# A Generic Learning Rubric

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This rubric outlines levels of attainment and a range of generic learning attributes that might be taught and assessed in a university education. The following rubric has been developed based on a number of frameworks that describe levels of learning attainment. They include:

The Solo Taxonomy (Biggs, 1992)
The Florida Taxonomy of Learning attainment (Grant and Givens Fisher, 1982)
The Taxonomy of Ethical Moral Reasoning (Perry, 1999)

The first row (in Italics) describes the general capacities of the level.

**Developing** is intended to describe performance that is not yet at the basic level of expectations. So features may be present but not enough to pass, but maybe enough to ask for further work and resubmission.

**Functional** is intended to describe learning attainment that meets the basic requirements and can be carried out in part without support, although some may still be necessary as there still is a high degree of reliance on authority for guidance in decisions making and very little translation or integration of concepts. It would correspond to a Pass.

**Proficient** is a desirable standard for most students to reach and strongly exhibits independence, translation, integration and application. It would correspond to a credit.

**Advanced** is performance beyond core expectations that is highly independent, creative, critically reflective, generative and transformative. It would correspond to a distinction or high distinction.

It is intended that the rubric will be further developed by specific disciplines or fields of study to accurately reflect the learning intentions of their programme. This development might mean the selection of some of the attributes and the elaboration of still others to form new ones. The resulting rubric can be used in a number of ways.
1. As a guide in curriculum design. The attributes can be used as a checkpoint to ensure that the knowledge, skills and capacities deemed important are included in the design of topics and the teaching and learning strategies employed.
2. For communicating expectations to students.
3. As a feedback tool to provide students with an idea of where they sit in a framework of orderly development towards increased expertise in a learning domain
4. As a peer and self evaluation tool
5. As a guide for assessors to aid *consistency* and *accuracy* and *representativeness* in interpreting, grading and reporting learning outcomes

Feedback of any developments of this rubric would be greatly appreciated and used for the common good.

| Assessment Attributes | Levels of Attainment | | | |
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| | **Developing** | **Functional** | **Proficient** | **Advanced** |
| *General description of the level of attainment* | *Not yet to desired standard or unsafe practice. Possibly a resubmit or a fail grade would be given.* | *Reached basic academic standards and capable of limited safe practice. Work is rule based with limited or no translation and interpretation of concepts, skills and procedures and limited adaptations to meet situational factors unless aided. Would attract a pass grade.* | *Has completely reached the standards expected. Can function independently in novel contexts, adapting concepts, skills and procedures to meet situational factors. Demonstrates an appreciation of own limitations and can set personal learning goals. Given adequate teaching, assessment tasks, resources, and student effort, most students should be able to reach this standard. Would attract a credit grade* | *Have gone beyond the basic expected standards. Exhibit high levels of independence and can use principles to generate new understandings and ways of completing procedures and can provide theoretically defensible arguments for their new interpretations and adaptations. Can engage in productive critical reflection. Would attract a distinction or high distinction grade.* |
| **Knowledge & Understanding** | Limited understanding of required concepts and knowledge. Inaccurate reproduction of text and lectures Cannot discuss concepts in their own words | Encyclopedic knowledge and can reproduce accurately required facts and definitions. Has adequate breadth, but limited depth of understanding of basic concepts. | Exhibits breadth and depth of understanding of concepts in the knowledge domain. Can use terminology accurately in new contexts and has transformed the ideas so that they can express them appropriately in their own words. Demonstrates an appreciation of the limits of their own understanding. | Exhibits accurate and elaborated breath and depth of understanding of concepts in the knowledge domain. Knows how particular facts came to be. Demonstrates an appreciation of the limitations and temporary nature of conceptual knowledge in the discipline or field. Can generate and justify principles, protocols and hypotheses. |
| **Psychomotor Skills & procedures** | Cannot complete tasks and standard procedures unaided. | Can successfully complete most tasks largely unaided. Does not exhibit a capacity to make adaptations to account for situational factors unaided. Can practice safely under supervision. Demonstrates limited capacity to evaluate their own behaviour and skill level and to establish personal learning goals | Can independently complete all tasks and standard procedures successfully and safely. Can provide theoretical explanation for them. Can adapt standard procedures and protocols effectively for novel contexts to meet situational demands and can use theory to defend the adaptations. Can critique their own practice and identify ways to improve. | Effectively executes procedures and skills that are embedded within a theoretical framework. Selects from a range of options, appropriate ways of proceeding taking contextual factors into account and providing a theoretically defensible rationale for doing so. Can prioritise and make compromises and provide a justification. |
| **Communication Skills** | Poor verbal communication and listening skills accompanied by a lack of self-awareness of impact on others. | Communicates ideas and relates sensitively to others. Can listen to the ideas of others and respond to them. | Communicates most effectively and explains ideas clearly. Actively listens to others and responds appropriately, reflecting a personal understanding of the viewpoint expressed. | Balances listening and responding. Synthesizes what has been heard and evaluates or elaborates in responses to others ideas offering alternative perspectives. |

