

Adapting a Rubric

There are four main stages involved in adapting a rubric (from Stevens & Levi, 2013)¹. Although they are the same four stages used in creating a rubric, keep in mind that the questions and processes are different, since you are changing an existing rubric to suit your own needs.

Stage 1: Reflecting.

Consider the following questions:

1. Why did you create this assignment?
2. Have you given this assignment or a similar assignment before?
3. How does this assignment relate to the rest of what you are teaching?
4. What skills will students need to have or develop to successfully complete this assignment?
5. What exactly is the task assigned? And how does it break down into smaller, individual tasks?
6. What evidence can students provide in this assignment that would show they have accomplished what you hoped they would accomplish when you created the assignment?
7. What are the highest expectations you have for student performance on this assignment overall?
8. What is the worst fulfillment of the assignment you can imagine, short of simply not turning it in at all?

Stage 2: Listing.

1. Mark up the original rubric that you are modifying.
2. While listing, remember the following: “The learning objectives and highest expectations [the rubric] will ultimately reflect must be yours” (Stevens & Levi, 2013, p. 100).
3. A ready-made rubric may prompt you to think of other ideas to include, which can be useful.
4. You may want to consider using departmental or even campus-wide assessment rubrics, if they exist.

Stage 3: Grouping and Labeling.

1. Start with the ready-made rubric.
2. **Do not** just edit the old rubric; transfer ideas into a new rubric grid to avoid overlooking alternate possibilities and connections.

Stage 4: Application.

1. Rewrite the final rubric into a new grid.
2. Check to make sure that your revised rubric best suits the assignment or task that it is meant to assess.

¹ Stevens, D. D., & Levi, A. J. (2013). *Introduction to rubrics: An assessment tool to save grading time, convey effective feedback, and promote student learning* (2nd ed.). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.