



## Original Research

# Practicum of the Master's in Teacher Education: Design, Implementation, and Competency-Based Assessment Using Rubrics

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**Abstract:** This study explores the development and implementation of specific rubrics for the assessment of competencies in the practicum of the Master's Degree in Compulsory Secondary Education, Upper Secondary Education, Vocational Training, and Language Teaching (MCSE). Higher education programs, particularly in teacher training, including the Practicum of the MCSE, have generated a significant amount of written feedback to support competency assessment and professional development. Through an iterative collaborative process, assessment rubrics were developed and refined with twin focuses on the quality of students' reports and their attitude during their practicums. The result is two rubrics that have better alignment of learning objectives and praxis and that can support more detailed and more objective assessment. Notably, the involvement of the tutoring team in the validation process was crucial in refining the competency of descriptors to provide comprehensive feedback and greater consistency of assessment. The involvement of tutors is essential, as they not only provide external perspectives that enrich the analysis of Practicum activities but also help clarify learning objectives and promote the development of students' competencies. In this process of guidance and monitoring, rubrics stand out as effective tools for assessing acquired competencies, fostering teacher training that meets the contemporary needs of the educational environment.

**Keywords:** *Competency Assessment, Teacher Training, Practicum, Assessment Rubrics, Secondary Education*

## Introduction

Teacher training must address evolving educational demands by incorporating effective practices that foster student teacher skills (Gil-Molina et al. 2018; Isusi-Fagoaga and García-Aracil 2020; Martínez-de-la-Hidalga et al. 2020; Martínez-Ferreira et al. 2022; Tejada Fernández 2006).

Rubrics play a key role in promoting transparency and consistency in assessments, aligning educational goals with outcomes (Panadero and Jonsson 2020; Jonsson and Svingby 2007). However, their adaptation to practicum contexts in secondary teacher education is underexplored (Crespo Fernández 2022). This study proposes rubrics bridging theoretical training with practical demands. The Practicum is essential for linking theory with practice, in teacher training (García Sanz 2014; España Ramos et al. 2017; Martínez-Izaguirre et al. 2019; Pantoja Vallejo et al. 2019; Ruiz-Gutiérrez et al. 2021; Zabalza 2017). In the Master's

Degree in Compulsory Secondary Education, Upper Secondary Education, Vocational Training, and Language Teaching (MCSE), this component is particularly vital. Student teachers with different subject specialisms face the challenge of translating and adapting their deep subject knowledge to dynamic real-life educational environments (Gil-Molina et al. 2018; Tejada Fernández 2020). The process not only assesses their capacity to integrate and apply that subject knowledge in the classroom but also tests their acquisition of essential teaching skills. The design, development, and use of methods and tools for the assessment of competencies in the Practicum are crucial steps to provide a framework for the fair, constructive appraisal of the skills developed by student teachers. These methods and tools support high-quality teacher training that responds to the needs of education today. (Cabezas et al. 2017; Isusi-Fagoaga and García-Aracil 2020; Ruiz-Gutiérrez et al. 2021).

Within this context, rubrics have gained significant attention in recent years as key tools for evaluating teaching practicums. This study utilizes a conceptual framework that identifies two dependent variables: relevance and usefulness of feedback tools. Relevance is defined as the alignment of feedback with the specific learning needs and contexts of student teachers, while usefulness refers to the actionable value of feedback in enhancing teaching competencies (Gallagher 2017; AITSL 2019). This framework aligns with the principles of assessment for learning, emphasizing how structured feedback systems can bridge the gap between theoretical training and practical application (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick 2006). By fostering personalized and timely feedback, automated tools enhance both formative and summative assessment processes, making them more impactful. These variables were selected based on their prominence in prior research (Jonsson and Svingby 2007; Panadero and Jonsson 2013) and their applicability to both formative and summative assessments in teacher education. The framework also underscores the role of structured feedback systems in bridging the gap between theoretical training and practical application, enabling a more comprehensive evaluation of student competencies.

According to Reddy and Andrade (2010), rubrics offer a structured and transparent framework that not only clarifies performance expectations but also reduces ambiguity for both evaluators and students. Additionally, rubrics enhance the objectivity of assessments by providing predefined criteria and performance levels, promoting consistent evaluation across multiple assessors (Jonsson and Svingby 2007). Their use is also linked to improved student self-regulation and reflection, as rubrics help students understand what is required to achieve higher performance levels (Panadero and Jonsson 2013). Despite the growing recognition of their value, much of the existing literature focuses on general applications of rubrics (Panadero et al. 2024), with fewer studies addressing rubric adaptation to the specific context of teaching practicums (Crespo Fernández 2022).

These needs make the development, application, and validation of specific rubrics for the assessment of competencies in the Practicum an imperative. Such a tool allows a much better

fit between the assessment process and the environments and activities that student teachers encounter (Cano 2015; España Ramos et al. 2017; Marín-García and Santandreu-Mascarell 2015; Panadero et al. 2024; Reddy and Andrade 2010). At this point, the essential role of university tutors must be mentioned, particularly in terms of their role in assessing the written work of student teachers, such as their placement reports. That assessment is a fundamental pillar of the professional development of student teachers. University tutors not only provide an external perspective that is essential to analyzing and understanding the activities carried out, but they also have a determinative role in clarifying the learning and skills acquisition goals to be achieved by student teachers in their Practicum reports (García Sanz 2014; Martínez-de-la-Hidalga et al. 2019; Santiago Cobo 2020).

