

Peer Observer Guide

Peer Review of Teaching for Fellows / Lecturers on Probation

1. Purpose

1.1 The peer review of teaching for probationers provides a structured framework for the ongoing improvement of teaching and learning practice, supporting probationers to reflect on and in practice:

- Develop self-awareness and encourage the probationer to reflect on their own teaching and identify their development needs;
- Recognise and identify good teaching practice;
- Support innovation in teaching;
- Promote research into teaching and learning;
- Improve the student experience by improving teaching and assessing.

1.2 One of the essential criterion for a Lecturer/Lecturer (Education) on probation to be confirmed in post is evidence of positive peer reviews of teaching. Peer Review Reports completed by the peer observer will be forwarded to the Head of School for review by the School Academic Probation Committee.

2. Peer Observer

2.1 Allocation of peer observers should be determined by the Head of School.

2.2 Ideally, the peer observer should be a more senior member of academic staff who has experience and knowledge in the discipline and is broadly familiar with the subject the probationer is teaching (i.e. Director of Education, discipline lead, etc).

3. Pre-observation discussion

3.1 The pre-observation discussion between the peer observer and the probationer is essential to cover:

- the context of the teaching (eg: room, status and history of student group, particular constraints and opportunities), learning objectives of the session and teaching approach;
- any concerns that the probationer may have.

4. Pro-Forma Report

4.1 A pro-forma report is completed by the peer observer (see Appendix 1) and a copy is kept by the peer observer, probationer and the probationer's PDR Reviewer.

5. Feedback

5.1 As soon as practically possible after the teaching session has been observed, the peer observer should meet with the probationer to provide feedback. The feedback should be focused and constructive and encourage reflection on the session observed.

5.2 Good feedback will:

- Allow the probationer to describe the class and say how he/she felt the session went;
- Positively state what the peer observer considers the probationer has completed with skill, insight, competence etc. The peer observer should provide evidence or instances of any claims made;
- Identify what did not appear to be so successful, or any areas in which some difficulties were observed. Again it is important that specific instances are cited as evidence for any comment about what did not go so well;
- Identify constructive solutions to any observed difficulties, including sources of professional development and support where appropriate.

5.3 Where the peer observer feels that aspects of teaching and learning need to be thought through and further developed, follow-up actions should be identified and a date arranged for a further peer review of teaching to be undertaken.

6. Peer Review

6.1 At least one review per year during the probationary period should be completed.

6.2 Where possible, each peer review should be undertaken by a different peer observer. Should a peer observer raise any areas of concern, peer reviews should be completed more often. This should be discussed and agreed with the probationer's PDR Reviewer and School Probation Committee.

7. Key Stages/Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 To ensure the timely implementation of peer observation of teaching during the probation period immediately following the appointment of the probationer, the Head of School will:

- select a PDR Reviewer
- select an initial Peer Observer of Teaching for Year One

The Head of School will advise the PDR Reviewer and Peer Observer(s) of their role and responsibilities

PEER REVIEW OF TEACHING

School of Xxxxxxx, Queen's University Belfast

Module Title:

Module Number:

Lecturer: Dr

Assessor:

Length of session: XX minutes **Length of observation:** XX minutes

Nº. of students present:

Level/Year of Study:

Type of class:

TEACHING

	Please comment on the effectiveness of each of the following elements
Content	
Methods	
Enthusiasm	
Use/Clarity of Language	

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

To what extent was student participation intended and how far did it occur as planned; what evidence was there of student engagement with the session?

ACCOMMODATION & RESOURCES

How effective was use of the room and layout, specialist equipment and material, visual aids, IT etc?

OVERALL QUALITY OF THE SESSION

Comment on any strengths and weaknesses of the session

Strengths	
Weaknesses	

*The peer observer should use this section to summarise the overall quality of the teaching session**

**Where the peer observer feels that aspects of teaching and learning need to be thought through and further developed, follow-up actions should be identified and a date arranged for a further peer review of teaching to be undertaken.*

Signatures <i>To confirm the peer observation of teaching has taken place</i>	
Peer Observer:	Date:
Probationer:	Date:

A copy of this form is kept by the peer observer, probationer and the probationer's PDR Reviewer.

This form should also be submitted to the Head of School for review by the School Academic Progression Committee during the annual progression cycle.

