Peer and Self-Assessment of Team Assignments

How to Incorporate Peer and Self-Assessment into a Course

- Discuss the rationale for doing peer/self-assessment; explain the expectations, the benefits and the assessment strategy and process.
- Design guidelines and rubrics with clearly defined criteria specific to the assignment aims and intended learning outcomes; and, when possible, involve students in contributing to the criteria.
- Introduce rubrics through learning exercises to ensure students develop skills to apply the rubric effectively.
- Discuss the grading scheme and how peer and self-assessments will count toward their final grade in the course. E.g. not all teamwork activities need to be assessed, but students must be informed from the start which ones are being assessed and why.
- Consider breaking a larger assignment into smaller pieces and incorporating peer assessment opportunities at each stage; e.g. assignment outline, first draft, second draft, etc.
- Discuss instances of unfair or inappropriate peer assessment and how they will be dealt with.
- Discuss how to use the assessment tool(s) to maintain the quality of the feedback.
- Effective peer and self-assessment requires instruction and sufficient time for students to learn – model how to give descriptive and constructive feedback, and give clear directions and coaching on how to provide meaningful feedback.
- Listen to team feedback discussions and be prepared to give feedback on students’ feedback to each other.
- Show examples of feedback of varying quality and discuss which kinds of feedback are useful and why.

Ideas for Educational Practice

- Small Feedback Teams. Provide students with feedback on an assignment and have students work in pairs or small teams to discuss the feedback they received.
- Require students to submit a cover sheet with their assignment. On the cover sheet, students should respond to self-assessment prompts (for example):
  
  1. What is strong, or what went well with this assignment? Provide examples.
  2. What do you think are the strengths and weakness of this assignment, and what do you need to improve in the future?
  3. What feedback did you get from your peers and what did you learn from that feedback that you have used/will use in the future?

- Ask students to identify one or two specific areas that they would like feedback on for a particular piece of work done by the team. This may include an essay, a presentation, a problem or a research proposal.
- Ask students to develop criteria (either by peer(s) to assess the assignment and/or the instructor).
Self-Assessment

- Require students to keep a log of their contribution to a team assignment, which includes reflective analysis, or an evaluation of how the team worked, what they contributed, and how the process could have been improved; or ask them to report on how well they met the team goals and provide evidence.
- Ask students to submit a half-page evaluation of their work based on the assessment criteria stated in the grading rubric.
- Require students to submit a cover sheet with their assignment, with responses to self-assessment prompts such as:
  1. What is strong, or what went well with this assignment? Provide examples.
  2. What do you think is weak about this assignment?
  4. Ask students to identify one or two specific areas that they would like feedback on. (This item can be added to the cover sheet method).
- Have students write up their own contribution to the project and reflect upon what they achieved, what their duties and responsibilities were, and how well they feel they have met their objectives. Also, ask them to consider their own abilities as team member and how they performed throughout the assignment. Ask them to identify and reflect on areas that they can improve.

Peer Assessment Methods

A variety of peer assessment methods are reported in the literature. What a student claims to have contributed to the group and its final product can be verified with a peer assessment in which members rate or rank (or both) the contributions of others. A formative peer assessment early in the process can help members redress what the group might identify as problems they are experiencing at this stage.

For summative evaluation, typically students rate their peers numerically on specified criteria. Each student is rated by all other peers in the team. The marks are totaled and averaged. The student’s final individual mark consists of a combination of the average peer rating plus the instructor’s mark for the final product. If any peer mark is significantly different from the other peers’ marks, the instructor and the team members meet to discuss the discrepancy and to obtain consensus. See examples of using numeric values:

1. [https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/developing-assignments/group-work/methods-assessing-group-work](https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/developing-assignments/group-work/methods-assessing-group-work)
2. [Integrating teacher- and peer-assessments of group coursework - ERIC](https://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/query/ericsearch?product=ERIC&searchTerm=integrating%20teacher%20and%20peer%20assessments%20of%20group%20coursework)

Peer and self-assessment plays a vital role in formative assessment because the most effective learning takes place when students have an opportunity to practice, receive feedback, and then try again (Bain, 2004; Fink, 2003; Wiggins, 1998). Therefore, students developing their teamwork skills must receive feedback about the quality of those skills. A formative assessment of teamwork skills typically comes from their peers because they are the ones most likely to see their teamwork skills in action. However, faculty members, coaches, or others who may see their teamwork can also provide formative feedback.
How Can learning Technologies Support Peer Assessment Processes?

