

Advanced grading method

Within Totara Learn most grading that takes place is **simple direct grading** (either numerical or a scale). Advanced grading methods allow you to grade based on criteria using either a grading rubric or marking guides.

Marking guides

A marking guide allows you to grade a learner based on a set of criterion.

You can either choose to add a new marking guide from scratch or to create one from a template.

Advanced grading: Assignment 1 (Submissions)

Change active grading method to  Marking guide 

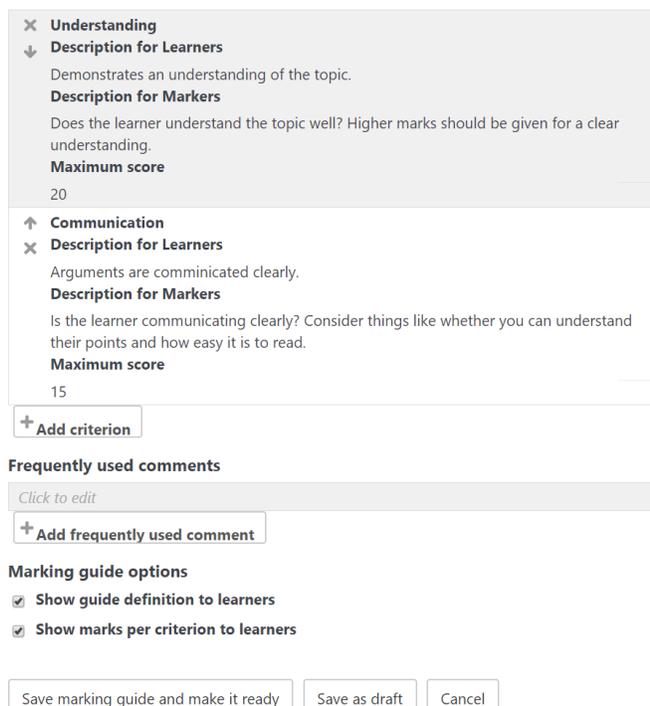


Creating a marking guide from scratch

To add a new marking guide you will first need to [add an assignment](#), you will then need to follow these steps:

1. In the **Administration** block select **Advanced grading**.
2. Next, select **Marking guide** in the **Change active grading method to** dropdown.
3. Click on **Define a new marking guide from scratch**.
4. Add a name and description.
5. You can now start adding marking criterion - you can fill out the first one then click **Add criterion** to add more.
 - Add a **Name** e.g. 'Understanding'.
 - Add a **Description for learners** - this will let them know what the criterion means.
 - Add a **Description for markers** - this will help guide them when marking.
 - Add the **Maximum score** (the highest amount that can be given for this criterion).
6. Add **Frequently used comments** - these can then be used to make marking quicker.
7. Configure **Marking guide options**.
8. Click **Save marking guide and make it ready** (or if you want to work more on the marking guide **Save as draft**).

Marking guide



The screenshot shows the configuration interface for a marking guide. It features a list of criteria with expandable sections for 'Description for Learners' and 'Description for Markers', and a 'Maximum score' field. Below the criteria list is an 'Add criterion' button. There is also a section for 'Frequently used comments' with an 'Add frequently used comment' button. At the bottom, there are 'Marking guide options' with two checked checkboxes: 'Show guide definition to learners' and 'Show marks per criterion to learners'. At the very bottom, there are three buttons: 'Save marking guide and make it ready', 'Save as draft', and 'Cancel'.

