# The Workshop Activity

The **Workshop** activity is a peer assessment module in Moodle. This activity allows learners to submit their work to be assessed either by themselves or their peers. Instructors can also grade the students' submissions and assessments in this module.

The module encourages learners to actively engage in the learning process and give each other feedback, individually or in small groups. Instructors can use an existing rubric or develop their own assessment guidelines and introduce them to the participants. Learners can practice using these criteria by grading sample submissions before they assess each other's work. This can help learners understand what qualifies as a good submission and improve their own work accordingly.

For this activity, two grades are saved for each student in the **Gradebook**. One grade is for each learner's submitted assignment. This is the average of all the grades that other students have assigned to that student's submission as part of the peer review. The diagram below shows the average of the grades that other students have given to Student A for an assignment.
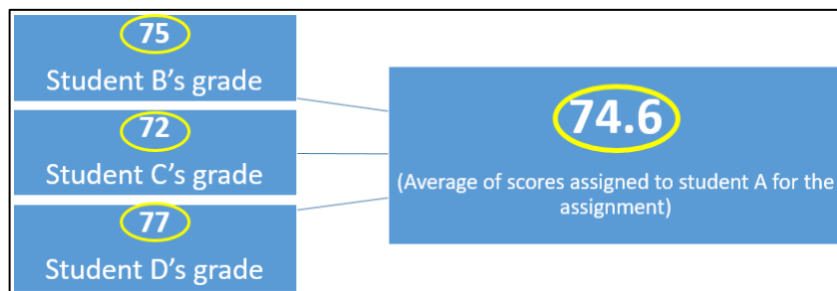
The other grade shows how well each learner has **assessed** someone else's submission compared to other peers who have graded the same submission. The diagram below shows how Student E has assessed Student A's assignment compared to the other 3 students.
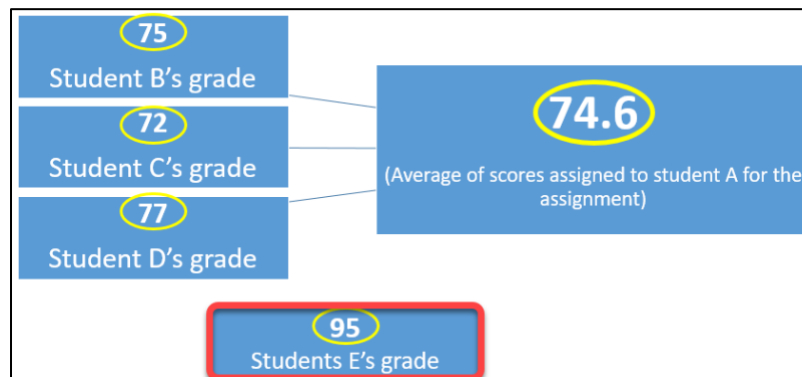
These grades will affect the student's **Assessment** score at the end. In other words, the more different an assessment score is with the classroom average, the lower grade it will receive. Therefore, learners will be held accountable for the quality of their assessment.

Five Phases of the Workshop Activity

The **Workshop** module has five **Phases** that are completed during the course of the activity. Once each phase is over, the teacher can manually switch the activity to the next phase. Alternatively, the activity can be set so that some phases transition to the next automatically.

1. In the **Setup phase** an instructor determines the main workshop settings including the description, instructions for submission, assessment forms, and example submissions. This phase can be revised and modified anytime during the activity (if necessary).
2. In the **Submission phase,** a teacher opens the workshop for students to submit their work. Here a teacher would provide instructions for assessment, allocate submissions to the students, and set the submission start date and deadline. In this phase, if a learner is not happy with their own submission, they can delete it and submit another one provided the earlier work has not been assessed. An instructor can delete a submission at any time.
3. The **Assessment phase** opens the **Workshop** for students to assess the work of their peers. Teachers can limit student access by scheduling start and end dates and times.
4. During the **Grading Evaluation phase**, submission and assessment grades are calculated by Moodle. The students will no longer be able to modify their work in this phase.
5. The **Workshop** enters the **Closed phase** when it is over and the final grades appear in the students' **Gradebook**. Each learner's work is available for them to view privately.

Below is view of the 5 Phases of the **Workshop** activity.

Using the Workshop Activity to Enhance Blended Learning

The **Workshop** activity can be used as an effective assessment-for-learning tool. Instructors can use a **Workshop** activity to communicate task expectations and criteria for evaluation, encourage active learning and provide prompt feedback to the learners for their submitted work.

The **Workshop** module helps learners become familiar with assessment criteria. It allows them to view and reflect on each other's performances, and encourages cooperation and online peer interaction. If instructors choose to show students' names with the submissions, they provide potential opportunities for face-to-face collaboration among students to make the activity more engaging and communicative. This can also motivate learners to improve the quality of their work before submitting it online.

Students learn by doing; therefore, when they are aware of the evaluation process, they learn about their strengths and weaknesses. Learners will better reflect on their own learning and will be able to set new learning targets and plan to accomplish these goals accordingly.

While the **Workshop** activity is a useful tool for blended learning contexts, especially in a classroom with higher CLB level students, it needs to be used with caution and kept brief for classes where students have lower language and technology skills.

Using the Workshop Tool for PBLA

The **Workshop** module is a valuable tool for supporting PBLA. It allows instructors to design a variety of level-appropriate, authentic tasks based on the work completed in the classroom. Instructors can design skill-using activities to elicit multiple samples from different competency areas, save these artifacts in the learners' portfolio and keep track of their progress. This information can be used later by the instructor to modify the curriculum and plan future activities.

The **Workshop** activity is primarily a peer-assessment tool that relies heavily on high quality feedback for its success in the blended classroom. Therefore, instructors need to ensure that students understand the purpose of the task and that assessment criteria and methods are clear and comprehensible for everyone. To help achieve this, instructors are encouraged to provide sample assessments and have students review and evaluate them according to the guidelines. These assessment criteria might be developed by the instructor alone, or collaboratively with the learners. They can also be designed to include action-oriented feedback. During this stage, it is important that instructors make sure learners understand how to give effective feedback that is not only clear, useful and appropriate, but also respectful and constructive. Once instructors are confident that students have developed sufficient assessment skills, they can move on to the main activity with the class.

When the **Workshop** activity is used for the first few times, it might take longer for a teacher to oversee and evaluate students' peer assessments. However, as learners gain more experience with

assessing, instructors can be more selective about the tasks or elements that need more attention and provide targeted feedback and suggestions for improvement in areas where the peers are not able to.

Resources

Using Workshop
https://docs.moodle.org/39/en/Using_Workshop

Workshop FAQ
https://docs.moodle.org/39/en/Workshop_FAQ

Created on 2020-09-24 4:35:00 PM