

# Effective and Efficient Grading with Rubrics

## What is a rubric?

A rubric is a tool for assessing student work that details assessment criteria and associated performance standards.

Rubrics are useful for assessing:

- Essays
- Lab reports
- Group work
- Discussions
- Oral presentations

## Benefits

- High quality feedback to students in a timely manner
- Reduced grading time
- Improved grading consistency (over time and between assessors/ teaching assistants)
- Makes the assessment process and criteria explicit.

## Sample template

**Assignment Title**

**Name:**

**Date:**

**Task Description:**

	<b>Weak</b>	<b>Mid-Range</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Dimension 1</b>				
<b>Dimension 2</b>				
<b>Dimension 3</b>				
<b>Dimension 4</b>				

**Student and assignment information**

**Performance levels**

**Dimensions of the assessment**

**Description of expected performance for each dimension**

## ... Effective and Efficient Grading with Rubrics continued

### Student and assignment information

- Tailor the rubric to the particular assignment.
- Provide students with the rubric in advance so they know how they will be assessed.

### Performance levels

- Indicate how well each dimension of the assignment has been performed.
- Consider using 3 to 5 levels.
- Label performance levels with words, numbers, or grades.

### Dimensions of the assessment

- Reveal components of the assignment being assessed.
- Weigh dimensions equally or according to their relative importance.

### Description of performance for each dimension

- In each cell, describe the performance that reflects the corresponding dimension and performance level. Articulate common trouble spots for students.
- In simple rubrics, a student's work does not always fit neatly into one column. Move beyond description limitations by circling elements within two or more columns.
- When descriptions are more comprehensive, consider using boxes that can be checked off beside each element of the description to convey the mixed response.
- Scoring rubrics include only a description of the highest level of performance. The other columns of the rubric are used for written comments and points earned for that dimension.

Rubrics take time to create, and often require editing early on. However, once refined, rubrics can reduce time required for grading, thereby allowing you to provide quality feedback to students in a timely manner.

*For additional teaching and learning strategies and tips, contact the Centre for Academic and Instructional Development or visit us online at [www.smu.ca/administration/caid/](http://www.smu.ca/administration/caid/)*