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| Use of mathematical ideas | Knows a few mathematical ideas and rules can use them with supervision. | Rule based, knows basic concepts and rules and can use them to solve problems and in novel contexts. Requires support for transferring to new situations. | Thorough and accurate understanding of concepts and processes and can analyse and apply them in new situations. | Uses principles and theories accurately Abstracts and applies them in novel situations. Uses concepts to build new knowledge and understanding. Recognises the limitations of current thinking. Is open to new ways of mathematical thinking and problems solving. |
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| **Reasoning** | Personal and anecdotal | Rule based, derived largely from authority (texts, teachers, authority figures). Mostly 'black and white' thinking. Little interpretation or translation. | Can recognise competing explanations and can identify the relative merits and limitations of an argument or position. Can describe and defend their own view or position. | Uses principles to formulate a position or an argument. Can articulate the limited nature of their argument and can challenge to boundaries of disciplinary understanding. |
| **Analysis** | Personal and anecdotal | Descriptive and anecdotal with limited use of theoretical frameworks. . Limited capacity to identify the complex factors within a larger idea or context. Limited capacity to synthesise a number ideas into a larger argument. | Can break large ideas, situations or problems down into components and explain each using the theoretical ideas and concepts of the discipline.  Can synthesise a number of concepts or factors into a larger idea. Can evaluate the salience & limitations of arguments | Analysis is sophisticated with a balance of theory and personal reflection. Capable of generalising from personal reflection on theoretical ideas or real life experiences to formulate principles and evaluate the efficacy of ideas from a number of standpoints. |
| **Ethico-moral reasoning** | Black and white thinking. Dependent on the views of authority and experiences difficulty in formulating own opinion or in hearing the efficacy of another's opinion. | Multipulistic or relativistic thinking. Still largely dependent on the views of authority to form an opinion.  Can hear differences in viewpoints but is persuaded by majority viewpoint. Conclusions summarize view points rather that formulate opinions. | Weighs an idea to formulate and justify personal conclusions.  Recognises the need for compromise in decision-making. Can recognise the competing interests in arguments and identify the ethical issues embodied in them. | Uses principles to decipher competing interests and views.  Can elaborate on the ethical and moral positions inherent in viewpoints and actions. Articulates a personal position, but is willing to surrender it should further persuasive evidence become available. |
| **Professional and work based literacy** | Fails to notice important information and factors in the workplace.  Requires constant supervision.  Unable to make independent decisions.<br>Is not safe. Does not relate to colleagues and clients appropriately. Does not seek guidance through sensible questioning. | Can practice safely. Carries out most procedures without direct supervision. Notices basic contextual cues and asks questions. Attempts to relate to colleagues and clients. Functions largely through imitation, protocols and rules rather than through problem posing, critical reasoning and effective problem solving strategies. Finds little relevance in the workplace for theoretical concepts. | Establishes personal learning goals. Practices safely, balances initiative and independence with seeking guidance and feedback.  Uses/critiques theoretical learning in the workplace. Considers and prioritises alternative action. Relates professionally to colleagues and clients. Makes effective contributions to the workplace. Understands organisational structure, functions and contemporary social context and issues that impact on it. | Makes a major contribution to the organisation though judicious use of the academic learning. Has the capacity to notice important cues in the workplace environment. Can work independently and take initiative as well as co-operating effectively in a team. Investigates the organisation and understands the social, political and economic factors that impact on it. Establishes personal learning goals and monitors their own learning. |