The assessment function encompasses more than just the evaluation of written content; it extends to ensuring that student teachers are capable of effectively articulating their reflections, learnings, and experiences (Martín et al. 2021; Martínez-de-la-Hidalga et al. 2019). That requires an evaluation that goes beyond the formal aspects of the text and explores in-depth reflection, capacity for critical thinking, and the application of theory in specific practical contexts (Lupi3n-Cobos and Caracuel-González 2021). In that sense, university tutors act as a vital bridge between the university and each placement to ensure that the teaching practice report is a faithful reflection of the effective integration of theoretical knowledge with practical skills, to align the formal educational process with the real demands of a working environment (Santiago Cobo 2020).

The introduction of an assessment rubric that responds to the specific activities and contexts of the Practicum is, thus, a crucial step in improving teacher training. This study adopts an assessment for learning approach, emphasizing the use of evaluation as a tool to promote continuous improvement in teaching competencies (Black and Wiliam 1998). This philosophy supports the integration of feedback mechanisms that align learning objectives with practical applications, ensuring that assessment practices not only evaluate but also enhance professional development (Hattie and Timperley 2007).

Such a rubric should be a framework not only for assessment, but also for constructive guidance for the development of skills that are key to the work of a schoolteacher, supporting the training of future teachers who are capable of successfully meeting the educational challenges of today.

In conclusion, the introduction of specific rubrics for the assessment of the MCSE Practicum can thus be seen as a key strategic step in aligning theoretical training with the practical demands of schools. That focus allows for richer and more detailed feedback and, thereby, contributes significantly to the continuing professional development of teachers.

**Method**

Context and Objective

The Practicum of the MCSE at Deusto University (Spain) bridges theoretical learning with classroom realities through two phases: Practicum 1 and Practicum 2 (Table 1).

Table 1: Characteristics of Practicum 1 and Practicum 2

	<i>Practicum 1</i>	<i>Practicum 2</i>
<i>Credits</i>	4	6
<i>Duration</i>	Two weeks (school timetable)	Four weeks (school timetable)
<i>Objective</i>	Understand the school environment, observe classes, and plan Practicum 2	Engage in teaching, observing, and planning lessons
<i>Student Teacher Activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teaching practice journal (non-assessable)</li> <li>▪ Report on Practicum 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teaching practice journal (non-assessable)</li> <li>▪ Report on Practicum 2</li> <li>▪ To plan and give lessons in their subject specialism</li> </ul>
<i>General Competencies (GC)</i>	Critical Thinking—Learning Focus—Ethical Appreciation—Adapting to the Environment	
<i>Assessment of the Practicum</i>	Evaluates reports, attitude, and involvement	Evaluates report and teaching performance

Source: Martínez-de-la-Hidalga et al. 2019

This study aims to design and validate rubrics for assessing competencies in both Practicum phases, ensuring alignment with specific activities and contexts.

Experts and Sample Analyzed

The MCSE tutoring team comprises nineteen teaching staff from the university’s two campuses (Bilbao and Donostia), drawn from its various subject departments. Twelve members of the tutoring team were actively involved as experts in the process of validating the assessment rubrics for each of Practicum 1 and 2, representing all subject specialisms in the MCSE except Humanities, broken down as follows: two from Science–Technology, two from Physical Education, two from Training and Occupational Guidance, two from Language and Literature, three from Modern Languages, and one from Educational Guidance. Thus, 63.2% of the tutoring team were involved in this second phase of the process. As part of their role, the tutors conducted a content validity analysis (Zamanzadeh et al. 2015), ensuring that the items in the rubrics adequately covered the key competencies expected of student teachers in the practicum. This validation process was essential to confirm that the rubrics represented the full range of skills and knowledge areas necessary for effective teaching practice, ensuring that the assessment tools were both comprehensive and aligned with the learning objectives of the program.

In Phase 3, seventy-five reports were assessed using Practicum 1 rubric and eighty-eight with Practicum 2 rubric. Across the two Practicums, the breakdown of reports by subject is as follows: seven from Science–Technology, sixteen from Physical Education, six from

Training and Occupational Guidance, fourteen from Language and Literature. From Humanities, there were fifteen in Practicum 1 and seventeen in Practicum 2; in Modern Languages, there were seventeen in Practicum 1 and eighteen in Practicum 2. The numbers of reports in those two specialisms are different because students from the preceding academic year did their Practicum 2 in the academic year of the study. Finally, it should be noted that there were ten Practicum 2 reports for Educational Guidance, for which students only do Practicum 2. The analysis of 163 feedback reports during the 2023–2024 academic year provides a robust dataset that aligns with prior research advocating for scalable and adaptable assessment frameworks in teacher training programs (Crespo Fernández 2022). The rubrics serve as structured instruments that facilitate the systematic evaluation of general competences such as critical thinking, adaptability, learning focus, and ethical appreciation. By offering well-defined criteria and measurable indicators, they enable a comprehensive assessment of teaching competencies. This approach ensures a cohesive integration of theoretical knowledge with practical application, fostering a more robust evaluation process within teacher training programs. This empirical grounding enhances the validity and reliability of the proposed rubrics as effective tools for competency-based evaluations.

The assessment rubrics were drafted using a rigorous, collaborative method to generate assessment instruments that were both relevant and effective. That procedure included the active involvement of the university tutoring team, who played a crucial role in the validation of the competency descriptors and constructive feedback that underlies the revision of the rubrics.

