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Peer Review of Teaching at Deakin

Principles and Implementation Framework A Handbook for Faculties

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SECTION A

Background

Peer Review of Teaching (PRT) is relatively uncommon in higher education in Australia. Individual institutions have made effective use of PRT (e.g. University of Wollongong), following on from the trend which began emerging in the United States of America during the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's (D'Andrea, 2002; Quinlan & Akerlind 2000).

In 1990, Boyer pressed for the importance of the scholarship of teaching. Schulman (1993) argued that for teaching in higher education to be regarded as a scholarly activity, it must be amenable to scholarly review. In pursuing this theme, the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE - <http://www.aahea.org/>) completed a project "From Idea to Prototype: The Peer Review of Teaching", reported on by Hutchings (1994).

From an Australian perspective, the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) sponsored project *Peer Review of Teaching in Higher Education* (2008) produced a handbook to support institutions in developing peer review of teaching policies and practices:

(<http://www.altc.edu.au/resource-peer-review-teaching-australian-higher-melbourne-2008>

or

http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/pdfs/PeerReviewHandbook_eVersion.pdf

References

Boyer, E. 1990 *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities for the Professoriate* Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Princeton, NJ.

D'Andrea V. (2002) *Peer Review of Teaching in the USA*. Learning and Teaching Support Network, York.

Hutchings, P. 1994 'Peer review of teaching' *AAHE Bulletin* (Nov) 3-7. = www.cba.ufl.edu/mywcba/facstaff/Docs/PeerReviewofTeachingPolicy.pdf

Quinlan, K. & Akerlind, G. 2000 'Factors affecting departmental peer collaboration for faculty development' *Higher Education* 40, 23-52.

Shulman, L. 1993 'Teaching as community property: Putting an end to pedagogical solitude' *Change* 25(6), 6-7.

Principles

The central principles of peer review are important but not inflexible. They can be applied to any setting as determined by those involved. They act as a framework within which institutions, faculties or schools may design their own approach to peer review of teaching.

The ALTC supported national project of 2008 identified the 'core' principles that are regarded as '...fundamental to peer review of university teaching that are relevant to the contemporary Australian higher education environment (Harris et al 2008, p. 7). These principles are included in Table 1 (p. 5).

Table 1: Peer review of teaching in higher education: A framework for Australian universities.

Peer review of teaching in higher education:	
A framework for Australian universities	
The core principles	
In Australian universities, peer review of teaching:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has the enhancement of teaching and learning as its primary purpose. 2. Is a fundamental tool for the evaluation and development of teaching, complementing feedback collected from students. 3. Recognises university teachers' shared professional responsibilities for monitoring and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. 4. Acknowledges and capitalises on the educative expertise and judgement of university teachers in their fields. 5. Provides feedback that affirms good practice as well as suggests areas in which development might be helpful. 	
The potential benefits	
Peer review of teaching:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extends beyond classroom teaching and presentation Peer review has the potential to provide feedback on all key aspects of teaching such as the learning aims and objectives, and the design of curricula, resources and assessment. • Accommodates the full spectrum of university teaching and learning contexts By drawing upon the insight of colleagues, peer review is readily adapted to diverse teaching and learning environments, such as clinical, field-based and online teaching. • Recognises the influence of disciplines on teaching and learning practices Central to peer review of teaching is the exchange of ideas, framed by recognised principles of good teaching practice — practice that is inevitably influenced by the field of study. Individuals' conceptions and disciplinary perspectives are an inherent characteristic and feature of peer review. • Strengthens the teaching culture of an institution The processes of peer review of teaching have the potential to contribute to collegial academic cultures in which critical reflection on teaching is valued and encouraged. Increased communication between staff, and enhanced knowledge of the broader curriculum are among the benefits for the immediate academic environment and the institution more broadly. • Has benefits for each of the parties involved Both reviewer and the person whose teaching is reviewed benefit from engaging in the process. Engaging in critical reflection on a colleague's teaching yields insights into an individual's own practice, while feedback from peers provides a unique perspective on teaching that other evaluation methods may lack. 	
The conditions for effective peer review	
Effective implementation of institutional programs of peer review of teaching is contingent upon:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collegial trust and respect Effective peer review of teaching requires a collegial atmosphere of trust and respect in which all parties approach the process in a professional and sensitive manner. • Supporting guidelines, resources and advice If the full developmental possibilities of peer review of teaching are to be realised, support and guidance for participants is necessary. Giving and receiving feedback on research is a familiar activity, but the same is not true for teaching. • Peer review being incorporated into policies for staff appraisal, promotion, and special recognition Staff contribution to the scholarship of teaching through involvement in peer review needs to be recognised and acknowledged by institutional policies. Such policy linkages are necessary to increase participation in peer review. Policies and administrative processes around appraisal, promotion, and other forms of recognition— such as teaching awards— need to explicitly recognise peer review of teaching. 	

Table 1 Source: Harris, K-L., Farrell, K., Bell, M., Devlin, M. and James, R. (2008). *Peer Review of Teaching in Australian Higher Education: A handbook to support institutions in developing and embedding effective policies and practices*. Support for the original work was provided by The Australian Learning and Teaching Council, an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, p. 6.

This ALTC framework has the development of teaching and learning at its hub, recognising the professional responsibility and ability of academics to contribute to advancing the quality of what they do by means of a recognised 'tool'.

Guiding Principles for Quality Peer Review of Teaching

Whether a peer review of teaching includes classroom visits, a teaching portfolio, or a more limited submission of teaching materials, there are certain general principles to consider.

1. No surprises. Faculty must know the use to which a peer review will be put!
2. The reviewer and teacher must agree on the process of peer review.
3. Knowing and understanding a subject does not mean you can teach it well. Good teachers are made, not born.
4. Considerable thought and effort are needed for good peer review.
5. The notion to sit beside, that is, two professionals working collaboratively, is critical.
6. Do no harm. The person being reviewed may be concerned about being found wanting, about being less than excellent, or being treated unfairly or harshly.
7. Confidentiality in a formative review must be maintained.
8. Peer review includes a focus on the thinking behind the work--faculty members' reasons for teaching the way they do, as well as the actual work itself.
9. Peer review should focus on specific teaching behaviors (e.g., syllabi, handouts, organization of lecture, eliciting questions from students, level of content).
10. Discourse should be based on reasoned opinions, not personal biases or judgments. A good peer review requires reflection.
11. Build on strengths. It is easy to determine what needs work. Be sure to identify what went well.
12. Good peer review involves being honest about the issues, but tender on the person.
13. Feedback must be provided in a timely and thoughtful manner, and the reviewer should meet with the faculty member being reviewed to provide this feedback.
14. Be patient. Improving teaching takes time.
15. The process of peer review takes time. Yet the sense of contributing to teaching development and working with colleagues usually makes the additional responsibility and time commitment worthwhile.
16. Reviewers also benefit from peer review. Ideas to improve their own teaching are likely to develop.

[based on the Guiding Principles appearing in Perlman & McCann (1998) and Chism (1998).]

Source: <http://teachpsych.org/otrp/resources/perlman98.pdf> - accessed 8 May 2009

Aims

Just as there are core principles, the basic aims of any peer review program are similar:

- acknowledge that there is no 'ideal' way to teach
- focus on all elements of teaching, not just the classroom
- provide collegial feedback which enables reflection on teaching and learning
- allow for different teaching and learning needs within different disciplines
- focus on improving teaching quality and therefore learning quality
- recognise that improvement is incremental and starting from many individual points along a continuum
- raise consciousness of the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Intended Outcomes

The overall desired outcome from PRT is improved quality of teaching and learning. There are various factors which, if achieved, will contribute to achieving this overall outcome:

- development of collegial conversations about teaching and learning
- building of trust between colleagues
- providing a system of mutual support for academic colleagues
- identifying ongoing academic development needs of teachers
- raising the profile of the scholarship of teaching and learning
- dissemination of effective teaching practices and strategies
- encouraging self reflection on teaching and learning
- developing individual teaching portfolios.

Issues for Determination

Whilst the principles underpin PRT, prior to any program being designed, it is essential that a set of key issues be clarified according to the context and circumstances of the program's implementation. Without certainty for all parties involved, PRT will easily become a flawed process.

The ALTC national project on peer review (2008) refers to these issues as 'key decision points' (see Table 2).

Table 2: Key Decision Points

<i>Peer Review of Teaching - Program Design</i>
Key Decision Points
1. Whose teaching will be reviewed?
2. What will be the policy regarding participation?
3. What will be reviewed?
4. Who will the reviewers be?
5. What form will the review process take?
6. What reporting will take place?
7. What types of follow up will occur after completion of the peer review process?

