

Peer and Self-Assessment

Category: Assessment, Feedback and Learning

Peer assessment involves learners evaluating or giving feedback on the work of others; self-assessment involves judging one's own work against relevant criteria to decide what to improve. Their educational value lies principally in developing evaluative judgement and self-regulation, not in transferring marking labour to students.

Both practices require preparation. Learners need meaningful criteria, examples of quality, opportunities to practise judgement, constructive language and safeguards for inclusion and trust. Peer feedback may inform revision without peers determining formal grades, and self-assessment should be tested against external evidence ([Topping, 1998](#)).

Assessment for Learner Agency

1. **Clarify quality:** Interpret criteria and analyse exemplars before judging unfamiliar work.
2. **Practise judgement:** Compare decisions, explain reasons and calibrate with educator guidance.
3. **Give useful information:** Identify evidence, likely effect and a feasible improvement rather than vague opinion.
4. **Receive critically:** Consider several perspectives, ask questions and retain reasoned ownership of revisions.
5. **Reflect and act:** Assess one's own work, implement priorities and evaluate the resulting change.

Examples in Practice

Before submitting a design report, students annotate an exemplar, review two anonymous drafts and justify one priority for each. They then self-assess their own report, choose feedback to adopt and explain their revisions in a short note.

Why It Matters

Judging others' work can make tacit standards more visible and strengthen learners' capacity to monitor their own performance. Benefits are not automatic: untrained peer scoring, social risk or criteria used mechanically may reduce validity, fairness and engagement. Anonymity or careful grouping may be needed when status, language confidence or relationships could inhibit honest participation ([Andrade, 2019](#)).

Further Reading

6. Topping, K. (1998). [Peer assessment between students in colleges and universities](#). Review of Educational Research, 68(3), 249–276.
7. Andrade, H. L. (2019). [A critical review of research on student self-assessment](#). Frontiers in Education, 4, 87.
8. Panadero, E., Jonsson, A., & Botella, J. (2017). [Effects of self-assessment on self-regulated learning and self-efficacy: Four meta-analyses](#). Educational Research Review, 22, 74–98.

Related Terms: Feedback Literacy | Evaluative Judgement | Self-Regulated Learning | Collaborative Learning