

**Procedure Title:** Peer Observation

## Scope

This procedure applies to all staff participating in teaching and learning activities across all college-based and off-site provision. Peer observations are deemed as good practice within each faculty, with the expectation that each full time lecturer will carry out two peer observations during the academic year. The number of observations for part-time staff should reflect their teaching commitment, with the expectation of at least one peer observation. The observations need to be agreed in advance and one of the observations should be outside of the host faculty area. The Peer observation can be recorded via an individual's professional practice log/journal; also supporting strand B of the Lecturer Competency Framework. The process will be managed by Faculty Directors and Academy Managers; with feedback to be provided to the Quality Improvement Team to enable the monitoring and sharing of good practice College-wide.

## Purpose

The purpose of ungraded, supportive, peer observations of teaching and learning is to:

- Recognise and celebrate good practice by sharing it with other related and unrelated curriculum areas encouraging the dissemination and development of innovative, inspiring and challenging teaching and learning.
- Provide teaching staff with an opportunity to reflect on their teaching, learning and assessment practices to continually enhance the student experience.
- Disseminate best practice throughout the College and its partnerships.
- Provide the College with evidence of sharing best practice and resultant improvements in teaching and learning activities, driving forward continuous quality enhancement.
- Contribute towards an individual's Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and stimulate a more reflective and scholarly approach to teaching and learning.
- Support the expectation that Higher Education Teaching staff have a commitment to CPD and evaluation of their pedagogic practice, as stated by the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF).

It should be remembered that you decide what the focus of the observations will be. The peer observations and the dialogue that follows can be focussed on a variety of teaching, learning and/or assessment practices. They could include whole class teaching, group work, practical work (e.g. in workshops, laboratories, studios, kitchens, salons and sports halls), revision sessions, portfolio building, tutorials, inductions, initial assessments, etc. For example, observing an innovative teaching strategy, the use of technology in the classroom, a behavioural management technique; the opportunities are endless.

## Preparing for a Peer Observation

The process aims to be a respectful, supportive and non-judgemental way of gaining feedback from a peer on your teaching and learning practices to enhance the student experience. It is beneficial to undertake both roles as the peer observer and observee.

1. Contact a colleague requesting a peer observation or invite a peer to attend one of your lessons.
2. Consider whether your peer observation is within or outside your faculty area ensuring you meet the peer observation criteria (one within your faculty and one with a different faculty).

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3. The observer should contact their chosen peer to agree a suitable and mutually convenient time to meet prior to the observation and book an observation time that suits the two parties involved. During the meeting agree areas of the lesson to comment and focus on, and then agreed areas of feedback. State any ground rules and health and safety considerations/requirements.
4. Peer observations can take place at any time during the academic year; with the agreement of both parties involved.
5. A peer observation proforma can be downloaded from the Teachers' Space on Moodle to record and reflect upon the practice observed. **Please note: completion and submission of this proforma is an essential requirement** (refer to attached flow chart).
6. Alongside curriculum management, the Teaching & Learning Coaches will encourage staff participation and ensure all staff are aware of the peer observation process; also receiving feedback and regularly monitoring the exchange of good practice across the College.
7. The Quality Improvement Team can support staff in identifying relevant staff to observe in their area of interest.

### Undertaking a Peer Observation

1. Be punctual and if possible meet with your peer for at least 5-10 minutes prior to the session to discuss the preparation and structure of the session. Aim to undertake at least a 30 minute peer observation.
2. Concentrate on group and individual learning taking place, how the peer manages, checks and assesses learning and the response of the students.
3. Where applicable, review how additional learning support effectively enables learning in the classroom.
4. Remember to take into account the impact of the environment / resources on the session.
5. Be objective about what you see. Consider whether what you have seen is in fact good practice and, if so, how you could implement it into your own sessions in the future.
6. At an appropriate opportunity talk to students and use their feedback to support your reflections about the impact of the practices observed.
7. Talk to the peer at a convenient time following the session to discuss the good aspects of the practice observed, exchange ideas and discuss ways in which you could implement changes in your own practice to improve the student experience.
8. Discussions between the peer and the observer should focus on what is meant by best practice through a joint reflection on the session.

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### The Peer Observation Form and Reporting Process

1. The observer is encouraged to record and evidence the peer observation within their own professional development portfolio and required to complete a 'Peer Observation Form'.
2. Peer observations will be discussed as part of CPD / sharing best practice / action planning at lecturer appraisals.
3. Completed forms should be submitted to your manager who will collate good practice and will forward them to the faculty administrator for logging and filing.
4. The good practice identified will be received by the Teaching & Learning Coaches and effectively utilised by curriculum managers to inform the contribution made to enhancements in teaching and learning through the dissemination of the good practice. This will also be reported on as part of the End of Term Programme Performance Review Process and Teaching, Learning & Assessment Forums.

**Author(s):** Quality Improvement Team  
**Enquiries To:** Teaching & Learning Coaches

<b>Issue Dates:</b>	October 2004
<b>First Review Date</b>	March 2006
<b>Reviewed</b>	July 2008, July 2009, July 2010, 2011, July 2013, July 2014, July 2015
<b>Next Review</b>	July 2016

#### Equality & Diversity Impact Assessment

<b>Date of Impact Assessment</b>	18 June 2008
<b>Date of Publication</b>	

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**Peer Observation Record Form**

Please complete the form at the end of the peer observation ensuring it is signed by both parties.  
 Please submit a copy to your manager and your administrator.

Name of observer:		Observers faculty:	
Date of peer observation:			
Name of peer:			
Name of LSA (if applicable):			
Time and duration:			
Room number:		<i>Please tick:</i> Practical <input type="checkbox"/> Theory <input type="checkbox"/>	
Faculty, course title and session topic:			
Agreed areas of feedback: <i>(Bullet point any areas you agreed to focus on during the peer observation)</i>			
Good practice observed: <i>(State any good practice observed during the lesson)</i>			
Suggestions for development: <i>(Based on the agreed areas of feedback)</i>			
General comments: <i>(Including what you could implement into your own practice)</i>			
Observer's signature:		Peer's signature:	
Date received:			

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**Table of Outcomes by Programme Area**

Academy managers to complete the tables below when staff peer observations are submitted.

<b>No:</b>	<b>Observer</b> (staff member conducting the observation)	<b>Observee</b> (staff member being observed)	<b>Faculty observed</b>	<b>Date / time of observation:</b>
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
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17.				
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19.				
20.				

**Good practice identified within Programme Area (summarised from the reports received)**

Please ensure all completed forms to date are submitted to The Quality Improvement Team termly (w/c 23 November 2015, w/c 07 March 2016 and w/c 10<sup>th</sup> June 2016) to help share and disseminate good practice.

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### Peer Observation Flow Chart 2015-16

