

## Appendix: Peer Observation Handbook

### Purpose of the handbook

This handbook introduces the principle and practice of 'Learning from the observation of others'. It will help Heads of School and Directors of Teaching decide how the policy will be implemented at school level. It also provides guidance for individual staff members.

Who is Peer Observation for?

Staff	Minimum Number of Observations
ATR	One per academic year
ATS	One per academic year
Teaching Fellows	One per academic year
PBL Tutors	One per academic year
Associate Tutors	One per academic year
Staff seconded to the university whose role entails teaching	One per academic year

### Principle of Reflective Learning

Observation and reflection on teaching is an important process in developing and enriching practice to help with student learning. The core principle of this flexible policy is that by placing the emphasis on **observing the practice of others** and reflecting on that experience an individual will enhance their own practice. Deeper reflection can come from the act of observing another's good practice and their innovative pedagogy. Observation of not only teaching delivery but also how a colleague has prepared or evaluated their teaching activities can provide a source of new ideas, as well as affirm existing practice. Reflection can make individuals more aware of strengths and weaknesses of their own practice. All teaching staff, regardless of length of experience can benefit by observation of others followed by reflection. Commitment to peer observation demonstrates to students, prospective students and other stakeholders the importance of high quality teaching to the institution. Summative peer observation will have been conducted for new staff through the MAHEP programme delivered by the Centre for Staff Education Development (CSED) in collaboration with EDU. Staff coming in with these qualifications or Fellowship of the HEA will have had peer observation as part of their course or to satisfy UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) for HEA Fellowship.

Staff offering observation sessions can also benefit by having this as evidence of sharing good practice with others (UKPSF A2, A5).

## Key Contacts

The University Teaching Fellows (UTFs) have extensive contacts across the university and will help suggest people to contact with specific expertise.

Table 1 UTF community and other suggested experts

Name	contact	Area(s) of expertise
Prof Kay Yeoman-ADLTE	k.yeoman@uea.ac.uk	Students and the community
Dr Katy Appleton	k.appleton@uea.ac.uk	Pedagogy of teaching GIS field skills
Dr Fabio Arico	f.arico@uea.ac.uk	Academic self efficacy; self assessment and peer instruction
Professor Eylem Atakav	e.atakav@uea.ac.uk	Internationalisation and global learning
Professor Laura Bowater	Laura.bowater@uea.ac.uk	Engagement and impact
Dr Pablo Dalby	p.dalby@uea.ac.uk	Spinning seminars
Prof Helena Gillespie	h.gillespie@uea.ac.uk	Inclusivity in the curriculum
Dr Rob Jenkins	Robert.jenkins@uea.ac.uk	Pedagogy on teaching maths and authentic assessments
Dr Harriet Jones	Harriet.jones@uea.ac.uk	Transition to HE/feedback and assessment
Dr Thomas Karshan	t.karshan@uea.ac.uk	Creative spaces and literature
Professor Simon Lancaster	s.lancaster@uea.ac.uk	Active learning
Dr Phil Long	p.long@uea.ac.uk	Preparing for Advance HE Fellowship
Dr Paul Mcdermott	p.mcdermott@uea.ac.uk	Structured reflection in the curriculum
Dr Gill Seyfang	g.seyfang@uea.ac.uk	Comedy in the classroom and active learning
Dr Usha Sundaram	u.sundaram@uea.ac.uk	Student employability
Dr Lisa Taylor	Lisa.taylor@uea.ac.uk	Student reflection, career and portfolio work
Dr Rebecca Westrup	r.westrup@uea.ac.uk	The student voice within higher education (HE)
Dr Jonathan Wilson	Jonathan.s.wilson@uea.ac.uk	Authentic assessments
Dr Leticia Yulita	L.Yulita@uea.ac.uk	The interface between language, intercultural and citizenship education

## **Model 1 Peer Group**

In the peer group model staff work together in a peer group of not fewer than three members to discuss the type of teaching they wish to observe. Support can be available to facilitate this process, for example the signposting of opportunities within and across different schools. Micro-courses covering different aspects of teaching will also be available on Blackboard which can be accessed via the Blackboard Catalogue.

Peer group has four steps

1. Group discussion (1 hour recommended-but longer needed if group more than three) where each individual shares their current teaching practice and shared the practice/type of teaching that they wish to observe. Support is then given by the group members in helping to suggest where this could be found within the school, faculty, institution or other institution. The lead on the teaching session(s) to be observed are contacted and permission sought to observe if the session is being delivered face-to-face. If a recorded session is being observed, then access to the relevant *Blackboard* site may need to be given. If observation is happening at another institution (UK based) then this should be discussed with the DoT and HoS to determine a funding source for travel and a decision made on the basis of how valuable the observation would be to wider school practice.
2. Observations occur of learning and teaching within an agreed timeframe.
3. Group reflection (1 hour recommended-but longer needed if group more than three). The group reflects on the observation experience, the practice under consideration and the group discusses how the practice could be embedded into the individual's teaching, so that personal development activities can be identified.
4. Recording-each group member records their observation, reflection and potential practice change and their personal development activities.
5. Meetings of the peer group can occur through Bb Collaborate.