#### Procedure, Development, and Validation of Rubrics

To evaluate the consistency of the rubrics in assessing student performance, an inter-rater reliability analysis was conducted using SPSS Statistics 27.0. The Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) was calculated with a two-way random effects model (ICC [2, k]) to measure absolute agreement among twelve evaluators who assessed seventy-five reports in Practicum 1 and eighty-eight in Practicum 2, ensuring that score variability stemmed from the rubric's criteria rather than from evaluator differences (Stemler 2004).

The ICC values obtained ranged from 0.80 to 0.87, with an average of 0.85 (95% CI: [0.80, 0.87]), indicating excellent agreement between evaluators. This high level of reliability, supported by a statistically significant result ( $p < 0.05$ ), demonstrates that the rubric consistently produces objective and fair evaluations of student competencies across different evaluators. According to Cicchetti (1994), values of ICC above 0.75 are considered excellent, further validating the robustness of the rubric design and its effectiveness in ensuring consistent assessments.

The high ICC values, particularly the average of 0.85, indicate that the rubrics offer a robust and consistent framework for assessing student teachers' competencies in real educational settings. This confirms the effectiveness of the collaborative rubric development process, and the validity of the descriptors used to evaluate key teaching skills in both Practicum 1 and Practicum 2.

*Development of the Rubric for Practicum 1 (RFP1)*

The instrument used as the starting point was an existing rubric taken from the MCSE Practicum Handbook—specifically, Appendix 14 “Questionnaire for assessment of student performance in Practicum 1 and 2 by university tutors” (Martínez-de-la-Hidalga et al. 2019, 48–51). That instrument with its structure and metrics provided a robust initial framework for evaluation of the study rubric. That original rubric (OPR) was the starting point. It was characterized by its twin focuses of assessment. First, it assesses the quality of the report generated by each student teacher. Second, it assesses the attitude shown while teaching practice. The OPR assesses four general competencies: Critical Thinking, Adaptation to the Environment, Learning Focus, and Ethical Appreciation. Each of those dimensions and competencies is assessed through multiple indicators, which are in turn each measured on a 1–10 Likert scale. Traditionally, the OPR was used for both Practicum 1 and Practicum 2 and therefore this study is focused on the development of specific rubrics for each Practicum. The rationale for this initiative is the diversity of activities that student teachers undertake during their Practicums, which require more specialized assessment criteria that are relevant to the individual features of each real-life setting. It should be noted that this revision responds directly to a need highlighted by the university tutoring team who have been demanding assessment tools that more closely match and are better aligned with the specific objectives of each placement (Figure 1).

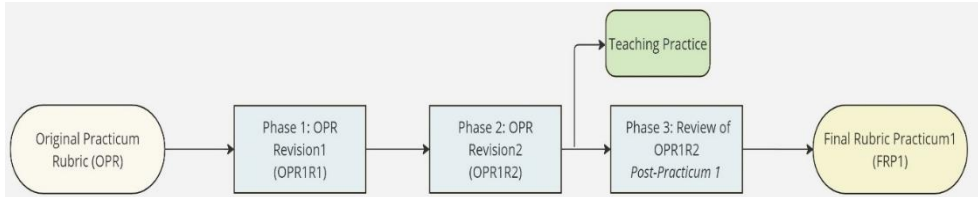


Figure 1: Phases of the Rubric for Practicum 1

This process ensures that the tool is highly focused and suitable for the specific context in which it needs to be applied. The specific details of the procedure are described in Table 2.

Table 2: Steps in the Development of the Final Rubric for Practicum 1 (FRP1)

<i>Phase 1</i>			
<i>Step</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>People Responsible</i>	<i>Dates</i>
1	Development of Analytic Tool: Taking the OPR as the starting point, an Excel spreadsheet was created with three columns: Column 1—competencies and indicators; Column 2—“delete,” “amend,” “retain” in function of the applicability of each indicator; and Column 3—free format column for the tutoring team to suggest reformulations of the items.	Coordination Team	Dec 2022
2	Distribution for Review: The instrument was sent to the tutoring team with a deadline for its return.	Coordination Team + Tutoring Team	Dec 2022
3	Analysis and First Iteration: Following consideration of the responses, the first revision of the rubric was drafted (OPR1R1).	Coordination Team	June 2023

<i>Phase 2</i>			
<i>Step</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>People Responsible</i>	<i>Dates</i>
4	Phase 2 Feedback: OPR1R1 was sent back to the tutoring team via Google Forms. Each indicator was presented as an individual question with the options as to retention of the field, followed by an open field for suggested amendments.	Coordination Team + Tutoring Team	July–Sept 2023
5	Review and Second Iteration: We reviewed the second round of comments from the tutoring team and prepared a further version of the rubric (OPR1R2).	Coordination Team	Oct 2023
6	Sharing the Rubric: The new version of the rubric (OPR1R2) was presented to and shared with the tutoring team and the student teachers in Practicum Seminar 1 with the aim of implementing it in the assessment process of the 2023–2024 academic year.	MCSE Coordination Team	Nov 2023
<i>Phase 3</i>			
<i>Step</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>People Responsible</i>	<i>Dates</i>
7	Teaching practice: The student teachers carry out their teaching practice in the schools to which they have been allocated	Coordination Team + Teaching Team+ Student Teachers	Nov–Dec 2023
8	Review post-Practicum 1: The OPR1R2 rubric was sent to the tutoring team following their review of the reports for Practicum 1.	Coordination Team + Tutoring Team	Jan 2024
9	Review and Third Iteration: Following review of the further comments from the tutoring team, the final rubric (RFP1) to be used in the assessment of Practicum 1 was created.	Coordination Team	Apr 2024

The process of refining the rubric was informed by the comments of the tutoring team who were able to select “retain,” “delete,” or “amend” for each item. The following criteria were used to determine which changes should be made to rubric items:

- Retain [R]: An item was retained if 75% or more of respondents agreed.
- Delete [D]: An item was deleted if 50% more of respondents agreed.
- Amend [A]: An item was amended if there was less than 75% agreement and specific amendments were suggested.

