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WHAT IS IT?

Peer assessment involves students in monitoring and making judgments about the quality of their peer's work and achievement of learning outcomes. It can work particularly well with learning or assessment activities where the student body acts as an audience, such as writing tasks, presentations or role plays. It can also be used to provide feedback during stages of an assessment activity, such as a written report. Self-assessment has similar attributes. It is valuable in guiding a student to take honest measure of their own capabilities and helps them gain confidence in self-directed learning. Peer and self-assessment work together to develop a student's meta-cognitive skills, and enhance their capacity for independent and lifelong learning.

WHY USE IT?

- Provides opportunities for feedback within a supported environment, facilitated by open discussions either online or during class time. Focus should be provided on explaining, guiding and managing the learning process by empowering students to critically assess and provide constructive feedback on each other's work as well as their own.
- Fosters group cohesion by promoting 'ownership' of learning, and the peer review process develops clarity of thought and expression in a social context.
- Provides an opportunity to learn to work cooperatively which can align to processes in modern workplaces, as students develop reflection and evaluation skills as well as learn how to constructively critique the work of others.

WHAT COULD I USE?

- vUWS Self and Peer Assessment Tool
- Turnitin PeerMark

CONSIDERATIONS

- As peer review is likely to be an unfamiliar or new learning/assessment activity for many students, careful planning and design is needed to ensure that expectations are clear and that specific tasks are adequately defined and framed.
- The development of clear marking rubrics and ensuring that students are able to interpret and apply the criteria are critical elements to facilitating effective self and peer-assessment.
- Skills in self and peer-assessment are developed incrementally and scaffolded through practice, so it may be necessary to develop a strategy for teaching and using these skills at the program level.

HOW DO I DO IT?

1. Provide students with a sample writing task. As a group, students can discuss and determine what should be assessed and how criteria for successful completion of the communication task could be defined.
2. Allow students to practice peer reviewing. Students assess this using criteria they have developed or have been given, and determine how to convey feedback clearly to the fictitious student.
3. Peers can correct or review preliminary work or early drafts of a piece of work, while the teacher grades a more refined final document/product.
4. The final grade awarded could be a combination of the teacher's mark and peer graders' averaged mark.
5. If reviewing an online assessment task, electronic files can be exchanged for peer review and comment. Analytics may also be used to automatically measure the level and regularity of engagement with the peer review if an online forum is used.
6. Students could also develop, under supervision of the teacher, the marking guides (rubrics) to be applied to their work.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

- [A Guide to Self and Peer Assessment: Approaches and Practice strategies for Academics](#) (Griffith University)
- [Creating a PeerMark Assignment](#) (Melbourne University)
- [Creating Self and Peer Assessments in Blackboard Learn](#)
- [Peer Assessment Strategies for Large Classes](#) (University of Toronto)
- [Peer and Self Assessment](#) (Deakin University)
- [Peer Review](#) (Science Education Resource Center at Carleton College)
- [Self and Peer Assessment](#) (Western Sydney University, QiLT)
- [Student Peer Assessment](#) (University of New South Wales)
- Topping, K.J. (2009), *Peer Assessment*, Theory into Practice, Vol 48 pp 20-27.