Best Practice for
Developing Online Peer Evaluation Activities

1. Involve students in developing and clarifying assessment criteria. Students need to be involved in developing the criteria for assessment in order to feel a sense of ownership and decrease any anxiety. Or teachers may propose some draft criteria before students’ discussion in small groups, which should lead to a modest amount of suggested change.

2. Explain to students how the peer feedback process works, as well as the rationales of why it is used in class.

3. Provide examples and set a model of effective feedback before the implementation of peer evaluation activities
   1. Provide guidelines, or checklists. Some kind of written and/or pictorial reminders or clues to the process to be followed will help, e.g., a simple sheet with not more than eight reminders of what to do and how to do it.
   2. Provide training, examples, and practice. Quality training will make a great deal of difference. Talk to students about what is expected of them, including the roles and behaviors expected of assessor and assessee. Then show them how to do it, perhaps by using a role play between two adults. Have the students practice peer assessment on a very short task selected for the purpose. While they practice, circulate to monitor their performance. Give feedback and coaching where needed.
   3. Specify activities and timescale. Make clear what needs to be done, within what time-scale, and what records (if any) need to be kept. For those who finish early—should extra peer assessment work be available or can they switch to some other kind of work? For those who finish late—how can they be given timescales and reminders to keep them up to speed?

4. Examine the quality of peer feedback. Particularly in the early days, check at least a portion of the peer assessments against your own assessments of the work. Choose a high, middle, and low ability student for this. Do not be surprised if the feedback is different from your own. The more feedback there is, the more chance it will be diverse. If it is very different, discuss this with the partners involved.

5. “Monitor the process and, in turn, provide feedback on the feedback, at least initially, to help the process run smoothly and to allow students to benefit from the strategy.”
6. “Ensure that the feedback is anonymous so that students can provide ratings without feeling pressure from peers.”

7. “Use multiple peer ratings for each response in order to provide an aggregated view of the value of the response.”

8. “Ensure that the process is easy for students to implement so as not to overwhelm them.”

Note: This checklist is extracted from findings of two articles on peer evaluation. Please refer to references for more information about the articles.

References


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