* Source: ALTC (2008) *Peer Review of Teaching in Australian Higher Education* p. 28.

Table 3: One Example of Key Decision Points in Program Design

<i>Peer Review of Teaching – Program Design</i>	
Key Decision Points	
1. Whose teaching will be reviewed?	academic staff on probation
2. What will be the policy regarding participation?	voluntary
3. What will be reviewed?	unit structure, classroom delivery, assessment design
4. Who will the reviewers be?	pool of voluntary academics from within the faculty
5. What form will the review process take?	reciprocal - one classroom session observed, feedback session, role reversal, feedback, discussion of units' content and sequence, discussion of major assignments
6. What reporting will take place?	confidential feedback from reviewer to reviewee
7. What types of follow up will occur after completion of the peer review process?	- reviewee will reflect on process and decide on which aspects of the feedback will be acted upon - follow up meeting with reviewer

There are other issues alluded to but not specifically identified as 'key decision points' which would also need to be considered when designing a PRT program. For example:

- training for reviewers
- pre-review meetings or briefings
- confidentiality
- is peer review the most effective means of gaining this information
- identification of any non-PRT information which may be useful.

An Example

<i>Issues</i>	
The Faculty Decides	The Faculty determines all aspects of the process
Voluntarism	The process is entered into voluntarily .
Confidentiality	Confidentiality is maintained at all times.
Objectivity & Professionalism	Reviewers approach is objective, impartial and independent , and they provide the Faculty with fair, expert, and timely advice.
Transparency	It is a transparent and supportive process, with achievable outcomes .
Neutrality & Independence	Performance criteria are determined by the Faculty, and are not linked to funding or inspection regimes.
Ownership	The Host retains ownership of the findings of the review.

Adapted from : www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/uploadedFiles/NCVO/What_we_do/Research/Research_Events/Purcell_%20M_and_Richardson_P_PDF.pdf – accessed 3 March 2009

SECTION B

1. What is PRT?

We must do something alien to academic culture: we must talk to each other about our inner lives -risky stuff in a profession that fears the personal and seeks safety in the technical, the distant, the abstract.(Parker J. Palmer)

Source: Palmer, P.J. 1998 *The Courage to Teach* Jossey-Bass Inc, San Francisco, p. 12.

As the title suggests, *Peer Review of Teaching (PRT)* involves colleagues sharing feedback about one or more aspects of their teaching in higher education. PRT is known by varying names, and refers not only to observing and reviewing a colleague in the classroom, but many other aspects of teaching and learning as well.

To some, it is known as Peer Observation of Teaching, although this title suggests a limited perspective. Certainly observing by peers of a colleague's classroom teaching can be a valuable means of feedback for a teacher to reflect upon. But you need to remember that the performance in the classroom was preceded by planning, researching and resourcing, and is likely to be followed by student inquiries, design of assessment tasks, exam writing and other aspects of teaching and learning - which shouldn't be divorced from the actual happenings in the classroom.

Others use the term Peer Evaluation of Teaching, which tends to hint at an element of measurement, quality assurance and rating, with implications for promotion and reward - or potentially lack of the same. Not that the use of peer review for determining appointment or promotion or teaching awards is a negative thing. Quite validly, PRT can and does play a judgemental role in higher education institutions. But also, the type of PRT process that is put in place must acknowledge the developmental role as well.

In order to lessen the 'stigma' of quality evaluation from PRT, some institutions refer to it as peer development, or perhaps peer support or peer coaching.

Whatever the terminology, PRT can provide the process whereby collegial and constructive discussions about teaching and learning may take place. Just as academics are familiar with a process of peer review of scholarly writing for publication, so too can we benefit from peer review of our teaching. Such feedback from colleagues is seen as adding another perspective to the feedback academics receive on their teaching from their students. The feedback from students can be very useful in assisting academics to reflect on the impact of their teaching. In conjunction, feedback from peers is seen as a means of receiving comments from the perceptions of practitioners in the field.

All of this leads to an important question. "What is good teaching"?

If you are asked to review a colleague's teaching, obviously there needs to be clear criteria in place beforehand. If a friend is to review your teaching, you would want to be quite clear beforehand what he or she was actually reviewing. At the heart of PRT is a sense of trust and collaboration, supported by clarity of what both the reviewer and reviewee see as the processes and outcomes. In a sense, this is a reflection of 'good' teaching - students know from the beginning what they are expected to do and what the learning outcomes should be.

The next section of this module provides guidance on what are widely regarded as elements of 'good' teaching. But before moving on, complete 'Activity 1'.

Activity 1.1

Nominate 5 elements which you believe are the basis for 'good' teaching.

2. What is 'good' teaching?

Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher. (Parker J. Palmer)

Source: Palmer, P.J. 1998 *The Courage to Teach* Jossey-Bass Inc, San Francisco, p. 10.

What is 'good' teaching at Deakin?

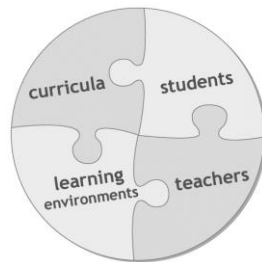
The eight *Principles of Teaching and Learning and the Student Experience* guide teaching and learning at Deakin University:

Principles Relating to Students

1. Focus upon learning outcomes
2. Recognise and celebrate student diversity

Principles Relating to Curricula

3. Courses that are relevant and future-oriented
4. Courses that are flexible



Principles Relating to Teachers

5. Teachers who are innovative and motivate students to learn
6. Teachers who are scholarly and professional

Principles Relating to the Learning Environment

7. A learning environment that is flexible and responsive to student support needs
8. A learning environment which provides engagement with the university community

Source: <http://www.deakin.edu.au/staff/teaching-learning/principles/about.php> - accessed 10 February 2009

It is obvious that there is much more to teaching than actual classroom instruction.

...good teaching is the effective application of a combination of a scholarly approach to teaching, and teaching plans and strategies that are derived from (in alignment with) a student-focused conception of teaching (Trigwell 2001, p. 72)¹

¹ Trigwell, K. 2001 'Judging university teaching' *International Journal for Academic Development*, 6 (1), 65-73.

Deakin's principles refer to diversity amongst students, development of both knowledge and attributes, curriculum design and delivery, teachers who motivate students and explore the scholarship of teaching and learning, and a welcoming and student-focused learning environment.

Individual teachers contribute in many different ways to 'good' teaching at Deakin, and it is this point which needs to be at the core of the PRT process. The PRT process can assist individuals to identify and highlight their contributions to 'good' teaching, as well as perhaps to identify other potential future contributions they may make. It also allows for the opportunity to contribute to other colleagues' development as teachers in higher education.

Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC)

The Australian Learning and Teaching Council promotes excellence in higher education by recognising, rewarding and supporting teachers and professional staff through a suite of award, fellowship and grant schemes. We aim to enhance the student learning experience by supporting quality teaching and practice.

Source: <http://www.altc.edu.au/carrick/go> - accessed 10 February 2009

The ALTC has established five criteria which are used to determine 'good' teaching for the purposes of awarding national citations to higher education teachers in Australia who have made outstanding contributions to student learning.

Briefly, these criteria are:

1. Approaches to the support of learning and teaching that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn.
2. Development of curricula, resources and services that reflect a command of the field.
3. Approaches to assessment, feedback and learning support that foster independent learning.
4. Respect and support for the development of students as individuals.
5. Scholarly activities and service innovations that have influenced and enhanced learning and teaching.

Source: <http://www.altc.edu.au/carrick/go/home/awards/pid/64> - accessed 10 February 2009

As a result of an ALTC funded project during 2008, a handbook *Peer Review of Teaching in Australian Higher Education* was produced to support higher education institutions in developing peer review of teaching policies and practices. The handbook includes the following expansions on each of the ALTC criteria used to define 'good' teaching.

1. Approaches to teaching that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn

For example:

- Effectively encouraging student participation
- Generating student interest in the subject
- Use of examples relevant to students' interest and experiences
- Incorporating current and relevant 'real-world' examples
- Modelling of critical thinking and problem-solving
- Use of activities that require students to take a critical approach to the task
- Demonstrating enthusiasm for learning in the discipline
- Effective communication skills
- High-level interpersonal skills
- Rapport and engagement with students
- Skilful presentation of ideas and information (including effective use of audiovisual material)
- Structure of the learning activity
- Developing students' scholarly values
- Encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning

- Helping students become reflective learners
- Management of the audience
- Effectiveness of questioning techniques
- Facilitating links between practice and theory (*for clinical/practical demonstrations*).