The criteria used in the review of the rubric respond to established principles of formative assessment and organizational change. The decision as to whether to retain, amend, or delete items was based on consensus theory (Hsu and Sandford 2019), which assesses the degree of expert consensus as indicative of effective practice. The focus is supported by studies such as those of Black and William (1998) into assessment in education, and Armenakis and Bedeian (1999) into leadership and change in organizations. The need to amend or delete items in function of specific feedback is aligned with the principles of formative assessment, which leads to continuous improvement, as highlighted by Taras (2005).

#### *Development of the Rubric for the Practicum 2*

Similar to the procedure followed for FRP1, for Practicum 2 we adopted a parallel scheme of review and amendment, to reflect the different demands and activities associated with this

more advanced phase of the Practicum. Figure 2 shows the stages of the preparation of the rubric for Practicum 2 (FRP2).

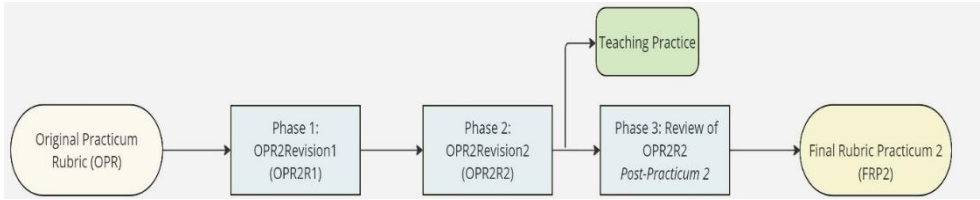


Figure 2: Phases of the Rubric for Practicum 2

Table 3 shows the process broken down into the steps taken to prepare FRP2.

Table 3: Steps in the Development of the Final Rubric for Practicum 2 (FRP2)

<i>Phase 1</i>			
<i>Step</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>People Responsible</i>	<i>Dates</i>
1	Development of Analytic Tool: Taking the OPR as the starting point, an Excel spreadsheet was created with three columns: Column 1—Competencies and indicators; Column 2—“delete,” “amend,” “retain” in function of the applicability of each indicator; and Column 3—free format column for the teaching team to suggest reformulations of the items.	Coordination Team	Dec 2022
2	Distribution for Review: The instrument was sent to the tutoring team with a deadline for its return.	Coordination Team + Tutoring Team	Dec 2022
3	Analysis and First Iteration: Assessment of the responses from the tutoring team showed that it was appropriate to develop a specific rubric for Practicum 2. It was observed that some items would be better assessed at Practicum 2, given the nature of the activities undertaken by student teachers. Consequently, we issued the first revised version of the rubric, known as OPR2R1, reflecting the circumstances of Practicum 2.	Coordination Team	June 2023
<i>Phase 2</i>			
<i>Step</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>People Responsible</i>	<i>Dates</i>
4	Phase 2 Feedback: OPR1R1 was sent back to the tutoring team via Google Forms. Each indicator was presented as an individual question with the options as to retention of the field, followed by an open field for suggested amendments.	Coordination Team + Tutoring Team	July–Sept 2023
5	Review and Second Iteration: We reviewed the second round of comments from the tutoring team and prepared a further version of the rubric (OPR1R2).	MCSE Coordination Team + Practicum Coordination Team	Oct 2023
6	Sharing the Rubric: The new version of the rubric (OPR1R2) was presented to and shared with the tutoring team and the student teachers in Practicum Seminar 1 with the aim of implementing it in the assessment process of the 2023–2024 academic year.	MCSE Coordination Team	Feb 2024
<i>Phase 3</i>			
<i>Step</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>People Responsible</i>	<i>Dates</i>
7	Teaching practice: The student teachers carry out Practicum 2 in the schools to which they had been allocated.	Coordination Team + Tutoring Team+ Student Teachers	Feb–Mar 2024

8	Review post-Practicum 2: OPR2R2 was sent to the tutoring team following their review of the reports for Practicum 2.	Teaching Practice Coordination Team + Tutoring Team	May 2024
9	Review and Third Iteration: Following review of the further comments from the tutoring team, the final rubric (FRP2) to be used in the assessment of Practicum 2 was created	Coordination Team	May 2024

The process of refining FRP2 was guided by the same criteria as in the preparation of FRP1 in terms of whether to retain, delete, or amend items.

It becomes relevant to point out that the rubrics were explicitly designed to reflect the real-world tasks and responsibilities encountered by student teachers during their practicum. For instance, the rubrics assess not only the quality of the teaching reports but also the engagement, professional attitude, and interaction with both the school tutor and students. By aligning the rubrics with practical expectations, it was ensured that the evaluation criteria provided an accurate reflection of the student teachers' competencies in real classroom settings (Jonsson and Svingby 2007). Furthermore, since students have access to the rubrics prior to starting their practicum, they can use them as a tool for self-assessment and ongoing reflection. This allows them to anticipate key expectations and competencies, helping them focus their work on areas that need improvement. This use of rubrics fosters self-regulation and promotes a more reflective approach to their professional development, providing a clear guide for their teaching practice (Panadero and Jonsson 2013).

## Results

### Practicum 1

The process of creating FRP1 involved multiple phases, starting from a single rubric used for both Practicums. The following are the results of the OPR1R2 evaluation by the tutoring team. Based on these results, the Coordination Team finalized the rubric for Practicum 1 (RFP1). As shown in tables (4–7), FRP1 includes various items to assess general competencies.

