MODULE 5 · NOTES

Building and Adapting the Rubric

R A D C

Collaboration Competency for ESD: Designing, Teaching and Assessing Collaboration
Micro Certificate 2 · Assessing and Auditing the Collaboration Competency

LEARNING OUTCOME

By the end of this module, you will be able to: adapt the four-criterion, four-level rubric descriptors to one's own discipline, differentiated by quality of reasoning.

1 What is fixed, and what you adapt

Fixed in every discipline	Yours to adapt
• The four criteria and their names • The four levels: Limited, Developing, Proficient, Exemplary • The judgement each criterion captures	• The wording of every descriptor, in the language of your own task • Where the marker looks in the submission

Adapting is required, not optional: a generic descriptor cannot be applied consistently by two markers. A descriptor that still says “affected groups” when your task is about tenants, downstream households or seasonal workers has not been adapted. Attainment can be added up across courses because the criteria and levels mean the same thing in Law as in Engineering, not because the sentences are identical.

2 The generic rubric

This is the starting point. Adapt each descriptor to your own task before use.

Criterion	1 Limited	2 Developing	3 Proficient	4 Exemplary
Representing other positions	Describes only their own position.	Describes another position but distorts it.	States a disagreed-with position accurately.	States it accurately enough that its holder would accept the account.
Who is absent	Considers only the people in the room.	Notes that others exist but not who.	Identifies affected groups absent from the process.	Identifies the absent groups and what their absence changed.
Handling disagreement	Avoids or suppresses the disagreement.	Acknowledges it but leaves it unresolved.	Works the disagreement through to a position.	Works it through and shows how it changed the outcome.
Individual contribution	No individual evidence; only the group product.	Claims a contribution but cannot show it.	Documents what they personally changed, conceded or integrated.	Documents it and explains at whose prompting, and why.

3 Deriving the four levels

Write the two ends first. Level 1 is the commonest error, the floor; level 4 is the exemplary move, the ceiling. Writing the ends first stops the middle going flat. Then split the gap.

Level 1 · Lists	Level 2 · Connects	Level 3 · Justifies	Level 4 · Sees its own choice as a choice
Positions, groups or feelings named, with nothing joining them.	The first sign of the competency: one link, one reason, one named other.	Connects and gives grounds. The expected standard mid-programme.	Turns the analysis on itself: a concession made, an objection met.

Differentiate by quality of reasoning, never by counting: “names an absent group and what their absence changed”, never “three groups” against “one group”.

4 Four faults in a rubric

Fault	In a Collaboration rubric	Fix
Adjectives instead of descriptors	Excellent / Good / Fair / Poor collaboration: a grading scale, not a behaviour-based rubric.	Use the generic descriptors, adapted to your task.
Levels separated by counting	Three absent groups versus one. Measures volume, not reasoning.	Separate levels by reasoning and effect.
Criteria restating the brief	“Memo is well structured and within the word limit.” Assesses report writing.	Keep it outside the four Collaboration criteria.
Written after the task	A rubric created at marking time. Students were never asked for the evidence.	Publish the rubric with the brief, and record the date.

5 Five steps to adapt the rubric

1. **Keep** the four criteria and their names unchanged. Do not add a fifth, drop one or reorder them.
2. **Rewrite** each descriptor in disciplinary language. Name the actual opposing party, the actual absent group and the actual group product in your task, not “the stakeholder”.
3. **Write level 1 and level 4 first,** then split the quality gap to create levels 2 and 3.
4. **Differentiate by reasoning,** not by counting references, examples or absent groups.
5. **Test each criterion against the one rule.** If a student could score full marks on it without using the competency, it measures writing or effort: rewrite it. If the brief has no clause asking for it, amend the brief.

6 A worked adaptation: Engineering

Task: an individual justification memo after a client-panel negotiation on a wastewater discharge standard.

Criterion	1 Limited	2 Developing	3 Proficient	4 Exemplary
Representing other positions	Gives only the student's own recommendation; the downstream water users do not appear.	Mentions the downstream users, but as an emotional appeal about the river.	States their case accurately, including the cost of treatment they already bear.	States it so the downstream users would accept the wording, and concedes what is strongest in it.
Who is absent	Considers only those present at the client panel.	Notes that others are affected but does not say who.	Names downstream households not on the petition and what including them would require.	Names them and states what their absence changed: the standard was set to the petition, not the catchment.

Your Workbench section *The rubric* shows the full worked rubric for your own discipline cluster.

KEEP THE FOUR INDEPENDENT

If two criteria always rise and fall together, they are one criterion written twice. Name each criterion for the judgement it captures, never for a feature of the output.

Key points

- Criteria, level names and judgements are fixed; descriptor wording is adapted, and must be.
- Write levels 1 and 4 first: lists, connects, justifies, sees its own choice as a choice.
- Separate levels by reasoning, never by counting.
- Publish the rubric with the brief; mark all four levels.

Activity: Workbench section 07 and Check 2; optional Worksheet W4. **Next module:** alignment, moderation and audit.