2. Development of curricula and resources that reflect a command of the field

For example:

- Effective use of teaching and learning resources
- Current research is integrated within the teaching
- Demonstrated command of the subject matter
- Evidence of sound planning of learning opportunities for students
- Content is relevant, accurate and current
- Appropriate use is made of online learning opportunities
- The learning encouraged supports the development of the desired graduate attributes
- Expectations are clearly communicated to students
- Clear communication of learning task and assessment objectives
- Effective use of interactive technologies in the design of learning tasks
- Engagement of community expertise and experience in the design of curricula and resources
- Learning activities and resources accommodate the skills, knowledge and experience of commencing students.

3. Approaches to assessment and feedback that foster independent learning

For example:

- Assessment tasks align with the stated learning outcomes for the subject
- Students have opportunities to practice the skills to be assessed
- Students have opportunities to self-assess in preparation for major assessment tasks
- Timely and constructive feedback is provided
- The tasks allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills
- Appropriate involvement of external expertise in student assessment
- Suitable methods are used to identify and monitor student progress
- The teaching encourages reflective practice and self-assessment
- Students are encouraged to take responsibility for monitoring their own learning
- Assessment encourages and rewards creativity.

4. Respect and support for the development of students as individuals

For example:

- Effective strategies for monitoring students' progress
- Involving students in the development of the curriculum and/or teaching activities
- There are opportunities for students to seek advice and assistance from the teacher
- Consideration is given to the diverse learning needs of students
- An inclusive and supportive learning environment is fostered
- Students are afforded respect, and thereby encouraged to respect peers and staff
- Consideration of students' aspirations and priorities
- Equal opportunities exist for all students.

5. Scholarly activities that have influenced and enhanced learning and teaching

For example:

- Evidence of reflective practice with regard to teaching and learning
- Contribution to the advancement of teaching and learning in the discipline
- Leadership in curriculum renewal
- Leadership in the enhancement of assessment practices, including academic standards
- Support for the development of the teaching of peers
- Fostering a scholarly approach to teaching among peers
- Rigorous and thoughtful investigation of student learning
- Knowledge transfer activities that enrich the curriculum.

Obviously it is unreasonable to expect all of these criteria and examples to apply each individual. But they can determine which particular aspects of teaching will frame the basis of any PRT process.

Activity 2.1

1. Reflect on how closely aligned your 5 indicators of 'good' teaching (from Topic 1) are with the above information.
2. Identify 3 aspects of your current teaching approach which substantiate this Chinese proverb.

Teachers open the door. You enter by yourself.
(Chinese proverb)

Source: <http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/29226.html> accessed 23 February 2009

3. Now try to identify some aspects of your teaching which may act to restrict this 'opening door'.

3. What is the purpose?

You learn more quickly under the guidance of experienced teachers. You waste a lot of time going down blind alleys if you have no one to lead you. (W. Somerset Maugham)

Source: <http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/40450.html> accessed 23 February 2009

A Peer Review of Teaching (PRT) program may be introduced for two main reasons:

1. for judgemental purposes
2. for developmental purposes

or it is most likely a combination of both.

Judgemental

This category of PRT is generally used to evaluate the quality of someone's teaching for the purposes of appointment to a continuing position, for re-appointment or for promotion. As such, this form of review is often described as 'summative'.

As with 'summative' assessment of student learning (for the purpose of grading students), there is a similar element of comparing the teaching of one person to that of another so that the quality of teaching can be determined.

This PRT category has more of a formal aspect to it, as the documented information can be made available to more parties than just the academic being reviewed.

Developmental

Compared to 'Judgemental', this approach is designed to provide information to academics for the purposes of improving their teaching. It is less formal, and the feedback may possibly only be seen by the reviewer and the reviewee.

Again, as with 'formative' assessment of student learning, a 'Developmental' model of PRT is ongoing and is designed to provide feedback from which someone can learn and improve. Hence, this approach seems most suitable for new and inexperienced teachers, although the most experienced could also obviously benefit.

It is possible for both approaches to PRT to operate concurrently, just as both forms of assessment operate concurrently with students. The ongoing discussions between reviewer and reviewee are likely to ultimately lead to a point where the reviewee will go through the more formal judgemental exercise. The devices used during the formative process - e.g. discussions, peer observation checklists, lesson planning documents, student assessment tasks - could logically be also used in a more formal sense.

Models

1. **Development and training model** - where one or more academics work together to find ways to improve teaching and where what is observed and discussed is generally based on the goals and concerns of the person observed.
2. **Performance model** - where peer observation is used in order to judge teaching competence, although this practice might more accurately be referred to as 'supervisor observation' or 'experienced peer observation'. Observation may be carried out for remedial purposes where there is a suggestion of a 'problem' in teaching.
3. **Mixed model** - where a combination of the above is utilised.

Maureen Bell *Peer Observation of Teaching in Australia*

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/id28_Peer_Observation_of_Teaching_in_Australia - accessed 16 February 2009.

Activity 3.1

Reflect on how you would feel if a colleague reviewed your teaching for formative developmental purposes as opposed to for summative judgemental reasons. Can you foresee you would be comfortable with both?

4. Who is a 'peer'?

I've watched my peers get better with age and hoped that would happen to me. (Bonnie Raitt)

Source: <http://thinkexist.com/search/searchquotation.asp?search=peer&page=4> accessed 13 February 2009

Strictly speaking, a 'peer' is someone of the same quality, character, position - an equal, a colleague, an associate, someone working in a similar field.

In terms of PRT, the meaning of peer is more broad. Obviously there is much diversity amongst teachers in higher education, meaning a wealth and variety of teaching experiences, abilities, skills and ideas. As such, a peer in PRT could be a lecturer with more years experience than you. It may be a fellow tutor. It could be someone from another school or faculty. It may be an outsider to the institution, perhaps from industry or the professions.

In their handbook to support peer review of teaching in Australian higher education, Harris, Farrell, Bell, Devlin and James (2008)² indicate that who the actual peers are depends on the purpose for which the review is undertaken.

If for example, a new academic wishes to receive some constructive feedback on her early efforts at teaching, a teaching member of the same school or discipline would make a suitable peer. Perhaps an academic with many years teaching experience feels he is becoming a little jaded. A review by someone from another faculty may bring new and different insights. When applying for promotion, evidence of suitability could include a review from a senior academic.

Obviously, being involved in any form of review needs to be managed sensitively. The reviewee is exposing him or herself to judgements and potential constructive criticism of their performance by others. On the other hand, the reviewer is being asked to comment on the positives and 'not-so-positives' of a colleague. Clearly there needs to be a strong element of trust present, which is vital in deciding just who the peers involved will be.

Activity 4

1. Who would you feel comfortable with as a reviewer of your teaching?
2. Would you feel comfortable being asked to review a colleague's teaching?
3. What aspects of your teaching would you want a colleague to focus on?

Suggested Competencies of Reviewers

Due to the sensitive nature of PRT, obviously both parties need to be comfortable. It has been suggested that a reviewer would need to possess certain competencies. Obviously, for PRT to be acceptable there must be some form of training provided for reviewers before any program should be instigated. These competencies include:

- integrity and objectivity in analysing, storing and forwarding information
- constructive criticism
- knowledge / expertise in the field
- collaborative approach
- professionalism and effective communication
- commitment developing people
- diversity awareness

Source: [www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/uploadedFiles/NCVO/What we do/Research/Research Events/Purcell %20M and Richardson P.PDF.pdf](http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/uploadedFiles/NCVO/What%20we%20do/Research/Research%20Events/Purcell%20and%20Richardson%20P.PDF.pdf) – accessed 3 March 2009

² Harris, K., Farrell, K., Bell, M., Devlin, M. & James, R. 2008 *Peer Review of Teaching in Higher Education: A handbook to support institutions in developing and embedding effective policies and practices* Australian Learning and Teaching Council, Sydney, Australia

5. What is reviewed?

I really hope my peers appreciate and respect what I'm doing.
(Shania Twain)

Source: <http://thinkexist.com/search/searchquotation.asp?search=peer&page=4> accessed 13 February 2009

It needs to be decided from the outset what exactly your interpretation of PRT is - is it just observation of a teaching session by a peer, or, is it broader and inclusive of other elements of teaching - curriculum design, learning activity design, quality of Unit Guide, quality of assessment task design?

If it is agreed that the emphasis will just be on observation of a teaching session or sessions, then it may be preferable to use the term 'peer observation of teaching'. As such, what is reviewed will most likely be decided between the observing peer and the observee delivering the teaching session.

In a broader sense, peer review of teaching is more likely to emphasise a range of aspects of teaching, probably including observation of a teaching session, but also what precedes that session and what follows after that session, and it may be face to face or online teaching which is reviewed - or a combination of both.

