

CREATING A RUBRIC

A rubric simply a list of criteria used to evaluate or grade assignments.

Many instructors regularly use rubrics, but use alternative terms to describe them. If you have used a *scoring card*, *grading checklist* or *grading criteria*, you have used a rubric.

“At its most basic, a rubric is a scoring tool that lays out the specific expectations for an assignment. Rubrics divide an assignment into its component parts and provide a detailed description of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable levels of performance for each of those parts.”

Stevens & Levi, 2004

RUBRICS

- Clarify vague, fuzzy goals by providing additional explanation.
- Assists students in learning the process of metacognition.
(link: http://education.calumet.purdue.edu/vockell/edPsybook/Edpsy7/edpsy7_meta.htm)
(thinking about thinking)
- Help students to better understand what they are expected to do.
- Can encourage students to self-evaluate their work and reflect on how they learn.
- Can inspire better student performance as they strive to meet the acceptable standards and expectations.
- Make scoring and grading easier and faster.
- Lead to more accurate, unbiased and consistent scoring.
- Improve feedback to students.
- Reduce arguments with students as scoring criteria is explicitly outlined before an assessment tool employed.
- Improve feedback to faculty and staff.

**Adapted from *Assessing Student Learning*, 2nd ed.
Suskie, 2009**

In order to select an appropriate assessment tool for measuring an outcome, it is essential to outline what, specifically, is to be measured. With colleagues, create a list of skills that must be demonstrated to show that an outcome has been mastered. This list should be used as criteria when grading, reviewing or organizing assessment results.

In this list, describe the primary traits or performance indicators that must demonstrate to prove mastery of an outcome.

Begin by describing criteria for the achievement of an outcome. This is the grading criteria. Describe what students should demonstrate in a project, performance, text or other type of measure. Examples of criteria descriptors (adapted from Maki, 2010) include:

Creativity Self-Reflection Originality Integration Analysis	Synthesis Use of Language Logic Coherence Accuracy or precision	Clarity Structure Organization Development of Ideas
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Once your list of criteria is complete, create a level of achievement continuum describing how well students execute each criterion. This is the rating scale for each criterion. Examples of performance descriptors include:

Mastery	High-Proficiency	Proficiency	Low-Proficiency	No Proficiency
Complete Understanding	Above Average Understanding	Average Understanding	Negligible Understanding	No Understanding
90%-100% Proficiency	80%-89.99% Proficiency	70%-79.99% Proficiency	60% - 69.99% Proficiency	59.99% Proficiency or Lower

At this point, you're ready to start creating a grid. List your criteria for the achievement of an outcome in a column down the right side of the grid.

LIST CRITERIA BELOW					
Development of Ideas					
Use of Language					
Logic and Organization					

Next, add the level of achievement continuum categories in the row across the top.

List the levels of achievement continuum across the top	Mastery	High Proficiency	Proficiency	Low Proficiency	No Proficiency
Development of Ideas					
Use of Language					
Logic and Organization					

If you are creating a descriptive rubric, you will need to fill out the boxes. Describe, accurately and directly, what it is a student should accomplish for each criterion and level of achievement.

