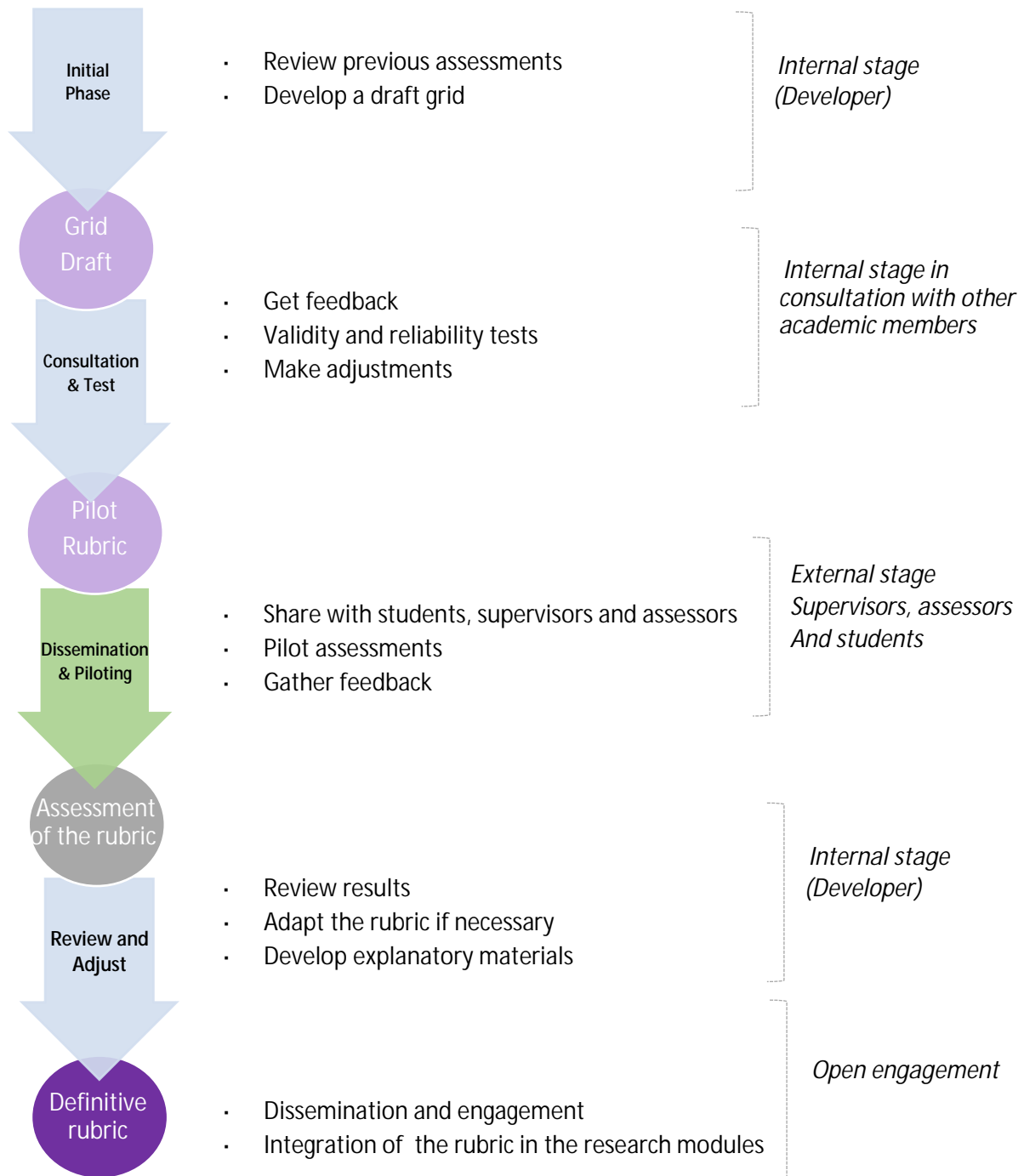


Guide to developing collaborative scoring rubrics for assessing dissertations

Steps and examples for developing collaborative rubrics for scoring undergraduate and Master's dissertations. It can be particularly useful in multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary fields when assessors come from different backgrounds.

Its development comprises four stages of internal work for the developer team with different types of external inputs in some of them (see figure 1).