The University of South Australia for example, suggests that peer reviews can be conducted on any aspect of teaching including:

- small group teaching
- distance materials
- online materials
- clinical instruction
- studio teaching
- lecturing
- assessment
- laboratory teaching
- design of a course
- evaluation of a course or program

Source: UniSA <http://www.unisa.edu.au/ltu/staff/practice/evaluation/peer-review.asp#instrument> - accessed 5 March 2009.

Activity 5.1

In order to get you thinking about 'what' to review, assume that a colleague has asked you to observe her teaching and give her some feedback generally - nothing specific.

Here is her lecture: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jsrw71J3DV4>

What are you going to say to her?

Reflect on this activity in terms of "what did I concentrate on" and "why did I do that". Is this what 'teaching' is?

This activity is designed to encourage thinking about the elements of teaching which we may or may not want to include in the 'what' is reviewed. There is a danger if we just observe one teaching session for example, that we don't place it in a broader context. As is the case with your colleague you have just observed, it is what she does with your feedback which is important. It is also important that she be given the opportunity to explain her approach in that class. Is that her usual approach to teaching? Is it a one-off? Was she well prepared? Does she provide consultation times for students? Are assessment tasks valid? Are course materials well designed?

Teaching can include:

- clinical instruction - teaching patient evaluation, diagnostic techniques, and management strategies
- performance instruction - teaching/enhancing performance skills
- graduate instruction - supervising graduate student research or disciplinary training
- outreach and continuing education - teaching persons other than “traditional,” full time students
- distance education - teaching students on or off campus
- lecturing in undergraduate or graduate courses
- leading discussions/seminars
- teaching laboratory or scientific procedures
- preparing a syllabus - selecting content for a course, designing activities to help students learn
- designing and implementing assessment procedures to evaluate students
- supervising student interns/externs.

Source: <http://teachingacademy.wisc.edu/archive/Assistance/MOO/definiti.htm> - accessed 10 Feb 2009.

With this in mind, here are some suggested frameworks to guide you to make the decision - ‘what’ is reviewed.

Frameworks

1. Principles Framework

Deakin’s Principles of Teaching and Learning and the Student Experience

Students

1. Focus upon learning outcomes
2. Recognise and celebrate student diversity

Curricula

3. Courses that are relevant and future-oriented
4. Courses that are flexible

Teachers

5. Teachers who are innovative and motivate students to learn
6. Teachers who are scholarly and professional

Learning environments

7. A learning environment that is flexible and responsive to student support needs
8. A learning environment which provide engagement with the university community

From within this framework, you are able to select certain aspects of teaching at Deakin on which to focus your review. This framework encourages teachers to reflect on their teaching in terms of the principles of teaching and learning and the student experience, and to build a portfolio of evidence in support of the ways they are applying the principles in their teaching.

2. Face to Face Framework

This framework concentrates on peer observation of a colleague’s teaching face to face. This may be in a lecture or tutorial or practical or fieldwork of placement environment, and is usually supported by checklists and rating scales based on observable characteristics of ‘good teaching’ (see Appendix 1).

3. Online Teaching Framework

Reviewing online teaching requires elements which are generic to all forms of teaching, but also aspects which tend to be unique to the online environment. Effective online teaching requires different strategies from face to face, and it is more than a matter of simply loading a lot of content into a unit online site.

For discussions of effective online teaching, the following provide a useful resource:

<http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/online/index.php>

<http://www.cs.kent.ac.uk/people/staff/saf/dc/meetings/ExternalReviewGuidelines.pdf>

http://www.jcu.edu.au/teaching/idc/groups/public/documents/advice/jcuprd_016982.pdf

<http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/Resources/online-eval/>

http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/Resources/online-eval/if_desgn.htm

<http://www.altc.edu.au/project-peer-review-online-learning-unisa-2007>

4. Assessment Framework

If the focus of a review is on the assessment practice of teachers, a different set of measures is needed. Again, the widely accepted principles of good assessment should guide this framework's development.

These resources may help determine what the focus may be in this form of review:

<http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/assessment/index.php>

<http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/assessinglearning/docs/AssessingLearning.pdf>

<http://www.pharm.usyd.edu.au/peu/projects.shtml>

5. Learning Design Framework

The emphasis here is on reviewing the design of learning experiences for students. This may involve reviewing a unit's learning activities based on an alignment of learning objectives, learning activities and assessment of learning.

Some resources on learning design:

<http://www.learningdesigns.uow.edu.au/index.html>

<http://www.altcexchange.edu.au/resources/alp/1166>

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-5629273206953884671>

http://emedia.rmit.edu.au/ed/Issue/2007b/Teach/article1_pg1.html

<http://www.indiana.edu/~deanfac/portfolio/def.html>

6. Course Materials Framework

Reading any course materials can enable the reviewer to see the instructor's teaching philosophy in action. Reviewing materials is unobtrusive, can take place at a time and place suitable to the schedule of the reviewer, and the amount of information that can be gained is significant.

The instructor may request that specific items are reviewed for specific reasons or a general approach may be taken. Some examples of the use of course materials are:

- Tests and exams - level of learning goals

- Graded tests, written work, or projects - level of learning goals, achievement of learning goals, and how the instructor provides feedback
- Syllabus - logical organization, content, rigor, and expectations

Source: <http://www.ncsu.edu/faculty-development/teach-learn/peer-formative-course.html> - accessed 11 May 2009

These materials may also include such things as Unit Guides, Study Guides, Readings, CD Roms, DVDs, lecture slides, tutorial activities and so on - materials which the teacher uses to support his/her teaching and develop student learning.

Useful resources include:

<http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/scholarly/studyguides/index.php>

<http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/curriculum/index.php>

<http://www.deakin.edu.au/quality/index.php>

7. Teaching Portfolio Framework

There are three sources of teaching data: students, peers-colleagues-consultants, and self. Teaching portfolios focus on self evaluation and assessment, the teacher as a reflective practitioner. In writing a teaching portfolio, teachers are confronted with the question of whether the way they teach and spend their time is congruent with their philosophy of teaching and goals for students.

The body of the teaching portfolio deals with questions such as:

- the faculty member's teaching philosophy
- the goals of one's teaching
- successes in the classroom
- areas for improvement
- goals for the next two or five years of teaching.

A teaching portfolio contains documents and materials that collectively capture the scope and quality of teaching performance in a careful and thoughtful manner. It displays and documents one's teaching, using selected information and solid evidence of effectiveness. Attached materials include the syllabus, exams, reading lists and texts, assignments, and so forth.

Source: <http://teachpsych.org/otrp/resources/perلمان98.pdf> - accessed 8 May 2009

Some resources are:

<http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/scholarly/portfolios/index.php>

<http://ftad.osu.edu/portfolio/philosophy/Philosophy.html>

<http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/FEEDBACK/gathercolfeed.htm>

8. Work Integrated Learning Framework

Several disciplines use work integrated learning models as part of teaching and learning at Deakin. A review of someone involved with work integrated learning would need specific guidance so as to ensure the focus was on what it is which makes for good design of work integrated learning experiences for students.

Resources on work integrated learning:

<http://www.altcexchange.edu.au/resources/alp/1201>

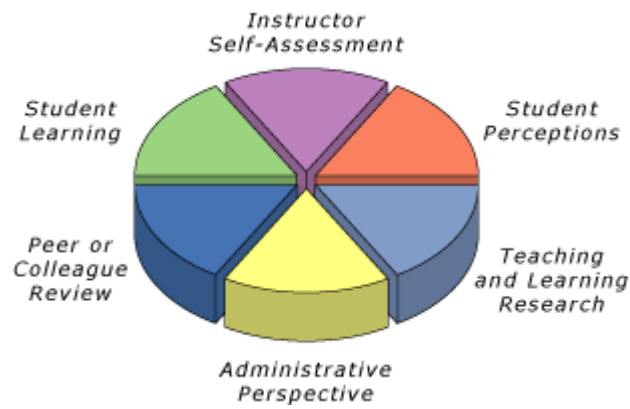
<http://www.rmit.edu.au/bus/wil>

<http://www.griffith.edu.au/gihe/learning-teaching-resources/work-integrated-learning>

<http://www.altc.edu.au/project-work-integrated-learning-wil-griffith-2007>

9. Generic Framework

Perhaps a review of teaching may aim to take a broadbrush approach and look at several aspects of 'good' teaching. This model is one means of illustrating what this framework may look like:



Source: <http://depts.washington.edu/cidrweb/consulting/assessment.html> accessed 23 February 2009

6. How is it reviewed?

I think the peer review system is not quite fine, but absolutely the best thing we have. (Donald Kennedy)

Source: <http://www.quotesdaddy.com/find/quote/peer/1> - accessed 13 February 2009