Understanding
Description for Learners
Demonstrates an understanding of the topic.
Description for Markers
Does the learner understand the topic well? Higher marks should be given for a clear understanding.
Maximum score
20

Communication
Description for Learners
Arguments are communicated clearly.
Description for Markers
Is the learner communicating clearly? Consider things like whether you can understand their points and how easy it is to read.
Maximum score
15

+ Add criterion

Frequently used comments
Click to edit
+ Add frequently used comment

Marking guide options
 Show guide definition to learners
 Show marks per criterion to learners

Save marking guide and make it ready Save as draft Cancel

Adding a marking guide from a template

To add a new marking guide you will first need to [add an assignment](#), you will then need to follow these steps:

1. In the **Administration** block select **Advanced grading**.
2. Next, select **Marking guide** in the **Change active grading method to** dropdown.
3. Select **Create new marking guide from a template**.
4. You will be able to browse or search for the marking guide you wish to use.
5. Once you have found the marking guide click **Use this template** underneath it.
6. You will then need to click **Continue** to confirm you wish to use that template.

You can now use the template or edit it to better suit your purposes.

Using a marking guide

If you wish to use a marking guide then you need to make sure that **Grading method** is set to **Marking guide**. You can then [create a marking guide from scratch](#) or [add an existing one from a template](#) (it will need to have been [published as a template](#)).

Then when you go to the table of submission simply follow these steps:

1. Click **Grade** alongside the submission you wish to start marking.
2. Use the marking guide to help you grade, by considering each criterion and then giving a mark and leaving a comment that is appropriate for that criterion. If you have set up frequently used comments then you may find these help to speed up the marking process.
3. Once you have finished marking a learner you can use the arrows in the top right to change users and mark another learner.
4. If you are finished marking entirely click **Save changes** before exiting to save your marks and comments.



Demo User 2

demo2.user@totallearning.com

Grade

Grade:

Understanding

Demonstrates an understanding of the topic.

Does the learner understand the topic well? Higher marks should be given for a clear understanding.

/50

Communication

Arguments are communicated clearly.

Is the learner communicating clearly? Consider things like whether you can understand their points and how easy it is to read.

/50

Show marker criterion descriptions Hide marker criterion descriptions

Show student criterion descriptions Hide learner criterion descriptions

Current grade in gradebook

Feedback comments

Notify learners

Save changes

Reset

Managing marking guides

Once you have added a marking guide you may wish to edit it. You can do this by going to **Advanced grading** in the assignment administration block.

You can use the options to edit the marking guide or delete it.

Advanced grading: Assignment 1 (Submissions)

Change active grading method to 

Marking guide



Edit the current form definition



Delete the currently defined form



Publish the form as a new template

Demo marking guide Ready for use

Understanding

Description for Learners

Sharing a marking guide

If you wish to share your marking guide with other trainers, so that they can also use it, then you need to follow these steps:

1. Go to the assignment that has the marking guide associated to it.
2. Click **Publish the form as a new template**.
3. You will then need to confirm you wish to make this marking guide available across the site.

Rubrics

A rubric is a grading matrix that allows you to grade the learner based on a preset marking grid.

Advanced grading: Assignment 1 (Submissions)

Change active grading method to 

Rubric



Define new grading form from scratch



Create new grading form from a template

Creating a new rubric from scratch

To add a new rubric you will first need to [add an assignment](#), you will then need to follow these steps:

1. In the **Administration** block select **Advanced grading**.
2. Next, select **Rubric** in the **Change active grading method to** dropdown.
3. Click on **Define a new grading form from scratch**.
4. Add a name and description.
5. You can now start adding criterion to the rubric, clicking **Add criterion** for each criterion you need to add:
 - **Criterion:** This can be a name or description for example simply 'Understanding' or 'The learner demonstrates a clear understanding of the topic'. A fuller criterion can help guide other trainers when marking.
 - **Level:** Each criterion has a series of marking levels, which are the different point scales, for example you might have four levels going from Poor - Excellent. Each level can include a description of what it entails and is allocated a certain number of marks (these can be ascending or descending). Click **Add level** at the end of the criterion row to add additional levels.
6. Repeat step 5 as many times as you wish.
7. Configure **Rubric options**.
8. Click **Save marking guide and make it ready** (or if you want to work more on the marking guide **Save as draft**).



When adding criterion you can use the duplicate () icon to copy the current criterion and its levels - this is helpful if the levels are similar for subsequent criterion. You can also use the arrows to reorder criterion and the cross to remove them (the cross can also be used within a level to remove that level).