GC5: Ethical Appreciation (Table 4) comprises eight items, six for the report and two for attitude. Items 1 and 5 were amended by adding a “Not Applicable” option, aligning the rubric with practical needs.

Table 4: Results of Validation of RFP1. GC5: Ethical Appreciation (EA)

	<i>OPR1R2</i>	<i>R (%)</i>	<i>D (%)</i>	<i>A (%)</i>	<i>FRP1</i>
<i>Report</i>	1. The text contains clear instances where the student reflects and suggests solutions for situations where they have to choose between two or more courses of action, each of which has significant ethical implications that arose in their immediate social context.	66.7	25	8.3	1. The text contains clear instances where the student reflects and suggests solutions for situations where they have to choose between two or more courses of action, each of which has significant ethical implications that arose in their immediate social context.

	2. The report provides evidence of moments of dialogue and shows a willingness to consider other points of view.	75	8.3	16.7	2. The report provides evidence of moments of dialogue and shows a willingness to consider other points of view.
	3. The text highlights moments of cooperation with peers, students, teachers, and other participants in the educational system.	83.3	8.35	8.35	3. The text highlights moments of cooperation with peers, students, teachers, and other participants in the educational system.
	4. It is apparent from the report that the student was an active participant during the teaching practice and was able to share their needs, concerns, problems, and so on at school and with university tutors/MCSE course mates.	91.7	8.3	0	4. It is apparent from the report that the student was an active participant during the teaching practice and was able to share their needs, concerns, problems, and so on at school and with university tutors/MCSE course mates.
	5. In the report, the student teacher acknowledges different methodologies, such as group cohesion, as essential to the creation of harmony in the classroom, it being understood that the effectiveness of such techniques depends on there having previously been a positive atmosphere.	58.3	16.7	25	5. In the report, the student teacher acknowledges different methodologies, such as cohesion as essential to the creation of harmony in the classroom, understanding that the effectiveness of such techniques depends on the presence of a previously positive atmosphere.
	6. In the course of preparing the report, the student teacher has made a distinction between public and private information and shows a responsible, ethical use of information in accordance with data protection laws. The student's use of AI tools in the preparation of the report evidences a sense of ethical responsibility.	75	25	0	6. In the course of preparing the report, the student teacher has made a distinction between public and private information and shows a responsible, ethical use of information in accordance with data protection laws. The student's use of AI tools in the preparation of the report evidences a sense of ethical responsibility.
<i>Attitude</i>	7. They show responsibility and commitment in navigating complex or conflictual social situations during the Practicum.	83.3	8.35	8.35	7. They show responsibility and commitment in navigating complex or conflictual social situations during the Practicum.
	8. Their behavior is based on principles of fair, inclusive, and diverse education.	83.3	16.7	0	8. Their behavior is based on principles of fair, inclusive, and diverse education.

GC2: Critical Thinking (Table 5) contains six items, four for the report and two for attitude. Five items were retained with over 75% agreement, while one attitude item was kept unchanged with 66.7% support.

Table 5: Results of Validation of RFP1. GC2: Critical Thinking (CT)

	<i>OPR1R2</i>	<i>R (%)</i>	<i>D (%)</i>	<i>A (%)</i>	<i>FRP1</i>
<i>Report</i>	1. They refer to and reflect on significant theories or conceptual frameworks in the report.	100	0	0	1. They refer to and reflect on significant theories or conceptual frameworks in the report.
	2. The report evidences effective integration of the experience of the Practicum with knowledge acquired in general and specialist modules of the MCSE.	91.7	0	8.3	2. The report evidences effective integration of the experience of the Practicum with knowledge acquired in general and specialist modules of the MCSE.

	3. The text shows the student teacher's skill in critically analyzing matters observed during their teaching practice in the context of the modules of the MCSE.	83.3	8.35	8.35	3. The text shows the student teacher's skill in critically analyzing matters observed during their teaching practice in the context of the modules of the MCSE.
	4. They cite or reference relevant authors and theories to enrich their reflections.	100	0	0	4. They cite or reference relevant authors and theories to enrich their reflections.
<i>Attitude</i>	5. The student teacher shows curiosity and an open mind. They use critical thinking to understand their problems, weigh options and reflect on the consequences of their actions in the Practicum.	100	0	0	5. The student teacher shows curiosity and an open mind. They use critical thinking to understand their problems, weigh options and reflect on the consequences of their actions in the Practicum.
	6. They demonstrate respect for, and reflect on, the contributions of their course mates to the different activities (seminars, group tutorials...) carried out at the University during the process of the Practicum and share their own perspective.	66.7	33.3	0	6. They demonstrate respect for, and reflect on, the contributions of their course mates to the different activities (seminars, group tutorials...) carried out at the University during the process of the Practicum and share their own perspective.

GC6: Adapting to the Environment (Table 6) comprises eight items, five for the report and three for attitude. Six items were retained (with over 75% consensus), while Items 4 and 8, with 66.7%, were revised based on feedback.

