



Assessment Grading Standards

Criterion-reference Assessment

Criterion-Referenced Assessment is a format for evaluating assessment in which the assessment is measured against predetermined criteria. It provides the standards to both the learners and the assessors so the assessment is assessed with little ambiguity and the assessors are expected to assess materials according to the defined criteria. Criterion-reference assessment encourages teamwork as it does not compete with other members but the set criteria. It is used to establish a person's competence. Example: Driving Test.

Norm-reference Assessment

Norm-Referenced Assessment (also known as grading on a curve) is a format for evaluating assessment in which the assessment performance is measured against the norm. The norm can be the average in a class cohort or even the national sample, these students' performances are then ranked accordingly. Norm-referenced assessment does not give an indication of how well the student performs, rather it is a way of comparing students, thus discourages group-working with competition. Example: IQ test.

Standards

Standard is the expected level of quality (set by instructors, professional bodies, schools, colleges, government) in which the assessment will be approved or accredited.

HKU and Assessment Grading Standards

HKU has adopted standards-based assessment, thus, when using standards-based assessment as opposed to norm-based assessment, grade descriptors should be established so that students are clear about what standards are expected of them. Students will receive a grade based on these benchmarks as opposed to a ranking based on a norm. The course grade descriptors should be provided to the students and the assessors, so the assessment is assessed with little ambiguity. If attendance forms part of the course assessment, such information should be included.

When you are developing your course level grade descriptors, the normal expectations of student achieving particular grades should be described. Each course may develop marking rubrics for assessment items aligned with the course level grade descriptors. The marking rubric for each assessment item need not include all aspects of the grade descriptor. Some assessment items may be more appropriate for the higher level grade descriptor (essay) and some for the lower level grade descriptors (MCQs). In developing grade descriptors, the danger is to set too high levels of standards. The grade descriptors should represent a range of grades.

It is recommended that marking rubrics should be provided for each assessment item in the course.





ASSESSMENT GRADING STANDARDS SAMPLE - FROM THE FACULTY OF ARTS

A	Demonstrate evidence of original thought, analytical and critical abilities as well as a thorough grasp of the topic from background reading and analysis; should demonstrate organizational, rhetorical and presentational skills with few (if any) errors.
B	Demonstrate evidence of critical and analytical thinking but not necessarily original thinking; show adequate grasp of the topic from background reading and analysis; should demonstrate organizational, rhetorical and presentational skills with few (if any) errors.
C	Demonstrate evidence of a reasonable grasp of their subject but most of their information is derivative, with rather little evidence of critical thinking; should demonstrate fair organizational, rhetorical and presentational skills but with some errors.
D	Demonstrate evidence of being able to assemble only the bare minimum of information, poorly digested and not very well organized in presentation. There is no evidence of critical thinking.
F	Demonstrate evidence of poor knowledge and understanding of the subject, a lack of coherence and organization, and answers are largely irrelevant. Work fails to reach degree level.

Web References and Resources

- Alaska Standards, Content and Performance Standards for Alaska Students. Revised March 2006. Accessed 22 January 2010.
<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/standards/pdf/standards.pdf>
- National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards & Student Testing
<http://www.cse.ucla.edu/>

To Reference these pages

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