	Mastery	High Proficiency	Proficiency	Low Proficiency	No Proficiency
Development of Ideas	The student explores ideas vigorously, supports points fully using a balance of subjective and objective evidence, reasons effectively to make useful distinctions.	All ideas are supported with effective examples, references and details that make key distinctions.	Most ideas are supported with effective examples, references and details that make key distinctions. The student makes few minor errors.	Ideas are presented in general terms, support for ideas is inconsistent, some distinctions need clarification, and overall reasoning is unclear.	Most ideas are supported with effective examples, references and details that make key distinctions.
Use of Language	The student employs words with fluency, develops concise standard English sentences and balances a variety of sentence structures effectively.	Word forms are correct and sentence structure is effective. There are very few errors are present, if any, and none are distracting.	Word forms are correct and sentence structure is effective. While a few errors are present, they are not too distracting.	Word forms and sentence structures are adequate to convey basic meaning. Errors in writing cause noticeable distraction.	Words used in the writing are unclear, sentence structures are inadequate for clarity, and errors are seriously distracting.
Logic and Organization	The student develops ideas cogently, organizes them logically with paragraphs and connects them with effective transitions. The introduction and conclusion are clear and specific.	Ideas are unified and coherent within paragraphs with very clear transitions. Overall, ideas are clearly organized and fit together. The introduction and conclusion are clear and specific.	Ideas are unified and coherent within paragraphs with generally clear transitions. Overall, ideas are clearly organized and fit together. The introduction and conclusion are clear and focused.	Ideas are organized and developed in paragraphs but are not necessarily connected. Some organization is apparent, but ideas seem illogical and/or unrelated. The introduction and/or conclusion seem unfocused.	Ideas are not developed cogently, and the introduction and/or conclusion are unclear. There is uneven and ineffective organization overall

Adapted from the University of Scranton
<http://academic.scranton.edu/departments/assessment/ksom/writing-rubric.pdf>

Many evaluators prefer to add a scoring element. Scoring elements can be added to the top horizontal portion of a rubric and as the last column on the right. A space for entering a final numerical score can be added to the bottom.

	4 Mastery	3 High Proficiency	2 Proficiency	1 Low Proficiency	0 No Proficiency	Score
Development of Ideas	The student explores ideas vigorously, supports points fully using a balance of subjective and objective evidence, reasons effectively to make useful distinctions.	All ideas are supported with effective examples, references and details that make key distinctions.	Most ideas are supported with effective examples, references and details that make key distinctions. The student makes few minor errors.	Ideas are presented in general terms, support for ideas is inconsistent, some distinctions need clarification, and overall reasoning is unclear.	Most ideas are supported with effective examples, references and details that make key distinctions.	
Use of Language	The student employs words with fluency, develops concise standard English sentences and balances a variety of sentence structures effectively.	Word forms are correct and sentence structure is effective. There are very few errors are present, if any, and none are distracting.	Word forms are correct and sentence structure is effective. While a few errors are present, they are not too distracting.	Word forms and sentence structures are adequate to convey basic meaning. Errors in writing cause noticeable distraction.	Words used in the writing are unclear, sentence structures are inadequate for clarity, and errors are seriously distracting.	
Logic and Organization	The student develops ideas cogently, organizes them logically with paragraphs and connects them with effective transitions. The introduction and conclusion are clear and specific.	Ideas are unified and coherent within paragraphs with very clear transitions. Overall, ideas are clearly organized and fit together. The introduction and conclusion are clear and specific.	Ideas are unified and coherent within paragraphs with generally clear transitions. Overall, ideas are clearly organized and fit together. The introduction and conclusion are clear and focused.	Ideas are organized and developed in paragraphs but are not necessarily connected. Some organization is apparent, but ideas seem illogical and/or unrelated. The introduction and/or conclusion seem unfocused.	Ideas are not developed cogently, and the introduction and/or conclusion are unclear. There is uneven and ineffective organization overall	
TOTAL SCORE						

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Types of Rubrics (adapted from Suskie, 2009)

- **Checklist Rubrics** list the presence of things you are looking for in an assignment.
- **Rating Scale Rubrics** are checklists with a rating scale added to indicate the degree at which a criterion was met.
- **Descriptive Rubrics** list brief descriptions on a continuum that indicate the level of mastery of a criterion.
- **Holistic Scoring Guides** are used when there is a massive amount of assignments to assess. Rather than listing specific criteria each assignment should meet (as in the types of rubrics listed above), they have short narrative descriptions of the characteristics of outstanding work, acceptable work and unacceptable work.

Once your rubric is complete, an assessment tool can be selected. It is good practice to distribute rubrics when introducing student to an assignment