1. **Development and training model** - where one or more academics work together to find ways to improve teaching and where what is observed and discussed is generally based on the goals and concerns of the person observed.
 - (a) **As an option within a formal course of study**

Video footage is used in some programs, where a pair or group may observe and discuss video footage of each other. Or observers sit in with a teaching session and record their observations.
 - (b) **As an option within a wider teaching development project**

A 'Teaching Internship' program in which teaching interns are provided with mentors and, as part of the mentoring process, mentors are encouraged to observe their interns teaching. Because of the positive relationships that develop, mentors often welcome feedback from the interns.
 - (c) **On request or by mutual agreement**

Informal observation sessions happen at least occasionally amongst academics however these activities are rarely reported. One example is within a team-taught subject in the University of Sydney's School of Computer Science where new members of staff observe and discuss more experienced teachers' classes.
2. **Performance model** - where peer observation is used in order to judge teaching competence, although this practice might more accurately be referred to as 'supervisor observation' or 'experienced peer observation'.
 - (a) **Performance review, quality assurance**

An individual may be observed by an educational developer or senior colleague in order to appraise the teacher's skills. A number of universities mention peer review in their promotion and continuing appointment policies. Staff are encouraged to seek peer review for evaluation and reports of peer observation by an educational developer or discipline peer to include these within the teaching portfolio.
 - (b) **Diagnostic**

An individual may be observed by an educational developer or senior colleague in order to diagnose the cause of an apparent 'problem' in teaching. Where observation for diagnostic purposes is identified, the process includes remedial training or developmental support.
3. **Mixed model** - where a combination of the some or all of the above is utilised.
 - (a) An individual may be observed by a peer, educational developer or senior colleague for a combination of performance and development and training purposes or a developmental program might be suggested by a performance-based observation program.

Source: adapted from Maureen Bell *Peer Observation of Teaching in Australia*
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/id28_Peer_Observation_of_Teaching_in_Australia - accessed 16 February 2009.

Table 4: Models of Peer Observation of Teaching

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>evaluation model</i>	<i>development model</i>	<i>peer review model</i>
Who does it & to whom?	Senior staff observe other staff	Educational developers observe practitioners; or expert teachers observe others in department	teachers observe each other
Purpose	Identify under-performance, confirm probation, appraisal, promotion, quality assurance, assessment	Demonstrate competency/improve teaching competencies; assessment	engagement in discussion about teaching; self and mutual reflection
Outcome	Report/judgement	report/action plan; pass/fail PGCert	Analysis, discussion, wider experience of teaching methods
Status of evidence	authority	expert diagnosis	peer shared perception
Relationship of observer to observed	power	expertise	equality/mutuality
Confidentiality	Between manager, observer and staff observed	Between observer and the observed, examiner	Between observer and the observed - shared within learning set
Inclusion	Selected staff	Selected/ sample	all
Judgement	Pass/fail, score, quality assessment, worthy/unworthy	How to improve; pass/fail	Non-judgemental, constructive feedback
What is observed?	Teaching performance	Teaching performance, class, learning materials,	Teaching performance, class, learning materials,
Who benefits?	Institution	The observed	Mutual between peers
Conditions for success	Embedded management processes	Effective central unit	Teaching is valued, discussed
Risks	Alienation, lack of co-operation, opposition	No shared ownership, lack of impact	Complacency, conservatism, unfocused

Source: David Gosling Models of Peer Observation of Teaching

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/id200_Models_of_Peer_Observation_of_Teaching - accessed 16 February 2009.

Using peer review processes to improve teaching

There are numerous ways to engage in peer review of teaching. Hutchings (1996) and the Centre for Teaching Effectiveness lists a number of peer activities which promote collaboration and reflection including:

- teaching circles
- peer development triads/ mutual mentoring
- reciprocal classroom visits and observation

- reciprocal projects on student learning
- team teaching
- collaborative enquiry
- curriculum review (design and delivery of distance education, online teaching, inclusivity, internationalisation, and assessment)

Source: <http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/Resources/staff-development/Peer%20Review/Teaching%20Guide%20-%20Peer%20Review%20of%20Teaching.doc>. - accessed 7 May 2009.

Peer Development Triads

Peer development triads extend the "pair concept" and offer additional opportunities to share and compare teaching/learning strategies with two peers.

Source: <http://www.utexas.edu/academic/cte/PeerObserve.html> - accessed 8 May 2009.

Small Group Instructional Diagnosis

The Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID) is another method used to improve instruction with the aid of a peer or faculty development consultant. The process, which can be easily learned by peers, is described by Bennett (1987) as follows:

- With a half hour or so left in a class period, the instructor introduces a facilitator (peer) as a friend who will gather ideas about the students' learning experiences. The word *evaluation* is not used because of its pejorative connotation to students. Before leaving the room, the instructor informs the class that he or she has voluntarily requested this SGID and hopes to learn about how the course is going.
- The facilitator assures students that the group results are confidential and will be shared only with the teacher. Groups of four or so students are formed to discuss their learning experiences and a notetaker for each group is designated by the facilitator. The facilitator also lists three questions on the board for each group to discuss:

Which aspects of instruction help you learn?

Which do not help?

What do you suggest to improve your learning?

- After ten minutes of discussion, the facilitator records the students' responses using appropriate quantifiers ("most said", "a few said"). The facilitator summarizes the major ideas and shares the summary with the students for additions or corrections.
- The facilitator then shares student responses with the teacher as soon as possible, using the students' own words whenever possible. If serious problems have emerged, the facilitator highlights solutions offered by students.
- During the next class period, if possible, the instructor replies to the students' analysis. Instructors should try to implement at least one of the suggestions made by students; suggestions that are inconsistent with course goals or a teacher's style do not need to be given serious consideration.

Source: <http://www.utexas.edu/academic/cte/PeerObserve.html> - accessed 8 May 2009

7. When is it reviewed?

...however early a man's training begins, it is probably the last lesson that he learns thoroughly. (Thomas Huxley)

Source: http://www.quoteland.com/topic.asp?CATEGORY_ID=52 accessed 23 February 2009

** We are assuming that for the intention of this discussion, the purpose of the peer review is formative and developmental.

When a review is conducted depends very much on what is being reviewed. For example, if the focus is on classroom teaching, it may be a one-off visit or it may be a series of visits. If the emphasis is on the design of assessment tasks, it may be beneficial to conduct a 'before-and-after' strategy. Perhaps the timing decision may revolve around the choice made by the observee - at a critical time of trimester, or for a particular teaching session, or trying a new strategy after a previous 'critical incident'.

As well, the issue of timing would need to include consideration of the number of reviews during a trimester - a year - a two year cycle. There may be a one-off visit to a classroom, followed by a follow up visit after feedback and reflection. Perhaps a 2-3- week block of trimester is scheduled in which the observer observes the observee, then the observee reciprocates. If the review is not of classroom teaching, it may happen prior to trimester (e.g. course materials) and post-trimester (e.g. student feedback).

Decisions around the timing of the review or reviews really need to be made:

- by all affected parties
- with consideration of workload
- with regard to institutional and faculty policies
- within the constraints of the academic calendar.

Some Options

Option	Suggested focus on..
one off observation	face to face teaching
series of observations	face to face teaching
mid-trimester	nominated teaching session - face to face
end of trimester	shared reflection
critical point of trimester	first teaching session final teaching session particular topic prior to first assignment
critical incident response	teaching session following a prior 'issue'
course materials draft stage	design of study guide design of assignment tasks design of unit guide choice of readings
every trimester	same focus repeated different focus each time
every year	major components of teaching face to face and online teaching SETU results
every second year	exploring different teaching approaches
2-3 week block	reciprocal reviews
pre-exam and post-exam	analysis of exam design and student responses
during assessment marking	constructive alignment
the choice of the observee	one or two specific aspects

8. What are the benefits?

Each generation will reap what the former generation has sown.
(Chinese proverb)

Source: <http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/34561.html> accessed 23 February 2009

Human beings, who are almost unique in having the ability to learn from the experience of others, are also remarkable for their apparent disinclination to do so.
(Douglas Adams)

Source: http://www.quoteland.com/topic.asp?CATEGORY_ID=92

Peer review programs (PRT) are said to have benefits for the person being reviewed, the reviewer, the impact on student learning and hence for the institution generally. If the emphasis of the PRT is strongly on development of teaching (as opposed to judgement of teaching quality), then all parties may profit.

Imagine this scenario:

Amrita has been a post graduate student at Mancini University for two years and her school has asked her to become a tutor for one of their environmental science units. Amrita has no experience of teaching and is quite naturally feeling anxious. But she prepares well and feels the first three tutorials go reasonably well, but doesn't feel that she is getting much response from the students. The faculty academic developer arranges for another tutor Shaheem, who has been with the school for several trimesters, to chat with Amrita and organise a suitable time to sit in on one of her tutorials and observe what is happening.

