Some General Guidelines for Tutors:

1. In general, your coordinator should establish and provide you with clear criteria for assessment of oral presentations. Ideally these criteria should align with at least some of the UoS outcomes and objectives (e.g., development of oral communication skills, development of collaboration skills). These skills should be demonstrated by students in presentations and captured at the time by tutors.

2. If you have a role in design of presentations or group work, consider carefully with your coordinator what skills you want to assess. For example, there are oral delivery skills: impromptu presentation, use of notes, clarity, eye contact, projection, expressiveness. There are also considerations of content: coherence of material, lucidity of ideas, argument, examples, and so on. Then there are considerations of audience: is the presentation pitched towards peers or the teacher? Is the level appropriate? Is the presentation stimulating?

3. Presentations and groupwork should be planned to ensure equity. This means taking into account timing and sequencing of presentations, and the different roles that might be assigned to students in groupwork and group presentations.

4. Make clear to students how they'll be assessed: show them the marking template in advance.

5. Keep in mind that oral presentations involve live assessment, they are not repeatable, and not usually documented or archived. This can make them subject to chance and students' awareness of the risk sometimes exacerbates difficulties. You can build into the presentation a follow up element of self-assessment, with self-reflection about what the presenter or group would do differently if they could present again. This may help to ground the presentation in more distanced reflection, and may also give confidence to the presenters that not everything is at stake in the live performance. (It also builds capacity for review, which is a learning experience in itself.)

6. Conditions of live assessment affect you, too. Presentations require attention, listening skills, and on-the-spot judgment. Also, since presentations are diachronic, you cannot easily compare those that are very distant from each other in time. Try instead to evaluate each presentation according to well-conceived standards. A template, like the one on the next page, will help.

7. Use the template to record your judgment against various categories at the time of presentation, but wait for students to provide their self-reflection before finalising your judgments. You might even have a category on the final marksheet for comment on their self-reflection.

8. Remember to thank all students for their presentation, and provide some immediate encouragement. You may mention obvious achievements or difficulties, but try not to steal from students the opportunity for self-reflection.

9. Presentations can take many forms. They include debates, team presentations, panel discussions. Giving one mark to the team that jointly presents vs individual presentations needs careful thought—it's sometimes fairer to mark each individual's presentation separately, and to require students to divide up the presentation time equally. Working in pairs often defeats the inequality-of-contribution problem common in group work.

10. Keep in mind that students are often not well-habituated to presentations. Some very good students don't shine so well against some presentation criteria, and others come up more strongly. Overall, the adrenalin, fear and pressure of performance often exacts terrific work from students. So be aware of how this might affect the marking scale, and discuss with your coordinator.

*I am grateful to Brigid Rooney, Department of English, for these reflections, which I have revised and reoriented slightly for this guide (rb).
Oral Presentation Feedback (sample template)*

[Tutors please note: this is a sample template, not a paradigm. There are many different ways that a template might be designed and many different criteria that may be assessed. This template may provide you with ideas about how to design one of your own.]

Name: ___________________________ Subject: ___________________________

Comments

- - - - +

A. Content (12 marks)

| Research question not mentioned; topic not clear from title or introduction | - - - - | Topic clear from title and introduction; research question mentioned |
| Little evidence of originality / creativity of thought | - - - - | Originality / creativity of thought |

Insufficient information provided to give an idea of the research conducted or the conclusions of the literature review. Unclear how question was answered or topic was assessed.

Sufficient information provided to give an idea of the research conducted and the conclusions of the literature reviews.

B. Presentation (8 marks)

| Frequent errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, or references | - - - - | Well polished slides with few errors |
| Too much text or not enough text; not enough visuals | - - - - | Right amount of text and visuals |

Presentation shaky; unclear

Good, strong oral presentation

Other Comments:

Total Score: .......... / 20 = .......... %

Grade: High Distinction HD  Distinction D  Credit C  Pass P  Fail FF

*I am grateful to Louise DeBeuzeville, Department of Linguistics for allowing us to use this template.

rick.benitez@sydney.edu.au