

Standard text often included in each peer marked practical to explain the purpose of peer assessment.

Why are we doing this?

You are expected to get several things out of this method of assessment which may be new to many of you:

1. It is an open marking system; therefore you can see what was required and how to improve your work.

2. You see mistakes others make and therefore can avoid them; you also see the standard achieved by others and can set your own work in a spectrum of marks.

3. You get an explanation of the practical and how you should have processed the data and done the discussion. Therefore your information and understanding is improved.

4. You get practice in assessing the work of others. You will need this skill quite early in a career and you must come to terms with the problem of bias; someone who is a good friend may have done poor work; it can be disturbing to have to give them a poor mark.

5. In assessing others you should acquire the ability to stand back from your own work and assess that as well. This is an essential ability in a scientist; to make an unbiased and objective assessment of the standards you have achieved in your own work. Once you are away from the teacher/pupil relationship (i.e. leave University) you will be the person who decides if a piece of work is good enough to be considered as finished and passed on to your boss, published to become part of the scientific literature or used as a basis to give a drug to human volunteers.

The method of marking adopted in this module is specifically designed with these factors in mind.