Initially, Amrita is reluctant to have this happen as she feels she might make a fool of herself in front of another tutor. But with reassurance that what is observed will remain confidential, and that the observer will provide Amrita with some informal feedback, suggestions and ideas, Amrita agrees.

The observation takes place, Amrita is glad to receive some positive feedback along with some ideas to try in the future. The observer sits and observes and reflects and realises that she too can learn from others' teaching. So ultimately, both people benefit from a collegial and non-judgemental conversation.

...and this scenario:

Novak University implements a peer review program for all new lecturers. It is compulsory. Gillis is new to teaching, having come from industry to his lecturer's position in the School of Maritime Engineering. His Head of School explains that a colleague will be allocated to Gillis to mentor him and to peer review his teaching. The colleague is Rafiq, a senior lecturer in the school.

The pair agrees that the lecture that Gillis is to give in week 7 will be observed by Rafiq. Gillis explains what the topic is and how he plans to structure his lecture. Rafiq advises Gillis to reconsider his plans as that is not the way Rafiq lectures. Gillis feels he is in an awkward position - he feels that his approach has been engaging his students, but he now feels unease at the power and status difference in his relationship with Rafiq.

Gillis knows that the peer review is important to the progress of his career, so he reflects on Rafiq's advice. He knows that he would prefer to present the lecture as he had originally planned, but being pragmatic, and feeling that he is being 'judged', he changes his lecture plans.

Activity 8.1

1. So, what 'benefits' are identifiable in these two scenarios?

Benefits for...			
Amrita	Shaheem	Gillis	Rafiq

2. Are these valid & beneficial outcomes?

Benefits?	YES	NO	UNSURE
Amrita feels pressured			
Amrita can reflect on feedback from a peer			
Amrita's students may benefit in future			
Shaheem can reflect on Amrita's strategies in class			
Gillis gets some sound advice			
Gillis receives a favourable review from Rafiq			
Rafiq's status is maintained			
Gillis' students benefit			
Gillis' students become confused			
Gillis' PPR will be better			
Gillis' school has in place some quality assurance measures			

They (SETU) are the outcome of a faculty culture that offers no alternative.
(Parker J. Palmer)
Source: Palmer, P. 1998 *The Courage to Teach*, Jossey-Bass Inc., San Francisco, p. 143

Potential benefits

It is possible for parties involved in PRT to gain some useful benefits from the process. This of course depends on the model of PRT being used - developmental or judgemental. Research (e.g. Bell 2001; Bell & Mladenovic 2008; Lomas & Kinchin 2006) into PRT suggests that handled objectively, PRT can provide many gains.

The benefits listed below are representative:

- gather new ideas for your own teaching
- reassuring and confidence-building to receive positive feedback from a peer
- share and evaluate teaching innovations
- can increase trust and help build positive working relationships
- reveal hidden teaching behaviours and devise strategies to eliminate negative behaviour patterns (for example some teachers unintentionally overuse a 'pet' phrase or filler, such as 'actually', 'right', or 'ok');
- raises the profile of teaching and learning
- encourages colleagues to debate and engage in dialogue about teaching
- an opportunity to record and report teaching achievements for the purposes of promotion or other reward.

Source: <http://www.prodait.org/approaches/observation/worth.php> accessed 25 Feb 2009

Advantages and uses of peer feedback

1. You can choose your peer: whom would you trust to give you the kind of feedback you'd value?
2. You can agree with your peer the aspects on which you will give each other feedback.
3. You can also agree who else will see or hear the feedback you give each other & this could well be no one at all.
4. As well as giving and receiving feedback, you can discuss the feedback you give each other. You can ask things like 'You said I lost them. Where exactly did I lose them? How could you tell I'd lost them? Why do you think it might have happened? How might I prevent this?'
5. You can have peer feedback sessions as often or as rarely as you both agree & just one session each way can be very useful.
6. The receiver of the feedback benefits, because they receive close supportive critical attention on their teaching from a colleague. They can then review the feedback, and decide how to use it.
7. The giver of the feedback benefits through paying close critical attention to someone else's teaching, asking themselves questions about it (as suggested below). Inevitably, the person giving the feedback will also think about how the teaching they have observed might relate to their own -- what was good that they could learn from, what was less good that they should avoid?

Source: <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocsd/firstwords/fw43.html> - accessed 4 March 2009

References

Bell, M. 2001 'Supportive reflective practice: a program of peer observation and feedback for academic teaching development' *International Journal for Academic Development* 6 (1), 29-39.

Bell, A. & Mladenovic, R. 2008 'The benefits of peer observation of teaching for tutor development' *Higher Education* 55 (6), 735-752.

Lomas, L. & Kinchin, I. 2006 'Developing a Peer Observation Program with University Teachers' *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 18(3), 204-214.

9. Concerns and Challenges

I'm doing the Region 18 teacher-certification program. They always talk about peer learning, peer learning, peer learning. I couldn't find any models. (Jeff Vann)

Source: <http://www.quotesdaddy.com/quote/738911/jeff-vann/im-doing-the-region-18-teacher-certification-program> - accessed 13 February 2009

In such a profession as higher education teaching, it is understandable when individual academics may balk at the idea of someone reviewing their work. How would you react if someone walked into your lecture or tutorial unannounced, observed what was happening and offered a commentary after the class.

What would be your reaction if someone asked you if they could have a look at your assessment tasks for the upcoming trimester and wanted to know why you had designed them in that fashion? Or if someone offered to pass comment on the discussion in your unit DSO site? Or perhaps they queried why you included certain topics in your unit.

Some academics may have no problem with this, but many may. The concept of 'academic freedom' has a long tradition in higher education institutions, and any perceived challenges to this tradition can be met with hostility.

On the other hand, if these concerns could be satisfactorily addressed, the visitor to your classroom, or to your online site or to your Study Guide may be able to provide a different perspective to your teaching approach - provided they knew what they were looking for.

Some Concerns

Some of the concerns about peer review that need to be carefully considered and addressed include:

- competency of the reviewer
- mistrust by the reviewee
- the potential for bias by the reviewer
- an assumption that there is one best way to teach
- potential weakening of existing peer relationships
- faculty or school culture emphasising quality assurance
- peer pressure
- uneven power/status relationship
- single observational classroom visit will not provide a total picture of teaching
- fear of peer review being used for summative purposes
- poorly designed observation tools.

Teaching is perhaps the most privatised of all the public professions.
(Parker J. Palmer)

Source: Palmer, P. 1998 *The Courage to Teach*, Jossey-Bass Inc., San Francisco, p. 142

The handbook (Harris et al 2008, pp. 16-17) designed to support development of peer review of teaching in Australian higher education acknowledges the concerns around peer review:

- heavy workloads
- limited time
- lack of confidence in the collegiality of their teaching environment
- suspicion of management's use of results of peer review
- lack of familiarity with peer review of teaching in Australian universities
- linking peer review practice with faculty and institutional policy development.

The point is well made that for peer review to be effective it needs to be ‘carried out in an atmosphere of trust and respect’ (Harris et al 2008, p.17).

Activity 9.1

All professions have particular cultures, norms, rituals, beliefs and language.

Suggest 3-4 norms you believe apply to the teaching in higher education profession:

NORMS

Nancy Chism (2007) argues that there are certain ‘norms’ around teaching in higher education. These norms need to be considered and responded to in the development of any framework for peer review of teaching.

Norm 1: Peer review violates norms of privacy and egalitarianism in teaching.

Norm 2: Teachers are accustomed to being non-judgmental about the performance of their peers. This norm lies behind scepticism about teaching awards and merit increases, which often embarrass those honoured

Norm 3: Peer review thus either seems mysterious or much ado about nothing.

Norm 4: Effective peer review is too time consuming and involves knowledge and skills that faculty members don’t have.

Norm 5: Personal or professional rivalries will contaminate the process and create deep divisions or recourse to legal remedies.

Source; Chism, Nancy Van Note. "Why Introducing or Sustaining Peer Review of Teaching Is So Hard, and What You Can Do About It." *The Department Chair*, 18(2) (Fall 2007): 6-7. Reprinted with permission from *Jossey-Bass*, an imprint of Wiley. - Online - available http://www.acenet.edu/resources/chairs/docs/Chism_PeerReview.pdf - accessed 30 April 2009.

These norms, reflecting concerns such as distrust of evaluation, violation of personal style and space, insecurities about performance, anxieties about time, and fear of bias, should form the very beginning of efforts to design an acceptable peer review program (Chism).

