CS-C3150 - Software Engineering, Lecture, 4.9.2023-13.12.2023

Syllabus   Course feedback

How to peer assess

A quick guide for how to peer assess, give comments and what the TAs are looking for in the peer assessments - this is not a final version so any feedback is appreciated!

How to peer assess

We've received several inquiries about peer assessments, and we believe that this guide can enhance your proficiency in both achieving the highest score and delivering specific, valuable, and constructive feedback.

Let's begin with the fundamentals: Each week, you'll be assigned three essays to assess. Failing to complete all your peer assessments will result in nullifying your essay points and peer assessment. The peer assessment rubrics will primarily comprise the following areas:

1.   Content Area 1

2.   Content Area 2

3.   Content Area, etc.

4.   Referencing

5.   Plagiarism

6.   Overall Assessment

7.   Length

Grading approach

There are various approaches to peer assessments. Some prefer to start with a perfect score and deduct points as they go through the rubric, while others opt to "build" points from 0. Both methods are valid and should yield the same results. We understand that assigning points for each aspect may be challenging, especially when you feel that a student has produced a strong essay that doesn't precisely match the rubric's criteria. In such cases, we encourage you to adopt an approach discussed in the Telegram group from the previous course: "I have just given points even if the essay wasn't exactly to the letter of the grading criteria but in the spirit, i.e., the author clearly understands the topic but doesn't mention the exact things". This approach is entirely acceptable from the course's perspective and aligns with many content area rubrics, which often emphasize that the listed aspects are not the only ones to consider when assigning points.

Regarding the referencing aspect, the goal is not to penalize minor issues like missing page numbers in in-text citations. Points should only be deducted if referencing shortcomings significantly impact the essay's quality. Keep in mind students' diverse backgrounds as well, most students taking this course are not native English speakers and as such language shortcomings should not be penalized. You can comment on them in a constructive manner.

The overall assessment of the essay should be just that – an overall assessment. If the essay is lacking in one aspect but perfect in the others, then you can still give it full points for this aspect. This is also the place where you can comment on essay technical aspects such as structure, flow, how logically the essay presents its content etc.

Comment / feedback approach

Now that you've assigned points to each aspect, let's discuss the comments you should provide. It's crucial to comment on both the essay and the grading you've just completed. We recommend addressing each aspect individually, offering motivation and justification for your grading, while also providing constructive tips for improvement. In cases where you've deducted points for referencing, plagiarism, or length, comments are necessary. The overall assessment section serves as an excellent opportunity to provide students with actionable feedback. Remember, it's vital to maintain a respectful and constructive tone, even when offering substantial criticism. Also, remember that full points should be justified, and positive feedback is just as valuable as constructive critique.

TA team perspective

As the TA team, we'll be assessing peer assessments based on several criteria. Firstly, we'll ensure that the assessments are fair, meaning that assigning a 4/4 score to an essay of quality 2/4 or giving 1/4 for a 4/4 essay is not equitable. Secondly, we'll evaluate the amount of feedback you've provided. A peer assessment with zero comments will receive a grade of zero. To earn a 2/2 rating in peer assessment, you should provide fair grading, identify potential essay shortcomings, and offer specific and constructive feedback on how the writer can improve both their essay and their overall essay-writing skills. A peer assessment with a score of 1/2 typically has deficiencies, either in the fairness of the assessment or the feedback provided to the writer. We are not looking for any specific word length in this category, instead we look at the peer assessment holistically.

Hopefully, this guide will empower you to succeed in your peer assessments!

Last modified: Wednesday, 25 October 2023, 9:04 AM

MyCourses support for students

A!
Aalto-yliopisto
Aalto-universitetet
Aalto University

Students
- MyCourses instructions for students
- Support form for students

Teachers
- MyCourses help
- MyTeaching Support

About service
- MyCourses protection of privacy
- Privacy notice
- Service description
- Accessibility summary