Table 6: Results of Validation of RFP1. GC6: Adapting to the Environment (AE)

	<i>OPRIR2</i>	<i>R (%)</i>	<i>D (%)</i>	<i>A (%)</i>	<i>FRP1</i>
<i>Report</i>	1. The report includes reflection on criticisms or observations made to the student teacher and proposes ways to learn from those experiences and improve.	91.7	0	8.3	1. The report includes reflection on criticisms or observations made to the student teacher and proposes ways to learn from those experiences and improve.
	2. The report provides evidence that the student teacher has identified challenges in the work of a teacher and worked to find solutions or responses to those challenges to the extent allowed by the teacher-mentor at their school.	100	0	0	2. The report provides evidence that the student teacher has identified challenges in the work of a teacher and worked to find solutions or responses to those challenges to the extent allowed by the teacher-mentor at their school.
	3. The student teacher presents in the report clear evidence of planning and time management that allowed them to effectively carry out their assigned tasks.	100	0	0	3. The student teacher presents in the report clear evidence of planning and time management that allowed them to effectively carry out their assigned tasks.
	4. The report reflects a skill on the part of the student teacher to simultaneously be involved in, attend to, and observe different tasks and activities.	66.7	16.7	16.6	4. As well as observation, the report reflects active participation in different tasks and activities.
	5. The text shows that the student teacher was able to identify and understand the principal characteristics of their school and each class, such as organization, structure, and context.	100	0	0	5. The text shows that the student teacher was able to identify and understand the principal characteristics of their school and each class, such as organization, structure, and context.

<i>Attitude</i>	6. They show a positive, receptive attitude toward criticism and observations received during the Practicum.	83.3	8.35	8.35	6. They show a positive, receptive attitude toward criticism and observations received during the Practicum.
	7. They show initiative in facing personal challenges and actively seeking solutions.	83.3	8.35	8.35	7. They show initiative in facing personal challenges and actively seeking solutions.

Finally, GC3: Learning Focus (Table 7) is made up of six items: four for the report and two for attitude. Five items were retained with 75% agreement, while Item 1, with 66.7%, was revised based on feedback.

Table 7: Results of Validation of RFP1. GC3: Learning Focus [LF]

	<i>OPR1R2</i>	<i>R (%)</i>	<i>D (%)</i>	<i>A (%)</i>	<i>FRP1</i>
<i>Report</i>	1. The learning strategies described in the report show flexibility and are suited to the specific context of the school of the placement.	66.7	17.7	15.6	1. The learning strategies described in the report have been developed with regard to the specific context of the school of the placement.
	2. The student teacher presents contributions or suggests innovative approaches to improve the practice observed in the school.	91.7	0	8.3	2. The student teacher presents contributions or suggests innovative approaches to improve the practice observed in the school.
	3. The document contains reflexive self-assessment of the student teacher concerning their progress in the Practicum competencies and the setting of individual targets for improvement.	100	0	0	3. The document contains reflexive self-assessment of the student teacher concerning their progress in the Practicum competencies and the setting of individual targets for improvement.
	4. In the report, the student teacher demonstrates efforts to obtain and use information beyond the basic documentation required for the writing of the report and has used a variety of reliable sources.	91.7	8.3	0	4. In the report, the student teacher demonstrates efforts to obtain and use information beyond the basic documentation required for the writing of the report and has used a variety of reliable sources.
<i>Attitude</i>	5. They actively seek opportunities to interact with their university tutor to exchange ideas, and value diversity of opinion as a means of improving their learning and personal development.	100	0	0	5. They actively seek opportunities to interact with their university tutor to exchange ideas, and value diversity of opinion as a means of improving their learning and personal development.
	6. They show curiosity and interest when they raise questions and express their uncertainties so as to expand their understanding and improve their learning using the responses.	83.3	16.7	0	6. They show curiosity and interest when they raise questions and express their uncertainties so as to expand their understanding and improve their learning using the responses.

Practicum 2

The university tutoring team’s evaluation of OPR2R2 guided the final version of the rubric for Practicum 2 (FRP2). As with FRP1, it includes items for assessing general competencies.

GC5: Ethical Awareness (Table 8) is composed of eight items: six for the report and two for attitude. Six items were retained (with over 75% agreement), while one item, with 70% support, was revised to include a “Not Applicable” option. This addition was applied to all items in FRP2 for consistency.

Table 8: Results of Validation of RFP2. GC5: Ethical Awareness (EA)

	<i>OPR2R2</i>	<i>R (%)</i>	<i>D (%)</i>	<i>A (%)</i>	<i>FRP2</i>
<i>Report</i>	1. The text contains clear instances where the student reflects and suggests solutions for situations where they must choose between two or more courses of action, each of which has significant ethical implications that arose in their immediate social context.	70	20	10	1. The addition of the Not Applicable response option resolved the tutoring team’s suggested amendments.
	2. The report provides evidence of moments of dialogue and shows a willingness to consider other points of view.	80	0	20	2. The report provides evidence of moments of dialogue and shows a willingness to consider other points of view.
	3. The text highlights moments of cooperation with peers, students, teachers, and other participants in the educational system.	90	10	0	3. The text highlights moments of cooperation with peers, students, teachers, and other participants in the educational system.
	4. It is apparent from the report that the student was an active participant during the teaching practice and was able to share their needs, concerns, problems, and so on at school and with university tutors/MCSE course mates.	100	0	0	4. It is apparent from the report that the student was an active participant during the teaching practice and was able to share their needs, concerns, problems, and so on at school and with university tutors/MCSE course mates.
	5. In the report, the student teacher acknowledges different methodologies, such as group cohesion, as essential to the creation of harmony in the classroom, with the understanding that the effectiveness of such techniques depends on there having previously been a positive atmosphere.	80	10	10	5. In the report, the student teacher acknowledges different methodologies, such as group cohesion, as essential to the creation of harmony in the classroom, with the understanding that the effectiveness of such techniques depends on there having previously been a positive atmosphere.
	6. In the course of preparing the report, the student teacher has made a distinction between public and private information and shows a responsible, ethical use of information in accordance with data protection laws. The student’s use of AI tools in the preparation of the report evidences a sense of ethical responsibility.	80	20	0	6. In the course of preparing the report, the student teacher has made a distinction between public and private information and shows a responsible, ethical use of information in accordance with data protection laws. The student’s use of AI tools in the preparation of the report evidences a sense of ethical responsibility.
<i>Attitude</i>	7. They show responsibility and commitment in navigating complex or conflictual social situations during the Practicum.	90	0	10	7. They show responsibility and commitment in navigating complex or conflictual social situations during the Practicum.
	8. Their behavior is based on principles of fair, inclusive, and diverse education.	90	10	0	8. Their behavior is based on principles of fair, inclusive, and diverse education.