It is often helpful to begin a peer review system by focusing on the formative aspects—stressing coaching and affirmation. Reciprocal exchange teams, with voluntary choice of partner, are an excellent way to begin. Given a practical system, these exchanges will be based on a faculty-constructed process, prepared reviewers, and time-conscious procedures. They will be introduced in the spirit of inquiry about student learning and how faculty can better facilitate success, rather than being tinged with overtones of establishing a teaching hierarchy or weeding out poor performers. (Chism 2007, p.3)

10. Feedback and Follow Up

*Morris read through the letter. Was it a shade too fulsome?
No, that was another law of academic life: it is impossible to
be excessive in flattery of one's peers.* (David Lodge)

Source: <http://thinkexist.com/search/searchquotation.asp?search=peer&page=4> accessed 13 February 2009

This is arguably the most important aspect of peer review.

It is not so much the tools used to frame an observation of teaching, nor the expertise of the reviewer, nor the 'what' of what is reviewed, but what the reviewee does with the feedback he/she receives. The overriding purpose of peer review is to allow for reflection on one's teaching, ideally with the intention of improving teaching practice.

Giving Feedback

The main purpose for giving feedback to your peers is to create the environment in which they can reflect on what you have said to them, or written about them. This environment can be created through consideration of the following characteristics:

Characteristics of Reflective Feedback

- promotes **reflection** as part of a dialog between the giver and receiver of feedback. Both parties are involved in observing, thinking, reporting, and responding.
- focuses on observed **behavior** rather than on the person. Refers to what an individual does rather than to what we think s/he is.
- is **descriptive** rather than judgmental. Avoiding judgmental language reduces the need for an individual to respond defensively.
- is **specific** rather than general.
- promotes **reflection about strategies** and the students' or observer's responses to a specific strategy.
- is directed toward behavior which the receiver can **change**.
- considers the **needs** of both the receiver and giver of feedback.
- is **solicited** rather than imposed. Feedback is most useful when the receiver actively seeks feedback and is able to discuss it in a supportive environment.
- is **well-timed**. In general, feedback is most useful at the earliest opportunity after the given behavior.
- involves **sharing information** rather than giving advice, leaving the individual free to change in accordance with personal goals and needs.
- considers the **amount of information** the receiver can use rather than the amount the observer would like to give. Overloading an individual with feedback reduces the likelihood that the information will be used effectively.
- requires a **supportive, confidential** relationship built on trust, honesty, and genuine concern.

(adapted by McEnerney & Webb from Bergquist and Phillips, 1975)

Source: <http://teachingacademy.wisc.edu/archive/Assistance/MOO/listfb.htm> - accessed 2 March 2009

Peer review of teaching may be accomplished by using a variety of 'tools' or 'instruments'. These include:

- checklists
- rating scales
- written analysis
- critical incident analysis.

Depending upon which aspect or aspects of teaching are being reviewed, these instruments have advantages and disadvantages:

Source: <http://www.utexas.edu/academic/cte/PeerObserve.html#WhatIsIt> - accessed 25 February 2009

Instrument	Advantages	Disadvantages
Checklists (see Appendix 1)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus the reviewer's attention. 2. Assists reviewer set framework before review. 3. Provides framework for reviewee. 4. Allows for alignment with SETU, CEQ, AUSSE. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Too restrictive. 2. Don't always provide feedback, just an observed behaviour or review of materials.
Rating scales (see Appendices 1 & 9)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus the reviewer's attention. 2. Provides framework for reviewee. 3. Indicate effectiveness of observed behaviour or reviewed materials. 4. Allows for alignment with SETU, CEQ, AUSSE. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can be regarded as judgemental. 2. Can be restrictive.
Written analysis (see Appendix 9)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allows reviewer to select what to focus on. 2. Allows reviewee to select what reviewer should focus on. 3. Allows reviewer to structure the review and feedback 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reviewer may be too narrow in focus. 2. May reflect reviewer's own approach to teaching.
Critical incident analysis (see Appendix 3)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allows for focus on one problematic aspect of teaching. 2. Allows for perspectives to be shared. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The incident has already occurred. 2. Emotional impact can cloud analysis.

As one single instrument is unlikely to cover several aspects of teaching, it seems preferable to use a combination of instruments, which provide a good overview of the various aspects of effective teaching. Nor is it likely that one instrument could be used effectively in one particular teaching context and be equally as valid in another - e.g. lecture, tutorial, laboratory.

Source: <http://www.utexas.edu/academic/cte/PeerObserve.html#WhatIsIt> - accessed 25 February 2009

Training for Reviewing Teaching & Giving Feedback

Training for potential peer reviewers may be done in a variety of ways (see below). No matter what the method, when providing training it is important to evaluate whether the potential reviewer demonstrates competency with the following criteria during and at the conclusion of the training:

The feedback given:

- is accurate and specific, with examples
- is relevant
- is focused
- is given in a supportive, nonjudgmental manner
- has positives intermixed with areas for growth
- allows for discussion and interaction
- contributes to what both the teacher and reviewer have already discussed
- provides specific alternatives for aspects of teaching that need change or improvement.

Adapted from Source: <http://teachpsych.org/otrp/resources/perلمان98.pdf> - accessed 8 May 2009

One useful resource for training reviewers is the set of videos produced by University of Victoria, Canada - <http://lrc.uvic.ca/servicesprograms/criticalincidents/index.php> - accessed 25 May 2009.

◆ RESOURCE

MacKinnon, M. 2001 'Using observational feedback to promote academic development' *The International Journal for Academic Development*, 6(1), 21-28.

Methods of Training Reviewers

1. Role plays
2. 'Practice runs' with willing colleagues
3. Role reversals with willing colleagues
4. Observe a video of face to face teaching
e.g. <http://ltc.uvic.ca/servicesprograms/criticalincidents/index.php>
5. Case studies of good learning design
6. Case studies of good assessment design
7. Online unit site design - good design principles
8. Case studies of 'no one way to teach' - teaching philosophies.
9. Analysis of sample course materials.
10. Case studies of online unit discussion spaces.

The Reviewee's Perspective (Receiving Feedback)

For peer review to be effective, the person or persons being reviewed must be comfortable with both the reviewer and the process. Just as reviewers need training, reviewees must be prepared for the process of undergoing review and developing strategies with which to respond to feedback from their reviewer.

The following issues should be considered:

- reaffirm that the observation and discussion will remain confidential
- reaffirm that choice of the reviewer will involve the reviewee
- endorse that it is not the intention to have your colleague assess or evaluate your teaching against their own practice or criteria but instead to provide you with additional objective data for your own reflection and evaluation
- stress that only particular features of teaching are being reviewed
- suggest that if it involves peer observation of teaching, the process of observation and recording may well affect the behaviour of the students (and possibly the reviewee!)
- suggest that the feedback and discussion subsequent to the review are often best initiated by the reviewee before inviting the reviewer to contribute additional data and then jointly exploring any issues that arise
- ideally the discussion may lead to a consideration of possible strategies to further improve teaching and learning
- propose that the reviewee document the issues raised during the discussion together with actions or initiatives that are proposed to address such issues. a teaching portfolio is one valuable means of such reflection, and subsequent action to improve teaching can usefully support claims of quality teaching
- recommend a follow up observation/review/discussion be arranged to consider the impact of any teaching initiatives that arise from the discussion. reciprocal peer review can facilitate discussion

Source: adapted from <http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/FEEDBACK/gathercolfeed.htm> - accessed 8 May 2009

The person who receives the feedback must stay in charge of the feedback - the process is being undertaken for them, for their benefit. And the intent and the process must always be constructive.

Source: adapted from <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocsd/firstwords/fw43.html> - accessed 8 May 2009

A process of reflection by the reviewee prior to the review itself should be encouraged. This allows for the reviewee to clarify certain aspects of their teaching, both for personal growth as well as for discussion with their reviewer.

Such a reflective process could be guided by the following framework:

<i>Aspects of Teaching</i>	<i>Responses</i>
What are my strengths as a teacher?	
What are my limitations?	
What do my students perceive as what I do best?	
What do my students perceive as needing improvement?	
What have I done to improve my teaching?	
How have I documented this?	
How would I define my philosophy of teaching?	

Source: adapted from <http://teachpsych.org/otrp/resources/perلمان98.pdf> - accessed 8 May 2009

During and after the review process, the reviewee may reflect on the following suggestions:

Receiving feedback is best handled by:

1. **listening** or reading without interrupting to refute, clarify, or refuse
2. **thanking** the person (where known) for the feedback, accepting praise without denial, and identifying areas for further consideration. eg. "Thanks for that. I'll certainly think about the areas you've raised."
3. **framing** the feedback to yourself as a means of identifying ways of improving eg. "Even if he couldn't see what is so obvious to me, it may mean it needs to be reworked so everyone can see the obvious."
4. if necessary, **cooling down** till you can think about it rationally
5. **reflecting** on what the feedback has to tell you about ways of improving
6. **planning** how to respond (if necessary) in ways that are professional eg. "I've reworked this material. Please let me know how it looks to you."