There are required fields in this form marked *.

Name*

Rubric 1

Description

Rich text editor with toolbar (bold, italic, list, link, unlink, image, video, link icon) and content: "This is a rubric for assessing learners."

Rubric

<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding of the topic.	Poor: Shows little or no understanding of the topic. 0 points <input type="checkbox"/>	Average: Shows some understanding of the topic, although further work is required. 5 points <input type="checkbox"/>	Good: Shows a solid understanding of the topic. 10 points <input type="checkbox"/>	Excellent: Show a deep understanding of the topic and it's implications. 15 points <input type="checkbox"/>	Add level
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Click to edit criterion	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Click to edit level 0 points <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Click to edit level 1 points <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Click to edit level 2 points <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Click to edit level 2 points <input type="checkbox"/>	Add level

+ Add criterion

Rubric options

Sort order for levels: Ascending by number of points

- Calculate grade based on the rubric having a minimum score of 0
- Allow users to preview rubric (otherwise it will only be displayed after grading)
- Display rubric description during evaluation
- Display rubric description to those being graded
- Display points for each level during evaluation
- Display points for each level to those being graded
- Allow grader to add text remarks for each criterion
- Show remarks to those being graded

Save rubric and make it ready Save as draft Cancel

Adding a rubric from a template

To add a new marking guide you will first need to [add an assignment](#), you will then need to follow these steps:

1. In the **Administration** block select **Advanced grading**.
2. Next, select **Rubric** in the **Change active grading method** to dropdown.
3. Select **Create new grading form from a template**.
4. You will be able to browse or search for the rubric you wish to use.
5. Once you have found the marking guide click **Use this template** underneath it.
6. You will then need to click **Continue** to confirm you wish to use that template.

You can now use the template or edit it to better suit your purposes.

include my own forms

Search

Rubric 1 Shared template

This is a rubric for assessing learners.

Understanding of the topic.	Poor: Shows little or no understanding of the topic. 0 points	Average: Shows some understanding of the topic, although further work is required. 5 points	Good: Shows a solid understanding of the topic. 10 points	Excellent: Show a deep understanding of the topic and it's implications. 15 points
Application of knowledge.	Poor: Little or no application of knowledge. 0 points	Average: Knowledge has been applied but only at a basic level. 10 points	Good: A good application of knowledge that shows real skill. 20 points	Excellent: An expert application of knowledge that shows a high level of skill. 30 points
Assignment structure.	Poor: There is no real structure to the assignment and it is hard to understand 0 points	Average: The assignment has a basic structure although it is difficult to understand in parts 5 points	Good: The assignment has a solid structure and is easy to understand. 10 points	

Rubric options

Sort order for levels: **Ascending by number of points**

- Calculate grade based on the rubric having a minimum score of 0 ?
- Allow users to preview rubric (otherwise it will only be displayed after grading)
- Display rubric description during evaluation
- Display rubric description to those being graded
- Display points for each level during evaluation
- Display points for each level to those being graded
- Allow grader to add text remarks for each criterion
- Show remarks to those being graded



Use this template



Delete

This is a rubric for assessing learners.

Back

Rubric option settings

Setting	Description	Notes
Sort order for levels	Choose from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ascending by number of points • Descending by number of points 	-
Calculate grade based on the rubric having a minimum score of 0	This setting only applies if the sum of the minimum number of points for each criterion is greater than 0. If ticked, the minimum achievable grade for the rubric will be greater than 0. If unticked, the minimum possible score for the rubric will be mapped to the minimum grade available for the activity (which is 0 unless a scale is used).	-
Allow users to preview rubric (otherwise it will only be displayed after grading)	Decide if learners can see the rubric before receiving their grade. This can help them familiarise themselves with the grading criterion before submitting their assignment.	-

