

What are Rubrics?

Rubrics are a grading and feedback tool that specifies the assessment criteria and level of achievement of an assessment (*Cockett & Jackson, 2018; Reddy & Andrade, 2010*). Rubrics can reduce grading and feedback time and ensure shared expectations.

Benefits of Using Rubrics:

Rubrics benefit both instructors and students. By using a rubric:

- Instructors have a complete analysis of every student's work measured against a consistent scale.
- Save time in grading, both short-term and long-term.
- Students clearly understand what is expected of them in a particular assignment.
- Students can use rubric feedback to identify areas for improvement.

Strategies and Considerations:

Rubrics keep instructors fair and unbiased in their grading but designing one can be tricky.

- 1. Avoid starting from scratch.** Check out popular rubric generators such as [iRubric](#) or [Rubistar](#), then refine. Need help with writing and language? [Rubric Wordsmith](#)
- 2. Avoid adding non-credible criteria.** Chosen rubric criteria must be appropriate to an assessment purpose and align to your course learning outcomes.
- 3. Avoid using subjective language.** Write criteria using observable and measurable characteristics of the task.
- 4. Avoid a missed opportunity.** Review the purpose of using a rubric before/after each assignment with students.

Types of Rubrics and Examples:

Decide on the purpose of the assessment to help choose the type of rubric and how it will be used.

- **Analytical Rubrics:** Usually laid out in table form with assessment criterion down the side and levels of achievement across the top. This grid format can be used to be specific and detailed with grading and feedback, and provides students a clear picture of their grade and feedback.

- **Single Point Rubric:** A single point rubric is a simplified version of the analytical rubric so it is easier for students to interpret. The single point rubric is composed of three columns, with the column for criteria that meets expectations down the middle, and areas for improvement and strengths on left and right. This type of rubric is good formative assessments, peer feedback and self-assessment.

- **Holistic Rubric:** Provide a big picture by grouping several assessment criteria together to assess student's overall achievement. Holistic rubrics provide the snapshot of the student's work and generally used for formative assessment and feedback.

- **Examples:** For examples of each type of rubric above, read the article titled "[Know Your Terms: Holistic, Analytic, and Single-Point Rubrics](#)" by Jennifer Gonzalez for a deep dive on holistic, analytical and single point rubrics on the Cult of Pedagogy blog.

Is A Rubric Always A Good Fit?

Although rubrics have many potential benefits for both students and instructors, there are situations and scenarios when transitioning away from a rubric is the right decision—for example, transitioning away from rubric dependency in a 4th-year discipline course.

- Please [email](#) CTLS Learning Designers to further explore rubric applicability.

Additional Resources:

Read the article [Holistic, Single-point, and Analytic Rubrics, Oh My!](#) by Katie Novak to review the pros and cons of each rubric type and additional examples.

Explore [Rubrics Useful Assessment Tool](#) from the University of Waterloo Centre for Teaching and Learning for additional examples, including participation rubric ideas.

How-Tos:

Creating Rubrics

The best procedure for creating a rubric is done in the course tools menu. Follow the steps below to create your rubric. In addition to accessing Rubrics through Course Tools, Rubrics can also be created any time an assignment or other gradable item is being created or edited. The CTLS does Recommend creating them through course tools.

1. From the Control Panel, click Course Tools
2. Click Rubrics
3. Click Create Rubric
4. Provide a name for the Rubric
5. Optionally, provide a Description

6. Optionally, edit the Rubric Grid (see below)
7. Click Submit

Note:

- Rubrics can be based on either points or weighted percentages.
- You can also create a rubric with no points.
- Each cell can only contain a maximum of 1000 characters.
- You can reorder the rows and columns by clicking the reorder button.
- Once a Rubric has been used for grading, it cannot be edited, to preserve the integrity of the grades. If you need to modify the rubric to use on another assessment, create a copy of the rubric and edit that version.
- For a Percent rubric, the total weight for all criteria must equal 100%.

RUBRIC DETAIL

The Rubric Grid lists Criteria (rows) for measurement (columns)

Add Row Add Column Rubric Type No Points Points Point Range Percent Percent Range Show Criteria Weight

Levels of Achievement 2

Criteria*	Novice	Competent	Proficient
Formatting Weight: 33.00 %	Percent: 0.00 Descriptions for each level are entered here. abc	Percent: 50.00 Descriptions for each level are entered here. abc	Percent: 100.00 Descriptions for each level are entered here. abc
Organization Weight: 34.00 %	Percent: 0.00 Descriptions for each level are entered here. abc	Percent: 50.00 Descriptions for each level are entered here. abc	Percent: 100.00 Descriptions for each level are entered here. abc
Grammar Weight: 33.00 %	Percent: 0.00 Descriptions for each level are entered here. abc	Percent: 50.00 Descriptions for each level are entered here. abc	Percent: 100.00 Descriptions for each level are entered here. abc

Total Weight: 100.00% Balance Weights

Click Submit to proceed.