## **Model 2 Individual or Pair Observations**

The observation process can be done on an individual basis or in a pair, with staff initially reflecting on their practice and then deciding what type of teaching they want to observe to enhance their practice, and seeking out the relevant opportunities. Opportunities can also be discussed with DoT. The activity is then reflected upon using the UKPSF dimensions of professional practice (Appendix 1) and recorded.

## What to observe?

Suggested observation opportunities, you do not have to be limited to these examples

Table 1

Type of event	Description
Lecture	This could be a lecture which has an active learning embedded within it, e.g. use of TurningPoint or Padlet
Collaborate session	This could be e.g. a lecture or seminar conducted fully online using Bb Collaborate
Seminar	This could be a seminar which uses role play or debating techniques
Workshops	Observation of skill development, e.g. statistical analysis
Active learning	Observation would include reading the material given to the students and then observation of the active learning session
Assessment	You can observe someone going through marking an assignment in a verbal process to see the thought process behind marking, or discuss the use of rubrics with colleagues
Teaching materials	You can review a colleague's teaching materials
Micro-courses	You can take advantage of the range of micro-courses on different aspects of teaching which are available to you through the Blackboard Catalogue
Conversations	Individual or group conversations with professional services, e.g. CTEL, CSED, Student Support or external examiners
Meetings	You could ask to observe an advisor/advisee meeting

## Etiquette

You will need to contact the person whose practice you wish to observe and gain permission. If you wish to observe a session with an advisor and advisee, then permission needs to be obtained from the student(s). The observer will be a passive recipient (unless directly invited otherwise).

## How to observe?

There are no specific guidelines on how to observe, but the diagram in figure 1 outlines a process flow which might be useful for a reflective approach.

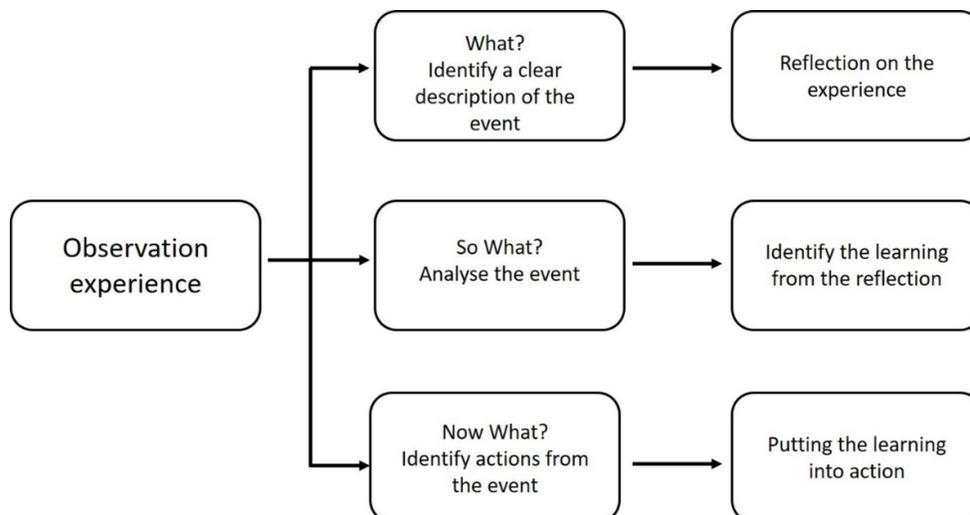


Figure 1 Reflection process starting with the observation experience

### **Feedback**

There is no expectation of feedback to the person whose practice is being observed. However the observer may have follow up questions.

### **How do I go about offering a session?**

If you want to offer a session which can be observed then this can be posted on the *Blackboard* Catalogue. This will ask for the 'event' description, time and date, and how many observers can be accommodated. Staff can then search the catalogue and book onto the event, and when the event is 'full' it will close.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **What is the Peer Group?**

The peer group is a collection of individuals who will work together through the peer observation process.

#### **Who is in the Peer group?**

It is up to each School how the peer group is established. For example, group members can be allocated by the Director of Teaching, or the peer group can be made up from colleagues who work closely together.

#### **What is the purpose of the peer group?**

Peer group is a supportive system of individuals who will help each other through the peer observation process. The group will;

1. Initiate a discussion around areas of activity they wish to learn more about and then identify individual sessions or conversations with individuals
2. Offer support and help each other with the process
3. Meet and reflect on the observation process

**Do I have to observe people on my peer group?** No, you don't have to observe the practice of your peer group, however you can do so if they have a practice you wish to observe.

**How do I find people to observe?** The peer group will assist each other in this, but support from others will be available, DoT, course directors as well as HEA Fellows and University Teaching fellows.

**Who allocates people to a peer group?**

This will be decided by each individual school

**Can a School devise their own model?**

Yes, providing that the policy is adhered to where the focus is on the person observing

**Can a School operate a peer paring?**

Yes, providing that the policy is adhered to where the focus is on the person observing

**How many observations do I have to do?**

One per academic year

## Appendix 1 UKPSF framework

### Dimensions of the Framework

