

Peer-Enhanced Educational Reflection

University Development of Teaching Policy

May 2022



UNIVERSITY OF
WINCHESTER

Document Title	Peer-Enhanced Educational Reflection: University Development of Teaching Policy
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Approving Body:	Education Committee
Review Date:	28/04/2023
Effective Date	May 2022
Date of Approval	May 2022
Indicate whether the document is for public access or internal access only Indicate whether the document applies to collaborative provision? (Strikethrough text, as appropriate)	Public Access
Summary/Description:	
<p>The document was developed with FADC Chairs and outlines the Peer Enhanced Educational Reflection Policy, which has been developed to ensure staff development as well as enhancing the student experience. The document outlines expectations around peer observation, as well as the reasons why it is valuable.</p>	



Peer-Enhanced Educational Reflection (PEER)

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Section 1 Aims

Peer observation is a collaborative, developmental activity which has the potential to enhance teaching practice and improve the quality of the student learning experience. Discussion of ideas and best practice is an essential aspect of peer observation which helps to develop reflection and innovation for both the observer and the observed. Observation will be of engagement with students, whether face-to-face or remote teaching, supervision, supporting learning or any other teaching and learning related activity. In accordance with this, the aims of the University of Winchester's Peer-Enhanced Educational Reflection (PEER) Policy are:

- a) To enable all teaching staff (established, associate and part-time hourly paid) to learn from each other and mutually benefit from improving understanding and practice.
- b) To develop a framework which enables and strengthens sharing, discussion and reflection about good practice in learning and teaching.
- c) To help staff to identify strengths in learning and teaching, and to identify areas where teaching and student learning could be improved.
- d) To support individual, modular and programmatic improvements in the design of programmes, particularly related to teaching methods and to student learning, through identifying common challenges and fresh solutions.
- e) To engender greater awareness, understanding and value for teaching approaches which enhance student learning, and disseminate these approaches within and across programmes.
- f) To help staff who teach and those who support learning to collect evidence of learning and teaching reflection for recognition through CASTLE, and benchmark their own practice to the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF);
- g) To ensure that the quality of teaching and learning at Winchester is continually energised and enhanced.

Section 2 Policy guidelines

In support of these aims, the University has approved the following requirements for the operation of peer observation:

- a) Departments within Faculties are expected to ensure that teaching staff (full- and part-time) are peer observed at least once every two years¹. An exception to this will be staff that are teaching on an apprenticeship programme/module (including where co-teaching takes place). All staff teaching apprentices shall undertake a peer observation once per year. Observation will be of engagement with students, whether face-to-face or remote teaching, supervision, supporting learning or any other teaching and learning related activity. The materials that support the observed teaching session can also be included. Observers should have access to relevant Canvas pages, for example. New members of teaching staff, including Associate Lecturers and part-time lecturers who teach more than 20 hours per semester should be peer observed within their first year of teaching. There is also an expectation that all academic staff should have the opportunity to observe a colleague.
- b) Experienced members of staff² should normally observe new Associate Lecturers and Visiting Lecturers who are on contracts >20 hours in a semester, as part of the university's commitment to supporting their work and building a shared community of practice.
- c) New Associate and Visiting Lecturers should undertake a reciprocal observation, for which they will be paid for two hours at the current interview rate (one hour for the observation, fifteen minutes for the pre-meeting, and 45 minutes for writing the report and post meeting).
- d) It is a requirement for colleagues enrolled in the PG Cert Learning and Teaching in Higher Education to complete observations and as such are exempt from taking part in PEER.
- e) Peer observations will take place within a Winchester context (i.e. not at another educational institution); this includes off-site teaching on Winchester programmes by Winchester staff e.g. fieldtrips, archaeology digs etc.
- f) Peer observation works best as a structured reflective activity. Good practice in PEER includes:
 - i) Pre-meeting, face-to-face or online, between observer and observed: the person being observed outlines the principles of engagement, both arrange a mutually agreeable time for the observation, and the observer identifies focus areas for discussion and observation.
 - ii) The observation of engagement with students: letting students know in advance of the event that you are going to be observed. Their consent is not required unless the teaching and learning event being observed is a tutorial (which might be the case if the only engagement that an academic has in teaching and learning is supervision).
 - iii) Written record of observation by the observer, with opportunity for reflection and response by the observed, using the standard form (Section 3, below) which categorises observable areas of teaching and learning. **This form is confidential to the observer and observed.**
 - iv) Post-meeting face-to-face or online discussion with reference to the constructive write-up. This meeting would elicit strengths, areas of shared interest, enhancement ideas and identify examples of best practice to disseminate (if any). The written observation and post-meeting should be firmly focused on what the observer has learnt from the observed.