Display rubric description during evaluation	Decide if you wish learners to see this and get an idea of the basis of the rubric during the evaluation stage.	-
Display rubric description to those being graded	Decide if you wish learners to see this and get an idea of the basis of the rubric whilst they are being graded.	-
Display points for each level during evaluation	Decide if you wish learners to see this and get an idea of the point levels of the rubric during the evaluation stage.	-
Display points for each level to those being graded	Decide if you wish learners to see this and get an idea of the point levels of the rubric whilst they are being graded.	-
Allow grader to add text remarks for each criterion	If this is enabled then graders can add additional remarks to explain or justify why they have chosen a certain point level for one or more criterion - this can help the learner understand what they did right or wrong and build upon that moving forward.	-
Show remarks to those being graded	Decide if you wish the remarks to be shown to learners.	-

Using a rubric

If you wish to use a rubric then you need to make sure that **Grading method** is set to **Rubric**. You can then [create a rubric from scratch](#) or [add an existing one from a template](#) (it will need to have been [published as a template](#)).

Then when you go to the table of submission simply follow these steps:

1. Click **Grade** alongside the submission you wish to start marking.
2. Use the rubric to help you grade, by considering each criterion and selecting the appropriate level, you can also leave a comment if this setting has been enabled.
3. Once you have finished marking a learner you can use the arrows in the top right to change users and mark another learner.
4. If you are finished marking entirely click **Save changes** before exiting to save your marks and comments.



Grade

Grade:



This is a rubric for assessing learners.

Understanding of the topic.	Poor: Shows little or no understanding of the topic. 0 points	Average: Shows some understanding of the topic, although further work is required. 5 points	Good: Shows a solid understanding of the topic. 10 points	Excellent: Show a deep understanding of the topic and it's implications. 15 points	This is my remark.
Application of knowledge.	Poor: Little or no application of knowledge. 0 points	Average: Knowledge has been applied but only at a basic level. 10 points	Good: A good application of knowledge that shows real skill. 20 points	Excellent: An expert application of knowledge that shows a high level of skill. 30 points	
Assignment structure.	Poor: There is no real structure to the assignment and it is hard to understand 0 points	Average: The assignment has a basic structure although it is difficult to understand in parts 5 points	Good: The assignment has a solid structure and is easy to understand. 10 points		

Current grade in gradebook

Feedback comments



Notify learners

Save changes

Reset

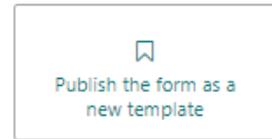
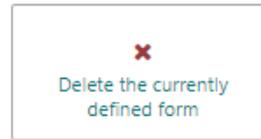
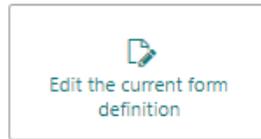
Managing rubric

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You can use the options to edit the marking guide or delete it.

Advanced grading: Assignment 1 (Submissions)

Change active grading method to  Rubric 



Sharing a rubric

If you wish to share your rubric with other trainers, so that they can also use it, then you need to follow these steps:

1. Go to the assignment that has the rubric associated to it.
2. Click **Publish the form as a new template**.
3. You will then need to confirm you wish to make this rubric available across the site.

Grade calculation

The rubric normalised score (i.e. basically a percentage grade) is calculated by adding all of the scores given (minus the minimum score possible) over the maximum grades (minus the minimum grades to achieve a fraction which is then converted into a percentage).

For example, if you had an assessment form with two criteria, which both have four levels. The Trainer chooses the level with 2 points for the first criterion and 3 points for the second criterion. Then the normalised score is:

This calculation may be different from how you intuitively use rubric. For example, if the Trainer in the example chose both levels with 1 point, the plain sum would be 2 points. But that is actually the lowest possible score so it maps to the grade 0 in Totara. To avoid confusion, it is recommended to always include a level with 0 points in the rubric definition.

Totara Academy



The Totara Academy has a whole course dedicated to using [Grading, completion and certificates](#) in Totara Learn. Here you can learn more on how to use these tools, see best practice, and give it a go yourself.