

Outcome-focused criterion-referenced rubrics: The New Normal

Bhavani Sridharan; Jamie Mustard; Phillip Dawson (Abridged Version)

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Preamble

The purpose of this document is to provide a succinct guide to the adoption of a revised outcome-focused rubric framework in the Faculty (Business and Law) to meet the new challenges of evidencing learning outcomes and quality assurance process. To facilitate effective assurance of learning (AoL) and closing the loop processes, the following guide has been developed to provide quick tips for implementing the framework standards, an evaluation tool for checking if minimum standards are met, and exemption guidelines.

To facilitate a consistent approach to rubric use in the faculty, a number of focus group interviews with students and markers were conducted. The findings from the focus group meetings and interviews with marking staff were disseminated at the rubric working group party meeting. Based on the discussion with key stakeholders, including DOTs, other stakeholders and experts, the following key decisions were endorsed through consensus decision-making process.

- Use of consistent 6 level rubric across the Faculty
- Use of consistent language for level description
- Use of consistent format for criteria descriptors (Descriptive)
- Use of both ULO along with specific GLO in rubric criteria



1. Faculty Standardised Rubric Framework

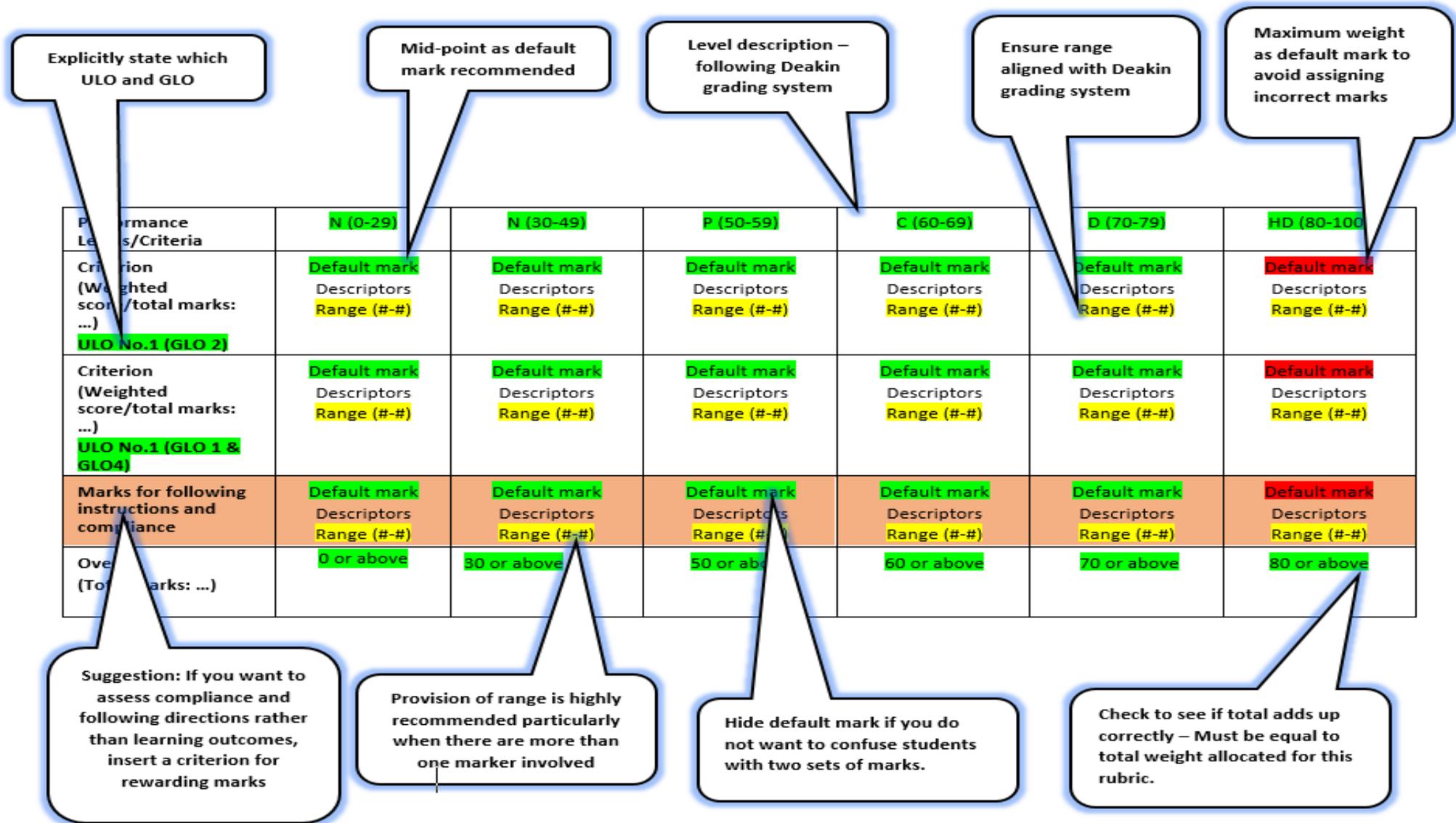
The following template is a modified version of the original Faculty mandated rubric template published in 2013 with some changes to align with CloudDeakin systems and to facilitate the transformation of an outcome-focused rubric. Some recommendations along with three types of elements are highlighted below. In addition, the proposed template provides some guidance to avoid some of the commonly made mistakes in designing rubrics.