Colleagues will be paired with other colleagues either from within their own department, or across

¹ It is expected that peer observation will be arranged locally as part of any collaborative provision arrangement and that this will be informed by the principles of development, dialogue and support which inform this policy.

² 'Experienced' refers to permanent members of staff with more than two years of teaching experience in an HEI

faculties and departments Decisions on how pairing will take place will be taken by Deans in consultation with Heads of Department. The stance of this policy is that no matter how experienced you are you can always learn from others, no matter how inexperienced. Observing someone from another department / School *might* maximise your chance of observing teaching approaches that are new to you and that you *may* be able to apply to your own situation.

Alternatively, a small group of tutors who have embarked on a learning and teaching project, may opt to observe each other to help assess how their project is progressing. This could be an internally funded project but does not need to be. Groups should be no larger than 3-4 staff. In this situation each staff member has to observe each other staff member (i.e., 2-3 observations each). Feedback could be one-to-one or as a group.

Peer observation is an intentional activity designed to foster reflection and conversations about teaching, both before and after the session. Team teaching is not the same as peer observation: in team teaching situations, the observer may be distracted by their own responsibilities to teach students and by the activity and dynamic in the room. Peer observations must therefore not be combined with team teaching; the observer must have no responsibilities within the teaching activity occurring.

- g) All peer observation is undertaken to enhance teaching, improve student learning and develop a culture of reflection about learning and teaching for both participants (observer and observed). This is a non-judgmental activity.
- h) Peer observation should contribute to Staff Development and Review conversations; it may highlight excellent practice for wider dissemination (for example, through Learning Lunches, faculty seminars on L&T, and DELTA).
- i) Peer observation will remain confidential between observer and observed, although the observed individual is free to share their peer observation record should they wish. In order to facilitate the dissemination of good practice, Heads of Department (HoD) will be invited by the Head of Learning and Teaching to nominate examples of good practice which can be shared through the University of Winchester Developing Learning, Teaching and Assessment (DELTA) resource to contribute to the systematic enhancement of teaching and learning across disciplines.
- j) The University requires a record of all peer observation that has taken place. HoDs are responsible for collecting brief monitoring data from all teaching staff concerning the time, place and sessions at which observation has taken place, as well as a record of observers (section A, below). This should be reported to the Dean annually. This record excludes the content of discussions and observation.
- k) Both the observer and observee can reflect on insights and enhancements which have occurred through engaging in PEER in the annual L&T return, which captures engagement, collaboration and enhancement through L&T activities. Any such reflections should not breach confidentiality.

Template for Peer-Enhanced Educational Reflection (PEER)

Please read the Peer-Enhanced Educational Reflection Policy before completing this form.

The content of discussions and the observations on this form are confidential to the observer and the observee, although the observee is free to share their feedback, should they wish, and may be invited to disseminate their good practice via DELTA.

At the conclusion of the peer-enhanced education reflection, the completed form should be retained by the observee.

However, as Deans are responsible for collecting brief monitoring data from all teaching staff about the time, place and sessions at which peer-enhanced educational reflections have taken place, as well as a record of observers, the observee should **forward a copy of Section A only to their Head of Academic Department** as soon as possible after the peer-enhanced educational reflection has taken place.

PEER-ENHANCED EDUCATIONAL REFLECTION (PEER) FORM

Section A

To be completed by the Observer and sent to Head of Department / School of both staff

(A copy of **Section A only** should be forwarded to the Head of Academic Department as soon as possible after the peer-enhanced educational reflection has taken place)

Observer			
Observee			
Department/School and Programme			
Apprenticeship	Yes / No		
Context	On campus / online live / online recording (delete as appropriate)		
Materials	e.g. access to Canvas		
Description of venue (if on campus)			
Date and time of delivery			
Number of students		Level	

PEER FORM

Section B – CONFIDENTIAL TO OBSERVER AND OBSERVEE.

To be completed by the Observer

1. **What areas for PEER did you jointly identify in advance of the session?**

2. **What approaches struck you as particularly valuable for student learning? Put another way, what are you as the observer taking away with you to put into practice yourself?**

Apprenticeship Specifics

- Were knowledge, skills and behaviors referred to, and their links to the aims and objectives of the session?
- Were apprentices encouraged/asked to reflect on their learning within the context of their individual workplace.
- Did any feedback include discussion of new targets to develop within the apprenticeship and for future career direction?
- Did discussions lead to any opportunities to discuss equality and diversity, and/or British Values?

3. **What were the main challenges in this learning environment? What might you do differently in future, given the same situation? You might want to identify sources of potential help, including relevant academic literature.**

Section C – CONFIDENTIAL TO OBSERVER AND OBSERVEE

To be completed by the Observee

4. **Reflections and response**