

A Repair Kit for Grading  
15 Fixes for Broken Grades  
--Ken O'Connor

1. Don't include student behaviors (effort, participation, adherence to class rules, etc.) in grades; include only achievement.
2. Don't reduce marks on "work" submitted late; provide support for the learner.
3. Don't give points for extra credit or use bonus points; seek only evidence that more work has resulted in a higher level of achievement.
4. Don't punish academic dishonesty with reduced grades; apply other consequences and reassess to determine actual level of achievement.
5. Don't consider attendance in grade determination; report absences separately.
6. Don't include group scores in grades; use only individual achievement evidence.
7. Don't organize information in grading records by assessment methods or simply summarize into a single grade; organize and report evidence by standards/learning goals.
8. Don't assign grades using inappropriate or unclear performance standards; provide clear descriptions of achievement expectations.
9. Don't assign grades based on student's achievement compared to other students; compare each student's performance to preset standards.
10. Don't rely on evidence gathered using assessments that fail to meet standards of quality; rely only on quality assessments.
11. Don't rely only on the mean; consider other measures of central tendency and use professional judgment.
12. Don't include zeros in grade determination when evidence is missing or as punishment; use alternatives, such as reassessing to determine real achievement or use "I" for Incomplete or Insufficient Evidence.
13. Don't use information from formative assessments and practice to determine grades; use only summative evidence.
14. Don't summarize evidence accumulated over time when learning is developmental and will grow with time and repeated opportunities; in those instances, emphasize more recent achievement.
15. Don't leave students out of the grading process. Involve students; they can—and should—play key roles in assessment and grading that promote achievement.