignment?

   As you can't measure everything in every assignment, consider which criteria are most important to this assessment. Consider not including criteria in which students may be assessed elsewhere and can be left off of this assessment.

   Often rubrics have 3-8 criteria but this is not a hard and fast rule, it is more important to reflect your learning outcome, elements of performance, employability skills for your industry, and the assessment itself rather than trying to fit to a set number of criteria.

2. *Defining Levels of Performance*

Decide how many levels of performance that you are going to have on your rubric. This is how many levels you will have for your defined criteria. When choosing your number of levels consider the grading scheme for your program (is a pass 80% or 60%). Usually rubrics have between three and five levels of achievement.

One thing to note, it is not necessary to have the same number of levels for reach of the criteria in your rubric. For example, a case study analysis may rate a summary of the case out of 2 and the analysis out of 5.

3. *Create descriptors*

For each criterion in detail what the performance at each performance level looks like. Be consistent with terminology and the means by which the criteria are evaluated

Each category score should describe student work at that level rather than a judgement of student work.
"Student project is smooth with no marks" is a description vs. "Student sanded the project well"

Start at the meeting expectations level or passing level. What does it mean for the student to meet expectations on that criteria? At this point also make sure that a student who 'meets expectations' will receive a passing grade on the assignment. From there fill in as it makes sense to you.

4. *Weighting*

All of the in your rubric do not need to be equally weighted. Criteria which is mor crucial to a given assessment may be worth more than other criteria. An easy way to do this is to add a multiplier to important criteria.

Developing rubrics interactively with your students

Involving students in the rubric creation process can have many advantages for students. As students are part of the tool's development, they have greater buy-in and understanding of how they tool works. It is also a valuable learning experiences as students think critically and identify those important criteria for the assessment (*Rubrics*, 2012).

To do this, the instructor acts as a facilitator and allows the students to determine the criteria and performance levels for the rubric. Students will often create a rubric that is very similar to the one that you would have created for the assessment as an instructor.

Creating Holistic Rubrics

Holistic rubrics contain overarching information to provide the learner with a description of their overall level of performance without going into the levels of performance within specific criterions

Scale	Criteria
4	• At least 4 accurate facts are displayed in the infographic • Selection, color, shape, size, and arrangement of graphics contribute meaning to the overall message • All 4 facts have sources identified on the infographic
3	• At least 3 accurate facts are displayed in the infographic • Selection, color, shape, size, and arrangement are eye catching and contribute meaning to the overall message • 3 facts have sources identified on the infographic
2	• At least 2 accurate facts are displayed in the infographic • Selection, color, shape, size, and arrangement of graphics are present but do not contribute to the meaning • 2 facts have sources identified on the infographic
1	• At least 1 accurate fact is displayed in the infographic • Selection, color, shape, size, and arrangement of graphics are detracting or misleading • 1 fact or 0 facts have a source identified on the infographic

The following link will provide a resource of guidance on developing holistic rubrics.
[Queen's University Teaching and Learning – Types of Rubrics: Analytic and Holistic](#)

Using Rubrics with Students

Rubrics can provide an opportunity to further engage the learner in the assessment of their work. While the ideals behind having a student use a rubric for self and peer assessments may seem transparent, it is a good idea to explain the benefits of student use of a rubric, prior to its implementation. Failure to take this step may result in student resentment towards taking on an extra task (Adachi et al., 2018).

Self-assessment

"In the hands of students, a good rubric can orient learners to the concept of quality as defined by experts in a field, inform self- and peer assessment, and guide revision and improvement. Rubrics can be informative as well as evaluative." (Andrade, 2007)

Peer-assessment

Students can use a rubric to engage in a peer assessment process. This process can provide benefit to the student's learning experience by both receiving additional formative feedback as they progress through their assignment and can give the assessor an opportunity to engage in an additional critical thought process, regarding the assignment. Peer-assessments are recommended as a formative assessment to for students and should encourage the assessor to focus on the strengths of student's strengths in the assignment, not just the areas that need improvement. It is recommended that students perform a self-assessment before attempting a peer-assessment (*Using Rubrics for Peer Review*, 2021).

Model the Use

Taking time to model the use of a rubric can benefit the student for self and peer assessment by making the student more comfortable, aware, and efficient when using the assessment tool. This may be an opportune time to have the student perform a self-assessment on their own work (*Using Rubrics for Peer Review*, 2021).

Collaborative Development

Developing a rubric with your students can students can enhance the learning experience and engagement with their assessment in some of the following ways:
- Students learn to identify criteria for quality work within their field.
- Students feel a greater sense of ownership in the process.
- Students understand where the rubric came from, and it does not seem arbitrary.

References

Adachi, C., Tai, J. H.-M., & Dawson, P. (2018). Academics' Perceptions of the Benefits and Challenges of Self and Peer Assessment in Higher Education. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *43*(2), 294–306.

Andrade, H. (2007, December 1). *Self-Assessment Through Rubrics*. ASCD. https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/self-assessment-through-rubrics

Carnegie Mellon University. (n.d.). *Creating and Using Rubrics*. Eberly Center Teaching Excellence & Educational Innovation. Retrieved January 27, 2022, from https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/assesslearning/rubrics.html

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Using Rubrics for Peer Review. (2021, March 18). Center for Teaching & Learning. https://www.colorado.edu/center/teaching-learning/teaching-resources/assessment/assessing-student-learning/rubrics/using-rubrics-peer-review