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| **Cultural and global literacy** | Fails to recognise cultural differences or issues> does not recognise bias in their own personal views as or appreciate their culturally embedded values. Take's a fairly ethnocentric view on most issues. | Recognises their own viewpoint as one of a number of competing views. Understands that they have tacit personal biases to justify their opinions and actions. Recognises cultural differences and competing interests. | Recognise cultural differences and how they are enacted in the social life, economic privilege and personal and political empowerment and marginalisation. | Demonstrates a critical understanding of own cultural history and how it influences their interpretation of privilege and oppression. Able to articulate how social institutions perpetuate 'othering' and continued racialised practice and maginalisation. |
| **Aesthetic Appreciation** | Is unable to engage in any discussion about aesthetics | Is encyclopedic in any discussion of aesthetics, using the language of lectures and texts appropriately, but reveals no personal views or ideas | Is able to identify elements of a complex whole and can appreciate aesthetic qualities using course related concepts appropriately. Can compare the qualities of similar bodies of work. | Able to identify and comment on elements of a complex body of work. Demonstrates a capacity to understand the underlying ideology or genre of a body, critically evaluating its relative worth using course concepts. Suggests improvements for a body of work. |
| **Technological Literacy** | Is uncomfortable in using technologies. Needs support. Rule based. | Largely rule-based, but can function independently. Can transfer some learning from one platform to another. | Confident, independent user of a variety of technologies and platforms. Understands underlying principles and uses this understanding to move between platforms and modalities. Is open to technological change and development. | A sophisticated and independent adopter of new technologies to solve organisational and informational problems. Can adapt technologies to meet personal preferences rather than adapting practice to standard platforms. Creative and innovative interaction with technology. |
| **Information Literacy** | Uses immediately available information with little discrimination. Cannot independently seek out and locate required information. | Can seek out and locate required information with minimal support. Does not always discriminate effectively between sources of information. | Can independently seek out and locate required information. Is selective, effectively discriminating between sources of information. | Independently seeks out and locates required information. Is selective and discriminates between sources of information. Adopts effective processes for storage and retrieval of information. |
| **Use of Academic Conventions** | Absence or inaccurate use of referencing and citation conventions. | Basic referencing accurate and use of a bibliography and or reference list. Sometimes lacks consistency, but never the less is a reasonable acknowledgment of the sources of information | Use of academic conventions such as referencing and citation is accurate, consistent and appropriate for the discipline. | Use of academic conventions such as referencing and citation is accurate, consistent and appropriate for the discipline. Able to adapt the approach to different disciplinary conventions. |
| **Use of academic writing and presentation grammars** | Does not demonstrate an understanding of what is expected in presentation of learning products. E.g. Fails to use spell checker, some sentences fail to have verbs, poorly punctuated, written in note form. paragraphs have only one sentence etc | Adheres to most basic expectations regarding the formatting and presentation of work. E.g., titles name on work, introduction, conclusion, and reference list. Has correct sections for reports, case notes etc. Spell checked & grammatically correct. | Adheres to all expectations and conventions with all expected attributes present. Some translation and interpretation of the conventions to suit personal style and the specific execution of the task. | All expectations and conventions with all expected attributes present but have been creatively interpreted to suit personal style and the specific execution of the task. A unique but appropriate presentation of work. |