

Peer Review of Teaching – Policy & Procedure

Introduction

1. This Policy and Procedure outlines how the College will conduct peer review of teaching and how the individuals who will be involved in reviews will be identified.

Purpose of Peer Observation

2. The main purpose of engaging in peer review of teaching is to enhance practice. Peer review provides a means of focussing on teaching, and engaging in reflective, constructive and analytical discussion with a peer about teaching practices. Peer review will normally include classroom observation where appropriate; alternative methods may be necessary (for example when teaching is undertaken by virtual methods).
3. Key features of peer review include:
 - The reviewer - a peer - uses a record sheet for note taking during the review;
 - Benefits derive from constructive feedback and self-reflection - this makes post-review discussion vital;
 - If areas for change/improvement are identified, suggestions for how to bring about the change are needed (time to re-plan the session/ module; a change to assessment to fit what students are being asked to learn; attendance at a training workshop; observing a more experienced colleague etc.);
 - The benefits often come as much from reviewing as being reviewed.
4. Peer review may take place-
 - As part of continuing professional development, a Department or School may operate its own scheme of periodic review of teaching. Individual members of staff are encouraged to check with their Department for guidelines or requirements on peer review;
 - As part of the probationary period: when the academic advisor may review inexperienced lecturers according to Departmental or School guidelines
 - As part of personal development, where individuals may seek review of their teaching from peers.
5. Reviews may include a review of the following areas:
 - Curriculum content/quality
 - Organisation of class
 - Communication/teaching method
 - Alignment of teaching on the module with teaching elsewhere on the programme
 - Facilities of venue/teaching accommodation
6. Positive and constructive feedback is encouraged and areas of development or action points may be highlighted.

The Process

7. Schools should produce guidance on who should be reviewed, and how often. For instance, Schools may normally wish to review staff teaching modules as follows:
 - All teaching staff to be reviewed once every 3 years;
 - New teaching staff to be reviewed in their first year;
8. Staff should be reviewed by an individual nominated by their Assistant Dean. The Assistant Dean may delegate the nomination of reviewers to appropriate individuals within their School.
9. Reviewers should be supplied, with the following:
 - Cover letter including review details;
 - Review record sheet template;
 - Review guidelines;
 - Module outline.
10. Staff being reviewed should receive:
 - Cover letter including review details;
 - Voluntary self-assessment form.
11. Departments must have a means of recording that peer reviews have taken place. Peer reviews can be managed using the Class Visit reports functionality in GURU, this includes scheduling reviews and recording of completed reviews.
12. Once the review is carried out (and no later than 2 weeks thereafter) the reviewer's record sheet should be returned to the member of staff being reviewed. The member of staff being reviewed should confirm receipt of the report to the School-based administrative staff member designated to keep a record of all completed reviews.
13. It is the responsibility of the reviewee to reflect on the peer observation report and discuss any areas with their line manager where appropriate'

Peer Review Process / Timeline

