

RUBRIC FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT AND ENHANCEMENT OF SERVICE LEARNING PROJECTS

GREM

Moral Education Research Group. Faculty of Education, University of Barcelona

This rubric is a tool designed to facilitate the self-assessment and enhancement of service-learning experiences. We present it in the form of twelve dimensions organised into three sections – basic, pedagogical and organisational – each of which contains four levels. We also propose models of analysis and discussion of the experiences, as well as forms of graphic representation.

Dimensions of SL	
Basic	<p>Needs: Shortcomings or difficulties presented by the reality of a particular situation and which, once detected, require actions aimed at improving that situation.</p> <p>Service: Set of tasks which are carried out altruistically and which produce a good that contributes towards alleviating certain needs.</p> <p>Significance of the service: Refers to the impact of the activity carried out, with respect to either the social benefit it produces or the civic awareness demonstrated by those performing it.</p> <p>Learning: Knowledge, competences, behaviours and values acquired spontaneously or through the educators.</p>
Pedagogical	<p>Participation: Intervention carried out by participants in an activity with the intention of contributing, together with other actors, to its design, application and assessment.</p> <p>Group work: Process of peer assistance aimed at the preparation and development of an activity undertaken by all participants.</p> <p>Reflection: Mechanism for the optimisation of learning based on consideration of the experience, in order to make sense of it and acquire new knowledge.</p> <p>Recognition: Set of actions intended to let participants in the activity know that they have carried it out correctly.</p> <p>Assessment: Process by which information is obtained to discover participants' performance in an activity and thus enable feedback to be offered which can help them improve.</p>
Organisational	<p>Partnership: Collaboration between one or more independent social institutions aimed at the joint performance of an activity.</p> <p>Centre consolidation: Process by which a formal or non-formal education centre discovers, pilots, integrates and supports any service-learning project.</p> <p>Organisation consolidation: Process by which a social organisation discovers, pilots, integrates and supports any service-learning project.</p>

Authors: J. Puig, X. Martín, L. Rubio, J. Palos, M. Gijón, M. de la Cerda, M. Graell.

Collaborators: M. López-Dóriga, L. Gómez, M. Páez, L. Campo.

Consult the complete guide: <http://www.aprenentatgeservei.cat>

If you would like to propose ideas to include in future editions of the rubric, please send them to: rubricaapsgrem@gmail.com

