

Top 10 tips on Self, Peer and Group Assessment¹

Self and peer assessment helps students to understand assessment criteria by their application of the criteria to their own and other students' work.

1. Link your self/peer assessment criteria clearly to intended learning outcomes. Students need to feel that the assessment is as 'real' and as important as tutor marked work to promote engagement.

2. Take the time to develop assessment criteria with the students. This provides 'ownership' of the assessment criteria and greatly improves the quality of the peer assessment exercise as students will be more objective and thoughtful about applying their 'own' criteria.

- Brainstorm, share, prioritise and edit criteria
- Use criteria to create checklist questions, weed out weak items, re-prioritise²

3. Give students a feedback sheet to fill out when submitting their work. This prompts self assessment and provides the tutor with a range of feedback areas to address (see *Top 10 tips on self assessment sheets*).

- Vary your feedback sheet (layout/questions)
- Use student comments in your feedback

4. Avoid moderating the marks significantly away from the student assessments. If students anticipate that the marks they give will be changed, then students will not put much objective effort into their gradings.

5. Provide feedback on the self assessment exercise. This provides tutor input about the work and the student's reflections on their work.

- Aim to improve a student's confidence about their reflection and their work: Some sensitivity is needed here to avoid demotivating students who feel they rated their own work fairly but who receive poor feedback from tutors.

6. When assessing group work, allow students to weight the groupwork grade according to the effort put in by each participant. You may leave this entirely up to students or put a maximum differential meaning that students may or may not be able to award zero to a student who didn't contribute, depending on the allowed differential.

- Problems may arise if students merely agree to all keep the same mark.

7. Give students the chance to peer assess a mark for contribution in addition to the overall group grade. This assesses process and product, and is generally felt to be fair.

8. After completing the group task, give students an individual additional task based on the groupwork. This makes it difficult to avoid contributing to the group task, but can increase marking loads.

¹ Adapted from sources listed in Further Reading

² See Further Reading P Race *The Lecturer's Toolkit*.

9. Test group members individually or together in a 'viva'. However, some students may not perform well under this stress and others may be able to 'fake good'.

10. Include a written test component for the groupwork. Students who did not contribute to the group task will not perform well, while students will also be encouraged to participate in the group task if they know it will be included in exam material. However, exams don't assess the same skills as groupwork and may advantage students who are good at exams.

Further Reading:

Race, P. (2001) *Assessment: A Briefing on Self, Peer and Group Assessment*, LTSN Generic Centre Assessment Series Number 9, York: LTSN Generic Centre

Race, P. (2001) *The Lecturer's Toolkit*, 2nd Edition, London: Kogan Page