

## A Rubric for Assessing Rubrics

### Rubric

A rubric is a set of criteria that makes it easier to assess the quality of a learning product.

Rubrics identify the behaviors or characteristics that must be present to indicate the extent to which learning outcomes are achieved.

Rubrics also specify the required behaviors or characteristics for each level of performance.

Rubrics should:

- define a carefully sequenced continuum of expected performances
- have a single focus, such as:
  - ✓ quality (excellent, good, fair, poor) *or*
  - ✓ frequency (always, sometimes, rarely, never) *or*
  - ✓ expertise (expert, advanced, intermediate, beginner)
- have a title and/or description for each level on the scale that is clear and appropriate to the assessment
- maintain a consistent directionality

### Criteria

A criterion is a single behavior or characteristic that is used to help make decisions about the quality of a learning product.

Criteria are standards on which a decision for specific behaviors or characteristics may be based – a yard stick for measurement.

Criteria should:

- describe unique behaviors or characteristics appropriate to the product being assessed
- focus on a single behavior or characteristic from one performance level to another
- describe the presence, rather than the absence, of possible characteristics or behaviors, i.e., what the behavior or characteristic at that level looks like, rather than what it does not look like
- discriminate clearly and sequentially between performance levels
- avoid the use of bias in language
- provide ratings that are measurable
- provide sufficiently clear and detailed information to foster decisions that are accurate, consistent, and fair

**Design, Structure, and Format of Rubric Rating Categories**

Criteria	Unacceptable	Acceptable	U	A
<b>Category Titles and/or Descriptions</b>	Category titles and/or descriptions for each performance level of the rubric are ambiguous and confusing to the reader.	Category titles and/or descriptions for each performance level of the rubric are accurately described and clear to the reader.		
<b>Focus of Rubric Rating Categories</b>	Rubric rating categories include more than one focus: quality, frequency, and/or expertise.	Rubric rating categories have a single focus: quality, frequency, <i>or</i> expertise.		
<b>Sequencing of Rubric Rating Categories</b>	The sequencing of rubric rating categories is inconsistent, with obviously unequal intervals between performance levels.	Rubric rating categories define a logically sequenced continuum of relatively equal intervals between performance levels.		
<b>Rating Scale Directionality</b>	The directionality of rubric rating categories varies from one criterion to another.	The directionality of rubric rating categories is consistent across all criteria.		

**Design and Content of Rubric Criteria**

Criteria	Unacceptable	Developing	Acceptable	U	D	A
<b>Uniqueness/Appropriateness</b>	The expectations for each performance level describe behaviors or characteristics that are inappropriate for the criteria being assessed. (For example, if relevant expectations are omitted from the criteria, or non-essential expectations are included, a rating of “Unacceptable” would be warranted.)	More than half of the expectations for each performance level describe behaviors or characteristics are appropriate for the criteria being assessed. Few essential expectations are omitted. Some expectations may be included that are not essential to the performance.	Expectations for each performance level describe behaviors or characteristics appropriate to the criteria being assessed. All essential expectations are addressed, and there are no expectations that are not essential to the performance.			
<b>Focus</b>	Fewer than half of the rubric criteria focus on more than one behavior or characteristic from one level to another.	More than half of the rubric criteria focus on a single behavior or characteristic from one level to another.	All rubric criteria focus on a single behavior or characteristic from one level to another.			
<b>Presence/Absence</b>	Most rubric criteria are written in terms of what the behavior or characteristic is <i>not</i> , rather than what the behavior or characteristic <i>is</i> .	Most rubric criteria are written in terms of the behavior or characteristic that is desired, rather than the behavior or characteristic that is not desired.	All rubric criteria describe the behaviors or characteristics that are desired, rather than the behaviors or characteristics that are not desired.			

<b>Performance Levels</b>	There is little or no distinction between expectations for each performance level. The increase in performance expectations may unequal or inconsistent from one level to another.	Performance expectations for most levels are distinct. The increase in most performance expectations is relatively equal or consistent from one level to another.	Performance expectations for all level are distinct. The increase in all performance expectations is relatively equal and consistent from one level to another.			
<b>Avoidance of Bias</b>	The wording of individual rubric items contains numerous examples of language that indicates racial and ethnic stereotypes and other forms of cultural insensitivity.	The wording of individual rubric items contains some examples of language that indicates racial and ethnic stereotypes and other forms of cultural insensitivity.	The wording of individual rubric items is free of language that indicates racial and ethnic stereotypes and other forms of cultural insensitivity.			
<b>Measurability</b>	The expectations for each performance level describe behaviors or characteristics that are not measurable in the prescribed setting.	Most expectations for each performance level describe behaviors or characteristics that are measurable in the prescribed setting.	All expectations for each performance level describe behaviors or characteristics that are measurable in the prescribed setting.			
<b>Accuracy, Consistency, Fairness</b>	The wording of most criteria is not clear or lacks sufficient detail to foster decisions that are accurate, consistent, and fair.	The wording of most criteria provides clear and detailed information that will foster decisions that are accurate, consistent, and fair.	The wording of all criteria provides clear and detailed information that will foster decisions that are accurate, consistent, and fair.			