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BASIC	Needs	<i>Unknown.</i> The needs are not programmed and no activities are planned to detect or define them, though they are probably present in the project.	<i>Presented.</i> The educators and/or social organisations choose the needs the service will address, without consulting participants.	<i>Discovered.</i> Participants discover the needs by conducting a group research project that involves a critical comprehension of reality.
	Service	<i>Simple.</i> Short-term service comprising simple tasks whose execution represents limited involvement and demands on participants.	<i>Continued.</i> Long-term service comprising repetitive and/or easy-to-learn tasks whose execution requires moderate involvement and demands on participants.	<i>Creative.</i> Service of variable duration made up of complex tasks designed by the participants themselves to resolve a problematic situation which requires creativity and, thus, still higher levels of involvement and demands on those participants.
	Significance of the service	<i>Incidental.</i> Service which does not arise out of a detected need and whose possible social dimension is not perceived by participants.	<i>Necessary.</i> Service which responds to a community need, though participants do not always perceive its social dimension.	<i>Transformative.</i> Participants provide a response to a need and are aware of its social dimension. However, they are also aware of the limitations of any service that fails to consider political action.
	Learning	<i>Spontaneous.</i> The learning experiences are not programmed and there are no activities planned to facilitate them. They are acquired informally during the service.	<i>Planned.</i> The learning experiences are programmed in accordance with the curriculum or educational project and activities are designed to acquire them without necessarily taking into account their relation to the service.	<i>Innovative.</i> The learning experiences are acquired on the basis of a research activity, are related to the curriculum or educational project and directly linked to the service to the community.
PEDAGOGICAL	Participation	<i>Closed.</i> Participants limit their involvement to executing the previously planned activities, without being able to introduce modifications to the initial proposal.	<i>Defined.</i> Participants carry out one-off activities required by the educators at different points in the process.	<i>Shared.</i> Participants and their educators share responsibility in the design and development of the activity as a whole.
	Group work	<i>Undetermined.</i> Spontaneous processes of assistance among participants who conduct an individual service activity.	<i>Collaborative.</i> Processes based on the contribution of participants in a group project that requires bringing together different autonomous and interdependent tasks.	<i>Expansive.</i> Group work goes beyond the initial number of participants and actively integrates other external agents, thus creating community action networks.
	Reflection	<i>Vague.</i> Active reflection is not anticipated and tasks to promote it are not proposed, though each participant's experience can be considered and discussed spontaneously.	<i>Occasional.</i> Reflection is programmed and tasks are planned to facilitate it, though it occupies only a limited amount of time which is separated from the project's established course of activities.	<i>Productive.</i> In addition to being planned and continuous, reflection involves participants in an activity of synthesis or creation which produces a new benefit to the community.
	Recognition	<i>Casual.</i> No recognition activities are planned, though different agents may spontaneously offer their gratitude and appreciation for the tasks undertaken by participants.	<i>Intended.</i> The educators organise activities aimed at positively reinforcing participants' work and/or celebrating the conclusion of the service.	<i>Public.</i> Recognition of the participants acquires a public dimension, either because the activity is made known to the general public or because the local authority publicly expresses its gratitude and highlights the civic value of the service.
ORGANISATIONAL	Assessment	<i>Informal.</i> No assessment plan is established, though educators may on their own initiative occasionally make an assessment and communicate their findings to participants.	<i>Intuitive.</i> To conduct their assessment, educators simply record, with no defined criteria or indicators, the achievement of certain general learning goals which can be accredited.	<i>Joint.</i> Together with the educators, participants actively intervene at different stages in the preparation and application process of an assessment plan.
	Partnership	<i>Unilateral.</i> One, sole organisation, usually an educational institution, participates in the project, either because it has direct access to the service space, or because the recipient of the service forms part of that organisation.	<i>Directed.</i> At least two organisations participate in the project: the educational institution that plans and executes it, and the social organisation that simply provides the service venue.	<i>Built.</i> The organisations involved in the project jointly design and apply it from its initiation until the end of the process.
	Centre consolidation	<i>Incipient.</i> Service learning is known about because of a project already being carried out by an educator or due to the presentation of an experience undertaken in another centre.	<i>Accepted.</i> Service learning projects conducted as the result of a personal initiative are recognised by the centre's management team and backed by the teaching staff.	<i>Identity-defining.</i> Service learning forms part of the centre's culture and its educational project, and the centre presents it as a feature of its identity.
	Organisation consolidation	<i>Incipient.</i> Service learning is known about because the organisation is already participating in an SL experience or due to the presentation of a project undertaken in another organisation.	<i>Accepted.</i> Service learning projects are recognised by the organisation's management and staff, who accept the organisation's educational role.	<i>Identity-defining.</i> Service learning forms part of the organisation's ethos and is presented as a characteristic of its identity. The organisation assigns the resources necessary to ensure the implementation of SL projects.

What is the rubric and what can it do?

- The rubric is a self-assessment and enhancement tool for service-learning experiences.
- It is an instrument of analysis which enables each dimension to be considered in isolation and assigned a level of development. An image of the experience can then be outlined and decisions made as to where improvements can be made.
- However, proper use of the rubric requires the dimensions analysed to be structured to recompose the overall image of the experience.
- A new evaluation of the experience as a whole should be conducted following its analysis.
- This will show us that a good experience does not need the highest level to be reached all its dimensions; neither is it necessary for experiences to resemble each other: there are endless ways to carry out good service learning projects.
- In a good project, the quality of the dimensions and their structuring are at the service of the young people's needs and the possibilities of the context in which it is applied.

What can we do with the rubric?

- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of a service-learning experience.
- Facilitate pedagogical discussion based on different points of view, expectations and evaluations.
- Optimise proposals by establishing realistic, contextualised improvement plans.
- Identify new possibilities that arise at different levels of development of the dimensions.
- Inspire the design of new proposals.
- The rubric should not be used to undervalue activities that have dimensions in the first levels of development.
- The rubric should not be used to establish rankings among different experiences and centres. Each experience must be considered in its own reality and evaluated in relation to its possibilities of improvement.

How should the rubric be applied?

- Apply the rubric as a team to the experience being conducted. It may be applied to the project as a whole, to sections or even to consider just one dimension.
- Systematise and make a graphic representation of the results obtained.
- As a team, read, analyse and discuss the data. Assess the quality of the dimensions and of the experience as a whole.
- Agree which aspects should be improved and consider what innovations could be introduced.
- Draw up a roadmap for application of the improvements.
- Implement and consolidate the changes with the involvement of all participants.
- Inform the centre about the analysis and improvement process.

How can the results be visualised?

Using a standard word processing application we can make a spider graph which will help visualise the strengths and weaknesses of the activity and enable us to decide on which aspects to focus discussion.