Figure 1. Steps for developing collaborative scoring rubrics for assessing dissertations



Steps:

- I. Initial phase: development of a draft grid.
 1. Review of academic contributions about rubrics.
 2. Review of assessment reports from previous academic years.
 - i. Identify common and divergent assessment criteria and rating scales.
 3. Consult with supervisors and assessors from previous academic years on the assessing criteria and rating scales that they consider appropriate.
 4. Gather of rubrics developed by other HE institutions with similar objectives to identify common aspects.
 5. Development of a grid draft.
- II. Consult on the grid draft and test it.
 6. Circulate the preliminary grid among supervisors and assessors from the last two academic years to get feedback.
 7. Test the validity and reliability of the grid in the score of dissertations from previous years. (See text box 1)
 8. Identify weak spots in the grid.
 9. Make adjustments and develop a pilot rubric.

Text box 1.

Validity test:

- Check that all the objectives pursued by the dissertation task are included in the scoring criteria.
- Check if among the scoring criteria there is any criteria unrelated to the objectives of the dissertation.
- Compare the results objectives – criteria. All the objectives should be included in the rubric. There should not be any criteria unrelated to the objectives of the dissertation

Reliability test:

- Check for intra-rater reliability: Rater A scores the dissertations in at least two different moments.
- Check for inter-rater reliability: The same sample of dissertations is rated by at least two different raters (A and B).
- Compare the scores A1, A2 and B and check for vagueness and inaccuracy in the grid.

- III. Disseminating and testing the pilot rubric
 10. Share the pilot rubric with current supervisors, dissertation students, and also with potential assessors.
 11. Apply the pilot rubric for the dissertation assessment.
 12. Survey supervisors and students for feedback on the rubric. See examples of useful questions in text box 2.

Text box 2.

Questions for the assessors:

- ✓ Do you think the rubrics used match well all the assessment criteria needed for the correct assessment of a XXX dissertation?
 - Yes, the rubrics match the criteria completely
 - Yes, the rubrics match the criteria in general but there are some unnecessary criteria included
 - Yes, the rubrics match the criteria in general, but there are some criteria missing.
 - Not in general, but I share some of the proposed criteria.
 - Not at all.
- ✓ If you consider that there is any criteria missing, please indicate which ones:
- ✓ If you believe that there is any unnecessary criteria, please indicate which ones.
- ✓ What do you think about the ranking scales included in the rubrics?
 - They are adequate
 - They are not adequate
- ✓ If you consider the ranking scales not adequate, please indicate which raking scales would you change and how.

Questions for the students:

- ✓ Do you think the descriptions of the assessment criteria reflect on what has been told you about how your dissertation should be?
 - Yes, completely agree
 - Yes, mostly agree
 - Only in part
 - Not at all
- ✓ What do you think about the ranking scales included in the rubrics?
 - They are adequate
 - They are not adequate
- ✓ If you consider the ranking scales not adequate, please indicate which raking scales would you change and how.
- ✓ What is the score that you would get self-assessing your dissertation with this rubric?

IV. Review and adjust the rubric

13. Review the results of the piloting.
14. Develop material for explaining the rubric.
15. Make adjustments in the grid considered necessary.

V. Implementation of the definitive rubric

16. Disseminate the rubric among supervisors, assessors and students.
 - a. Encourage supervisors to give feedback to the students using the rubric during the supervision cycle. Encourage students to self-assess their work using the rubric.
17. Integrate the grid as a content unit in the relevant research methods modules. This unit will review the content of the rubric analysing and explaining the assessment criteria corresponding to each one of the different aspects of the dissertation process, establishing a series of clear and precise guidelines about what it is quality in dissertation research. See an example in text box 3.

Text box 3.

Transversal Unit – The rubric for assessing the MSc dissertations as standard of quality in the social Research in local development.

- Using the rubric as reference point during the research (Link to the Unit in which this will be presented)
- Standards and assessment criteria about problem formulation (Link to the Unit in which this will be presented)
- Standards and assessment criteria about the importance of the contributions (Link to the Unit in which this will be presented)
- Standards and assessment criteria about the documentation assessment (Link to the Unit / units in which this will be presented)
- Standards and assessment criteria about formal issues (Link to the Unit in which this will be presented)
- Standards and assessment criteria about argumentation (Link to the Unit in which this will be presented)
- Standards and assessment criteria about research methodology (Link to the Unit in which this will be presented)