Assessment Self-Assessment Templates: Encouraging self-assessment in a digital context

Ciara O'Farrell

Eileen McEvoy

Academic Practice,
University of Dublin
Trinity College

2018

Sample questions for inclusion in Assignment Self-Assessment Templates

Including Self-Assessment in the Curriculum

Self-assessment is one of the most important skills that students attain for future professional development and life-long learning. Self-assessment enables students develop:

- a sense of responsibility for their own learning and the ability and desire to continue learning,
- self-knowledge and the ability to assess [their] own performance critically and accurately, and
- an understanding of how to apply [their] knowledge and abilities in different contexts.[1]

Guidelines for staff on self-assessment are available here. The guidelines include the rationale for using self-assessment, how best to prepare students for self-assessment, various models and examples of self-assessment, and the benefits and barriers associated with self-assessment.

Designing Self-Assessment Templates

One self-assessment method common in Trinity is the use of self-assessment sheets or online templates attached to or submitted with completed student assignments. These templates can provide an opportunity for students to propose a grade for their work, based on set criteria, and explain the rationale for their proposed grade. Alternatively, self-assessment sheets can solely focus on prompting students to consider their learning from the viewpoint of an assessor.

Self-assessment is useful to encourage in a remote context where students are already working at a more independent level. Many self-assessment strategies can be adapted easily to a digital context to encourage students to reflect on and evaluate their performance in an assignment. It's particularly valuable when self-assessment strategies are accompanied by an online rubric that shows students what success looks like and encourages them to evaluate their own work before they submit. This helps students to gauge if they have met the criteria and to what extent they have mastered the topic.

Questions included in self-assessment templates also prompt students to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of their work and consider what this tells them about their own learning and about actions that may need to be taken in the future. Depending on the level at which the student is studying, these questions can be framed with greater/less depth.

---

[1] Grantz, R and Gruber, R. (2014), 'How well did I learn what I learned? The Art of Self Assessment'. Journal of the Academy of Business Education, p. 26.

The completion of a self-assessment template should not be an onerous task. Rather, it should enhance students' positive engagement with their learning. It is best to only request that students respond to a maximum of three questions per assignment; even one question can suffice in some cases. Also, it is advisable to set a low word limit for responses to questions so that students can think through and focus their responses.

Example questions for students in the early stages of a programme of study

- Taking the marking criteria into account, what do you feel is a fair mark for this assignment? Why?
- In which aspects of this assignment do you think you performed best?
- Which aspects of this assignment did you find the most difficult?
- Is there anything you would change if you were to complete this assignment again?
- What is the most important thing you learned from completing this assignment?
- Is there any specific area of the assignment on which you would like to receive feedback?

Example questions for students at a middle stage of a programme of study

- Taking the marking criteria into account, what do you feel is a fair mark for this assignment? Please justify your proposed mark.
- What do you feel are the strengths of the assignment you are submitting? What helped you to make those aspects strong?
- What do you feel are the weakest aspects of the assignment you are submitting? Why do you think those aspects were not as strong as other aspects?
- What actions might you take in the future to assist you with those aspects with which you struggled?
- Did you learn anything in other modules that helped you in this assignment?
- How did you incorporate feedback from previous assignments into this assignment?
- Is there anything you learned by doing this assignment that you feel will be helpful in other modules?

Example questions for students at a later stage of a programme of study

- Taking the marking criteria into account, what do you feel is a fair mark for this assignment? Please justify your proposed mark.
- What actions could you take to improve your mark in an assignment such as this in the future?
- Is there anything you learned by doing this assignment that you feel will be helpful in your future career?
- Which aspects of the Trinity Graduate Attributes do you feel you developed through this assignment?
- What, if anything, did you learn about yourself, as a learner, from completing this assignment?

The following are sample self-assessment templates for student assignments. These samples include introductory texts and selected questions. If students are already requested to fill in an assignment submission form when they submit an assignment (see example here), the self-assessment question(s) may be incorporated/appended to that.

1. **Sample self-assessment template for a first-year essay assignment.**

   You are being asked to complete this self-assessment sheet to allow you to reflect upon and articulate what you learned through this assignment and how such learning came about.

   Becoming comfortable with assessing your own work and being able to evaluate critically its strengths and weaknesses is important, because it develops your abilities as an independent learner. This will be important as you progress through university and begin life as a graduate, when you will be expected to monitor and manage your own learning and outcomes.

   ## Sample self-assessment template for a first-year essay assignment

   - Student ID number(s):
   - Module code and title:
   - Name of lecturer:
   - Title of assignment:
   - Department/School:
   - Date submitted:
   - Taking the marking criteria into account, what do you feel is a fair mark for this assignment? Why do you feel this is a fair mark for your submitted assignment? (Max 300 words)

   - What have you yet to master in this assignment (Max 200 words)

2. Sample self-assessment template for a final-year group project assignment

You are being asked to complete this individual self-assessment sheet to allow you to reflect upon and articulate what you learned through this assignment and how such learning came about.

Being comfortable with assessing your own work and being able to evaluate critically its strengths and weaknesses is important, because it develops your abilities as an independent learner. This will be important as you begin life as a graduate, when you will be expected to monitor and manage your own learning and outcomes.

Sample self-assessment template for a final-year group project assignment

- Student ID number(s):
- Module code and title:
- Name of lecturer:
- Title of assignment:
- Department/School:
- Date submitted:
- Taking the marking criteria into account, what do you feel is a fair mark for this assignment? Justify your proposed mark. (Max 300 words)

- Is there anything you learnt by doing this assignment that you feel will be helpful in a future career (Max 300 words)