GC2: Critical Thinking (Table 9) comprises seven items, five for the report and two for attitude. Six were retained (with over 75% agreement), while Item 7, with 70% support, was revised based on feedback.

Table 9: Results of Validation of RFP2. GC2: Critical Thinking (CT)

	<i>OPR2R2</i>	<i>R (%)</i>	<i>D (%)</i>	<i>A (%)</i>	<i>FRP2</i>
<i>Report</i>	1. They refer to and reflect on significant theories or conceptual frameworks in the report.	100	0	0	1. They refer to and reflect on significant theories or conceptual frameworks in the report.
	2. The report evidences effective integration of the experience of the Practicum with knowledge acquired in general and specialist modules of the MCSE.	80	20	0	2. The report evidences effective integration of the experience of the Practicum with knowledge acquired in general and specialist modules of the MCSE.
	3. The text shows the student teacher’s skill in critically analyzing matters observed during their teaching practice in the context of the modules of the MCSE.	90	0	10	3. The text shows the student teacher’s skill in critically analyzing matters observed during their teaching practice in the context of the modules of the MCSE.
	4. The pedagogical focuses put forward in the report are relevant and applicable to the student teacher’s subject specialism.	90	0	10	4. The pedagogical focuses put forward in the report are relevant and applicable to the student teacher’s subject specialism.
	5. They cite or reference relevant authors and theories to enrich their reflections.	100	0	0	5. They cite or reference relevant authors and theories to enrich their reflections.
<i>Attitude</i>	6. The student teacher shows curiosity and an open mind. They use critical thinking to understand their problems, weigh options, and reflect on the consequences of their actions in the Practicum.	100	0	0	6. The student teacher shows curiosity and an open mind. They use critical thinking to understand their problems, weigh options, and reflect on the consequences of their actions in the Practicum.
	7. They demonstrate respect for, and reflect on, the contributions of their course mates in the different activities (seminars, group tutorials...) carried out at the University during the process of the Practicum and share their own perspective.	70	20	10	7. They demonstrate respect for the contributions of their course mates in the different activities (seminars, group tutorials...) carried out at the University during the process of the Practicum and share their own perspective.

GC6: Adapting to the Environment (Table 10) includes nine items, six for the report and three for attitude. Six were retained with strong consensus, while Items 3 and 5 were revised due to lower agreement levels (60% and 70%).

Table 10: Results of Validation of RFP2. GC6: Adapting to the Environment (AE)

	<i>OPR2R2</i>	<i>R (%)</i>	<i>D (%)</i>	<i>A (%)</i>	<i>FRP2</i>
<i>Report</i>	1. The text presents evidence that the student teacher has identified challenges and formulated strategies to overcome them in order to reach their Practicum targets.	90	0	10	1. The text presents evidence that the student teacher has identified challenges and formulated strategies or sought solutions to overcome them, to the extent allowed by their teacher-mentor, in order to reach their Practicum targets.

	2. The text includes reflection on criticisms or remarks made to the student teacher's suggestions to learn from those experiences and improve.	100	0	0	2. The text includes reflection on criticisms or remarks made to the student teacher's suggestions to learn from those experiences and improve.
	3. The report provides evidence that the student teacher has identified challenges in the work of a teacher and worked on finding solutions or responses to those challenges to the extent allowed by the teacher-mentor at their school.	60	20	20	Merged with Item 1.
	4. The student teacher presents in the report clear evidence of planning and time management that allowed them to effectively carry out their assigned tasks.	90	0	10	4. The student teacher presents in the report clear evidence of planning and time management that allowed them to effectively carry out their assigned tasks.
	5. The report reflects a skill on the part of the student teacher to manage simultaneously being involved in, attending to, and observing different tasks and activities.	70	10	20	5. The report reflects a skill in the part of the student teacher to simultaneously be involved in, attend to, and observe different tasks and activities.
	6. The text shows that the student teacher was able to identify and understand the principal characteristics of their school and each classroom, such as organization, structure, and context.	100	0	0	6. The text shows that the student teacher was able to identify and understand the principal characteristics of their school and each classroom, such as organization, structure, and context.
<i>Attitude</i>	7. They show a positive, receptive attitude toward criticism and observations received during the Practicum.	90	0	10	7. They show a positive, receptive attitude toward criticism and observations received during the Practicum.
	8. They show initiative in facing personal challenges and actively seeking solutions.	80	10	10	8. They show initiative in facing personal challenges and actively seeking solutions
	9. They show the capacity to handle several tasks at the same time with effective monitoring of their own progress.	40	20	20	9. The student monitors their own progress and manages simultaneous tasks.

Finally, GC3: Learning Focus (Table 11) is made up of six items, four for the report and two for attitude. Five were retained with over 75% consensus, while Item 1, with 70% agreement, was revised based on feedback.

