

## **Policy on Peer Observation of Teaching Process**

### **Introduction**

Peer observation is the practice where a colleague of the teacher observes him/her in the act of teaching in order to provide constructive feedback with the sheer intention of assisting the teacher to improve and enhance the quality of his/her teaching. Peer observation is used to denote direct feedback given to teachers regarding individual teaching practices, course organization and content, teaching strategies adopted, planning and delivery of lessons and the general teaching and learning environment. Moreover, peer observation in teaching is important for the quality enhancement process providing opportunity to explore teaching practice and teaching methods in the university. Improving instruction in the classrooms, laboratories etc. would lead to enhance learning process of the students - the ultimate goal of education. Furthermore, it provides a reliable source of information and suggestions regarding the quality of his/her teaching and how it could be improved.

Peer observation could be developed by faculties as a mean to assess teaching in addition to the collection of student feedback. Peer observation might be a new experience to many teachers in the university system because it is not an act which has been practiced widely or commonly. Therefore, several activities would have to be undertaken by faculties/universities before the actual practice of peer observation, so that the required mindset is developed by university teachers in order to realize the benefits and agree to peer observation.

The University needs to ensure that all members of staff undergoing Peer Observation of Teaching are treated in a fair and consistent manner. Peer observation should be systematic, taken seriously and respectful at all times of the rights of teachers.

### **Aims**

The aims of the University's Peer Observation of Teaching process are:

- To promote a culture in which good teaching is valued and to enhance teaching quality at the point of delivery by encouraging reflection on practice.

- To provide a supportive and constructive framework to monitor and improve the quality of the teaching.
- To enhance the quality of teaching by the identification of staff development needs and addressing those needs.

**Recommended procedure and practice is,**

- should identify a pool of peer teachers who would voluntarily observe teachers and provide constructive feedback and engage in formulating action plans for the teacher observed for improving in the future.
- assign two teachers for each observation
- outcomes are recorded collaboratively and conveyed to the teacher
- should be repeated in order to gain the benefits of feedback and action plan developed, if needed
- all teachers should be given an opportunity to be observed, whenever possible
- ensure that confidentiality and the creation of a nonjudgmental environment is evident
- encourage the colleague to reflect on and talk about their teaching.
- process should be formative, developmental and allow for personal reflection and exploration of practice.
- should discuss the aims of Peer Observation of Teaching at the pre-observation meeting with the teacher.
  - useful to encourage the teacher to raise any aspects of their practice that may want to focus on during the observation.
- during the Observation should refrain from participating in the session you are observing as this may change the focus of the activities undertaken and may reduce the capacity to comment objectively on the teaching processes used.

**Some aspects the observer may want to consider during the observation of teaching:**

- How well does the teaching match the intended learning outcomes?

- Are students encouraged to participate?
  - How is this done?
  - What processes are in place for students to engage with the session?
  - Do students receive feedback? How is this done?
- Are students supported to be critical and reflect on their learning?
- Is the session referred to previous content covered, or online resources and other related material?

### **Post-Observation**

- Following the observation, observer should engage with the teacher in a reflective feedback discussion at the earliest possible opportunity.
- When giving feedback, you should consider the following:
  - Always allow the teacher to talk about the session before you give feedback
  - Allow the teacher to highlight issues and possible solutions first
- Feedback on its own does not give room for improvement; be specific about what in your view worked well or may need to change. Use evidence based on your practice or how students responded during the session you observed
- Effective feedback should be focused on information that the teacher can make use of and is based on evidence collected during the observation
- Observation Form used for the observation and the recommendations, signed by both observer and the teacher, should be returned to the teacher /Head of the Department.