Many of the above suggestions for peer assessment and feedback can be supported online through the course site. Examples of whole or sections of assignments (strong, average and weaker ones) can be posted on the course site for students to peer assess or discuss using the forum options.

Alternatively, teams can post assignments on the course site and other teams can be asked to comment on them using a cover sheet to frame the feedback. Some class time can be spent reviewing the comments. The course site allows students to continue the process of active learning outside the classroom.

A Framework for Designing and Assessing Team Assignments

Whether teaching a course on teams or a course that involves team assignments, instructors should incorporate current teamwork theories in their pedagogies. This 5-phased integrated framework for developing and assessing students’ teamwork skills outlines phases, elements, processes and instruments for use at various points in the learning process. Good course and assignment design are central to team success. Including these elements in the design of courses with team assignments will improve the quality of the collaboration, improve the quality of the final project and facilitate deep learning and reflection.

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<tr>
<th>Pre-course</th>
<th>Design a good team assignment – with positive interdependence. Include “build the assessment process” into the course and/or the assignment; discuss goals and expectations, behaviour guidelines and assessment rubrics. Ensure the assessment methods and criteria are explicit in the course.</th>
<th>Instructor Role</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Design good team assignment(s) including rubrics, &amp; assessment tools: Assessment Rubrics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>Intentionally create teams – using ITP Metrics/ CATME/CANOE</td>
<td>Instructor Role</td>
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<td>Discuss team roles and explicit ground rules</td>
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<td>Teach teamwork skills - including giving and receiving feedback, conflict resolution, managing diversity</td>
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<td>Practice teamwork – create a small assignment or ice-breaker activity to practice working as a team, debrief the activity and create a team charter</td>
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<td>Discuss assessment - methods and criteria</td>
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<td>Q2</td>
<td>Initial check-in – when students are completing a draft deliverable for the assignment (e.g. 1st draft, initial phase, project plan, etc.), get formative feedback on the progress and process using peer feedback tools and instructor feedback</td>
<td>Instructor Role</td>
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<td>Intervention or corrective action (if required – team restructuring, team coaching, conflict resolution)</td>
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<td>Q3</td>
<td>Midpoint check-in – team health check (ITP Metrics), get formative feedback on progress and product using peer and self-feedback tools and instructor feedback. Timely and focused intervention (if required)</td>
<td>Instructor Role</td>
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<td>Assess process, provide feedback and intervene, as required</td>
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<td>Tools: Peer/Self-Assessment</td>
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| Q4   | **Final evaluation** – project complete, get summative peer feedback, self and instructor feedback on individual contributions to team processes based on assessment methods and criteria  
**Final reflection** – self-assessment – learning goals met and developmental assessment focusing on individual skills and behaviours |
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<td><strong>Assessment, Team Health</strong></td>
<td><strong>Instructor Role</strong></td>
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| **Instructor Role** | Assess process and grade process  
**Tools:** Peer/Self-Assessment; Leadership |

Q1 – Q-4 refers to the total length of the assignment or, if the assignment is due at the end of the course, Q refers to the total duration of the course (i.e. Q1 weeks 1-3, Q2 weeks 4-6, Q3 weeks 7&8, Q4 weeks 9-10)

At a minimum, include a mid-point check-in, differentiated team interventions, and timely and meaningful feedback to teams and team members.

**Resources**

- [www.ocadu.ca/Assets/.../Assessing+Peer+Contributions+in+Group+Assignments.pdf](http://www.ocadu.ca/Assets/.../Assessing+Peer+Contributions+in+Group+Assignments.pdf)
- [www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/lt/resources/handouts/StudentPeerAssessment.pdf](http://www.ryerson.ca/content/dam/lt/resources/handouts/StudentPeerAssessment.pdf)
- [https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/developing-assignments/group-work/methods-assessing-group-work](https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/developing-assignments/group-work/methods-assessing-group-work)
- [https://www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/pdf/Team_Peer_Evaluation_Examples.pdf](https://www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/pdf/Team_Peer_Evaluation_Examples.pdf)
References