Table 11: Results of Validation of RFP2. GC3: Learning Focus (LF)

	<i>OPR2R2</i>	R (%)	D (%)	A (%)	<i>FRP2</i>
<i>Report</i>	1. The learning strategies described in the report show flexibility and are suited to the specific context of the school of the placement.	70	20	10	1. The addition of the Not Applicable response option resolved the tutoring team's suggested amendments.
	2. The student teacher presents contributions or suggests innovative approaches to improve the practice observed in the school.	100	0	0	2. The student teacher presents contributions or suggests innovative approaches to improve the practice observed in the school.

	3. The document contains reflexive self-assessment of the student teacher concerning their progress in the Practicum competencies and the setting of individual targets for improvement.	100	0	0	3. The document contains reflexive self-assessment of the student teacher concerning their progress in the Practicum competencies and the setting of individual targets for improvement.
	4. In the report, the student teacher demonstrates efforts to obtain and use information beyond the basic documentation required for the writing of the report and has used a variety of reliable sources.	90	10	0	4. In the report, the student teacher demonstrates efforts to obtain and use information beyond the basic documentation required for the writing of the report and has used a variety of reliable sources.
<i>Attitude</i>	5. They actively seek opportunities to interact with their university tutor to exchange ideas, and value diversity of opinion as a means of improving their learning and personal development.	90	10	0	5. They actively seek opportunities to interact with their university tutor to exchange ideas, and value diversity of opinion as a means of improving their learning and personal development.
	6. They show curiosity and interest when they raise questions and express their uncertainties so as to expand their understanding and improve their learning using the responses.	100	0	0	6. They show curiosity and interest when they raise questions and express their uncertainties so as to expand their understanding and improve their learning using the responses.

## Discussion and Conclusion

This study validated two rubrics (FRP1, FRP2) for transparent assessment of teacher competencies in the MCSE Practicum, bridging theory and practice. Competency-based assessment ensures real-world application of knowledge and skills (Castro Morera 2011).

Reliable and validated tools are essential for objective and systematic competency assessment, particularly in key components like the Practicum. Various authors highlight the effectiveness of rubrics in ensuring consistency and transparency in evaluations processes (Cano 2015; España Ramos et al. 2017; Marín-García and Santandreu-Mascarell 2015; Panadero et al. 2024; Reddy and Andrade 2010). These rubrics also facilitate more precise evaluations by university tutors, enhancing the consistency and value of assessments. Additionally, the rubrics provide formative feedback to student teachers, helping them identify their competency levels and further develop their skills. In this way, assessment not only measures learning but also supports it, aligning with the principles of assessment for learning (Tejada and Ruiz 2016).

The development process followed a systematic and rigorous approach, offering a model for constructing and validating future assessment rubrics. The iterative and collaborative design process fostered better integration between theory and practice, promoting self-reflection and self-assessment among both student teachers and university tutors. Including the tutoring team was key to ensuring that the rubrics reflected the realities and needs of educational settings, aligning learning objectives more closely with real-world teaching practices. By prioritizing critical areas such as ethical appreciation and critical thinking, the rubrics not only evaluate

learning but also foster self-regulation and continuous improvement among students. These tools align with the philosophy of “assessment for learning” as emphasized in prior research (Black and William 1998; Tejada and Ruiz 2016).

The implementation of automated feedback processes, supported by the iterative design of rubrics, has shown potential for optimizing university resources. By reducing the time spent on manual evaluations, tutors can focus on individualized mentoring, curriculum development, and pedagogical research (Jonsson and Svingby 2007). Automated systems also ensure consistency and equity in assessment practices, fostering a learning environment aligned with institutional goals of excellence (Carless 2006). Future studies should investigate how these tools influence student engagement and learning outcomes, as highlighted by Shute (2008), through longitudinal research.

Some limitations arise from this approach. The lack of direct involvement from student teachers and school-based teacher-mentors in the rubric development process limits its scope. Incorporating their perspectives, could enhance alignment with classroom realities and refine the tools to better reflect the complexities of teaching.

Additionally, the study was conducted on a single institution and focused on a specific teacher-training program, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts. To address this, future research should expand to diverse educational contexts, involving broader samples to validate the adaptability and effectiveness of the rubrics (Ellis and Calvo 2007). Ongoing professional development for both university tutors and school mentors is crucial to maintain consistency in applying the rubrics, especially when new tutors are involved.

This study underscores the importance of assessment rubrics as essential tools for competency-based assessment education, in line with existing literature on their effectiveness in structuring objective evaluations (Crespo Fernández 2022; Guàrdia et al. 2023; Panadero et al. 2024). By integrating structured criteria and automated feedback systems, these rubrics provide a strategic framework for aligning theoretical training with the practical demands of teaching. They also enable tutors to dedicate more time to mentoring and curriculum design, enhancing the overall quality of teacher education. The findings contribute to advancing teacher-training practices by offering evidence-based tools that address evolving educational demands. While the study demonstrates the utility of rubrics in competency-based assessment, it also highlights the need for continuous refinement based on diverse perspectives and practical experience. Establishing ongoing feedback mechanisms will ensure these assessment tools remain effective and relevant in a constantly changing educational landscape.

In conclusion, the validated rubrics for assessing the MCSE Practicum represent a key strategy for achieving objective, detailed evaluations while supporting the professional development of future educators. By fostering alignment between theoretical and practical training, these tools significantly enhance the capacity of teacher education programs to prepare educators for contemporary challenges.

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## Informed Consent

The authors declare that informed consent was not required as there were no human participants involved.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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