Notes:

- Independent assessment of GLO-6 (self-management) and GLO-7 (Teamwork) is highly recommended instead of combining it with GLO-1 (Discipline specific knowledge).

- Alignment of overall rubric mark allocation with assessment weight is highly recommended.
- Midpoint mark is highly recommended for default choice for all levels except for the highest level (maximum criteria weight should be allocated for the highest (HD) level).
- If you want to assess compliance and following directions rather than learning outcomes, insert a criteria for penalising rather than rewarding marks
- It is important to note that rubric is not a substitute for feedback. Therefore, provision of constructive and actionable feedback is critical for enhancing learning outcomes.
- Rubric calculator tool can be used to ensure accurate allocation of marks across all criteria and levels. If you don't have a personal copy of this tool, please contact BL Learning Innovations Support: bl-learninginnovations@deakin.edu.au
- See table-1 below for specific details about faculty standard rubric – legend below
 - **Green – Mandatory for assurance of learning and CD system requirement**
 - **Yellow: Optional but useful for markers, students and teaching staff**
 - **Red: Mandatory fixed Rule -Weight must equal to default mark in excellent column (Online rubric system requirement)**

Figure 1. Faculty rubric framework with annotated key elements



2. Rubric Minimum standard Tool

The following comprehensive diagnostic tool in table 1 is provided to help teaching staff self-evaluate their rubric to help identify any issues that may compromise the quality of rubrics from four lenses: pedagogical, technical, operational and evaluational.

Table 1. Diagnostic matrix for evaluating rubrics

Dimension – Pedagogical	Response
Are the rubric criteria outcome-focused? (NOT task or question or compliance or rote learning focused).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does your rubric criteria explicitly state ULO and specific GLO?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does your rubric criteria explicitly include weight allocation for each criteria?	
Does your Rubric criteria contain NOT more than one generic GLO (GLO2 to GLO8) (You can combine GLO1 with preferably any other GLO other than GLO6 and GLO7 but not 2 or more generic GLO (e.g. not GLO2 and GLO3)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Do the criteria cover the key aspects of the assignment?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Are the performance level and criteria descriptors are distinct, with grading progress in logical order? (Must have clear descriptors measuring each level of mastery).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Are the descriptors helpful in measuring performance levels (use measurable language/verbs)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Technical	
Is the performance level description aligned with the faculty standard?	
Is the highest level (HD) default mark equal to criteria weight? (To avoid assigning incorrect marks)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the mark allocated accurately as per the level for criteria? (To ensure that marks are aligned with Deakin grading system - You may want to validate it using Rubric Calculator tool)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the mark allocated accurately as per the level for overall performance? (To ensure that marks are aligned with Deakin grading system - You may want to validate it using Rubric Calculator tool)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Operational	
Is the performance level description aligned with the faculty standard?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the performance level description aligned with the faculty standard (see above)?	
Is the format of descriptors is aligned with faculty standard (see above)?	
Is the number of levels equal to 6? (To ensure consistency across all rubrics absolute number of levels must be 6)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the rubric available on CD upon publication of assignment on CloudDeakin?	
Do markers have common shared understanding of expected performance levels for each criterion? (Calibrate to ensure consistent marking).	
Have you checked for intra-rater (same marker at two different times) marking consistency using the rubric before commencing marking?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Have you checked for inter-rater (different markers) marking consistency using the rubric before commencing marking?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Evaluational	
Is the rubric concise and clear to communicate effectively with your audience (students and markers)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the rubric combine product and process? If yes, is it appropriate? (It is ok to combine process and product if the objective is the same).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does your rubric fit within an A4 size paper? (Ideal rubric should fit within an A4 size paper)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3. Exemption Criteria – Broad Guidelines

If you want an exemption from using the faculty standardised rubric, please contact ADTL (kerrie.bridson@deakin.edu.au) providing justification for not using the faculty standard. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Use of Faculty Standard **Analytic** Rubric is not tenable in some instances. Use of other options (such as **holistic rubric or multiple choice questions**) can be explored in the following instances.

- When the assessment task/learning outcome relates to recalling or rote learning skills (Big No).
- When the assessment task/learning outcome relates to 2 or 3 possible answers (yes/No; True/False; correct/incorrect/not valid - type answers). This is particularly applicable for assessment tasks that require quantitative calculations and objective type questions (a few accounting and statistics Units have these types tasks included in their assessments)
- When the assessment task/learning outcome relates to holistic assessment where the tasks cannot be broken down into criteria (e.g. if it will kill/restrict the creativity – e.g. creative piece)
- When the assessment task is fully summative (assessment of learning (AoL) and feedback is not required for students (e.g. end of year exam)
- When the assessment task is very open-ended without any specific expectation – when the Unit Chair suspects it will restrict students' thinking process rather than expanding their thinking process.
- When the assessment task occurs in a classroom environment through observation (e.g. role play or group discussion or oral presentation) and use of comprehensive analytic rubric is not feasible owing to time constraint and the need for quick turnarounds.
- When the assessment task involves assessing behavioural skills – e.g. emotional intelligence. Likert scale is more appropriate in the front end than norm-referenced assessment (particularly for soft skills).