How to Edit the Rubric Grid

Blackboard Rubrics default to three rows and three columns with pre-set criteria and Levels of Achievement. However, the Rubric Grid may be edited to correspond to the type of feedback and scoring desired:

1. Click **Add Row** to add a new criterion at the bottom of the grid
2. Click **Add Column** to add a new Level of Achievement to the grid
3. Select a **Rubric type** from the drop-down list:
 - No Points - feedback only
 - Points - single point value for each Level of Achievement
 - Point Range - range of values for each Level of Achievement
 - Percent - flexible depending on each assessment's possible points
4. Click **Edit** from the action link next to the labels identifying rows and columns to change their names
5. Type a point or percentage value for each row
6. Type a description defining the criteria and the associated Level of Achievement
7. Click **Submit**

Copy and Edit a Rubric

1. From the Control Panel, click **Course Tools**
2. Click **Rubrics**
3. Click the **round drop down arrow** next to a previously created Rubric and select **Copy**

4. The copied Rubric will appear immediately and can be edited by following the same steps, but selecting **Edit**

Associate a Rubric with an Assessment

From the Grading settings of an assessment click the Add Rubric button and select one of the following:

1. Select **Rubric** - associates a Rubric that has already been created
2. Create **New Rubric** - allows for immediate creation of a new Rubric to associate with the item
3. Create **From Existing** - uses a previously created Rubric as a template to create a new Rubric

How to Edit the Rubric Grid

A Rubric will need to be associated to an assignment prior to grading. Gradable Rubrics can be associated with Blackboard Assignments, Essay and Short Answer Test questions, Blogs, Journals, Wikis, and Discussion Board threads and forums.

1. Access the item to be graded and open the rubric/feedback panel
2. Click the rubric title for List View or the View Rubric in Window button for a grid view
3. Select a level of achievement (column) for each criteria (row) In List View, click a radio button to select a level of achievement. In Grid View, click a cell to select a level of achievement. If a Rubric with point ranges has been used, select the desired value from the drop-down list.
4. Optionally, in List View, select the Show Description box to see the descriptions for each criteria
5. Optionally, in List View, select the Show Feedback box to enable feedback for each criteria
6. A running Raw Total score will be displayed as point selections are made. You may type a score in the Change the Number of Points box to override the calculated score, and type overall feedback to the student
7. In Grid View, click Submit to save the score and close the rubric window
8. In either view, click Submit to save the score to the Grade Center

The screenshot displays the 'Assignment Details' window for 'May 17 training 2023'. At the top, the 'GRADE' is shown as 16.30 / 22. Below this, the 'ATTEMPT' information is visible, including the date and time (5/17/23 1:14 PM) and the current score (16.30 / 22). The main section is titled 'Grade by rubric' and shows the rubric 'May 17 training 2023' is 'Used for Grading'. There are checkboxes for 'Show Descriptions' and 'Show Feedback'. The rubric is divided into three criteria: 'Formatting', 'Organization', and 'Grammar'. Each criterion has a score and a percentage, along with three achievement levels: 'Novice', 'Competent', and 'Proficient'. For 'Formatting', the score is 5 (22.72727%) and 'Competent' is selected. For 'Organization', the score is 5.8 (26.36363%) and 'Proficient' is selected. For 'Grammar', the score is 5.5 (25.00%) and 'Proficient' is selected. At the bottom, the 'Raw Total' is 16.30 (of 22), and there is a box to 'Change the number of points out of 22 to:'. A 'Feedback:' text area is also present. At the very bottom, there are 'Cancel' and 'Save Rubric' buttons.

References:

- Cockett, A., & Jackson, C. (2018). The use of assessment rubrics to enhance feedback in higher education: An integrative literature review. *Nurse Education Today*, 69, 8–13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2018.06.022>
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- Novak, K. (2021). Holistic, Single-point, and Analytic Rubrics, Oh My! Novak Education. Retrieved from Retrieved from <https://www.novakeducation.com/blog/holistic-single-point-and-analytic-rubrics>
- Rubrics: Useful assessment tool*. Centre for Teaching Excellence. (2023, June 13). <https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/catalogs/tip-sheets/rubrics-useful-assessment-tool>