Source: <http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/teams/monitoring.htm> - 11 May 2009

Judging Quality Teaching

Obviously, any PRT process involves an element of judgement. Judgement is part of the everyday work of academics - judging the suitability of learning resources or of learning activities; judging the quality of readings to be included in a unit; judging the quality of student learning via assessment tasks; judging the impact a lecture has had on student learning; judging the quality and quantity of posts made to students via DSO.

With PRT, the judgement is of the quality or effectiveness of someone's 'teaching'. As we know, 'teaching' involves many different activities and skills, and it is some or all of these which may be judged by a peer. It is absolutely imperative that both the reviewer and reviewee are clear about the criteria by which these judgements will be made.

Any judgement must be of someone's behaviour, so that the individual may modify or strengthen or eliminate such behaviour. A judgement of someone's personality should not play a role in PRT. Hence, the tools or instruments used to guide judgement of others' behaviour must contain specific behaviour descriptors. Also, it is common for such guides to include rating scales for each descriptor, often in the form of a five point scale from 'Very Good' to 'Very 'Poor', or some such language.


Criteria for Judging Quality Teaching

Using the criteria set by the ALTC and by considering Deakin's principles of teaching and learning, we could say that an effective teacher is someone who:

- is student focused and who influences and extends student learning
- is flexible in meeting student learning needs
- adequately prepares students for employment, lifelong learning and life in the community
- demonstrates up to date and relevant knowledge in a field
- uses assessment and feedback strategically
- recognises and respects the diversity amongst students
- reflects on teaching and is committed to the scholarship of teaching and learning.

The challenge here is to refine these broad criteria down to manageable and specific measures by which to judge the quality of these various aspects of teaching. Not only the specifics, but also the means by which we may reasonably and objectively judge how well these specifics are being achieved.

Given that PRT is based on observing teaching behaviours of peers, it is important to note that it is 'observable' behaviours which come under the spotlight. The nature of teaching is that it doesn't always involve observable behaviours, for teaching is a work in progress, it is intuitive in many ways and it evolves within individuals with ongoing reflection. Hence, to regard PRT as observing a single classroom session, reviewing a study guide, or analysing the design of an assessment task, is to miss the point. Teaching quality develops along a continuum, so a PRT program needs to reflect this.



Peer Observation of Teaching

This section focuses specifically on peer observation. That is, the process of a reviewer observing the observee in one (or more) of his/her face to face teaching sessions. This process of peer observation is usually guided by instruments or tools such as checklists or rating scales or both.

Examples of checklists and ratings scales are available in **Appendix 1**.

Example of a Poorly Designed Reviewing Instrument

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION FORM			
Teacher's Name			
Reviewer's Name			
Time/Date			
Session			
Location			
	YES	NO	N/A
CONTENT			
• suitability			
• relevance			
• clear			
• adequate			
STRUCTURE			
• clear			
• introduction			
• conclusion			
COMMUNICATION			
• accent			
• understandable			
• questioning			
USE of MEDIA			
• well organised			
• clear			
• effective			
Strengths			
Weaknesses			

Weaknesses

- provides no direction on how well or how poorly
- use of terminology is too vague
- forces reviewer to be judgemental
- does not allow the observee to conduct an effective reflection
- allows for only superficial response strategy development

Criteria

Observation should not become a process of checking performance against a check-list which cannot encompass all the complexities of the teaching situation. Nevertheless some common features do exist across almost all learning situations and these can be used to provide feedback.

- openings and closings
- planning and organisation
- methods/approach
- delivery and pace
- content
- intellectual stimulation
- student participation
- use of appropriate learning resources
- use of accommodation and equipment
- overall style and ambience
- acknowledgement of students' special needs.

Source: <http://escalate.ac.uk/resources/peerobservation/04.html> - accessed 5 March 2009.

◆ Resources

◆ Web

<http://www.courseportfolio.org/peer/pages/index.jsp>

<http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/peer/index.html>

http://www.edna.edu.au/edna/go/highered/hot_topics/pid/960

[http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/Papers/ASEE04\(Peer-Review\).pdf](http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/Papers/ASEE04(Peer-Review).pdf)

http://www.uow.edu.au/cedir/peer_review/index.html

http://cms.jcu.edu.au/hr/promotion/info/JCUPRD_042038

http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/downloads/evaluations/guidebook_peerreview.pdf

http://www.acenet.edu/resources/chairs/docs/Chism_PeerReview.pdf

<http://www.ecu.edu.au/CLT/peer-review/forms-for-formative-review-of-teaching>

<http://www.routledge.com/textbooks/9780415420259/checklist/lecturing.pdf>

http://www.routledge.com/textbooks/9780415420259/checklist/semi_tuto.pdf

http://www.routledge.com/textbooks/9780415420259/checklist/lecturers_list.pdf

<http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/downloads/evaluations/PeerObservationTandL.pdf>

<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/cte/ClassReport.pdf>

<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/cte/ClassWorksheet.pdf>

<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/cte/DRM301.pdf>

<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/cte/TeachObs.pdf>

<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/cte/ReportObs.pdf>

http://escalate.ac.uk/resources/peerobservation/glossary_criteria.html

<http://ltc.uvic.ca/servicesprograms/criticalincidents/index.php>

http://www.auqa.edu.au/gp/search/detail.php?gp_id=2603 - University of Wollongong (AUQA)

<http://www.econ.usyd.edu.au/tutorfeedback/> - Economics & Business, University of Sydney

<http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/projects/tutordev.htm> - University of Sydney faculty based programs

<http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/programs/staffdevelopment.htm> - University of Sydney

<http://www.pharm.usyd.edu.au/peu/peu.shtml> - University of Sydney - Pharmacy Department

◆ Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

*from David Gosling and Vaneeta D'Andrea, the Generic Centre, Higher Education Academy, cited at http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/londonmet/library/h32724_3.pdf (accessed 15 May 2009).

Beaty, L. and McGill, I. (1995) *Developing Reflective Practice: Observing Teaching as a Component of Professional Development*. University of Brighton.

A staff development pack including video of teaching and notes based on experience at Brighton University, using the principles of reflective practice.

Beigy, A. and Woodin, J. (1999). *DEVELOP: Developing Excellence in Language Teaching Through the Observation of Peers*. Leeds Metropolitan University.

An FDTL2 project which produced materials and video to support 'Tandem Observation' schemes in modern languages departments. The principles underpinning the idea of 'tandem observation' are reflective practice and mutual support between colleagues

Bell, M. (2001) Supported reflective practice: a programme of peer observation and feedback for academic development. *International Journal for Academic Development*. 6 (1): 29-39.

A very positive evaluation of the Teacher Development Programme at the University of Wollongong, which is part of an Introduction to Tertiary Teaching Course. The TDP includes feedback from a support colleague and educational developer. Bell suggests that the process has been a highly effective professional development strategy.

Bernstein D.J. and K.M. Quinlan (eds) (1996) *Innovative Higher Education*, special issue on 'The Peer Review of Teaching.'

This issue contains nine articles on a range of issues related to the development and implementation of peer review in higher education in the USA. It is an excellent summary of the range of successes and challenges facing this activity in the US in the mid-1990s.

Blackwell, R. and McLean, M. (1996) Peer Observation of Teaching and Staff Development. *Higher Education Quarterly* 50, 2, pp156-171.

This is an acute and realistic set of reflections on the benefits and dangers of POT based on experience in mainly 'old' universities. It provides a rationale for POT based on a development model, but warns that the context must be right to support the process. Full bibliography.

Boud, D. (1999) Situating Academic Development in Professional Work: Using peer learning. *International Journal for Academic Development*. 4 (1): 3-10.

Argues for the value of peer learning to achieve mutual benefits and sharing of knowledge at departmental level. Not so much about 'observation' but interesting case made for locating development within the academic work of departments.

Braskamp, L A. D.C Brandenburg, and J.C. Ory, (1984) *Evaluating Teaching Effectiveness, A Practical Guide*. California, Sage Publications.

One of the early US publications to address collegial review of teaching via classroom observations, the consideration of classroom materials and assessment of pastoral skills in the university. An oldie but a goodie.

Brennan, J. L., Frederiks, M. and Shah, T. (1997) *Improving the Quality of Education: The Impact of Quality Assessment on Institutions*. Quality Support Centre, The Open University, Milton Keynes.

This Report on the first stage of Teaching Quality Assessments, includes review of the impact of observation of teaching within the context of an external quality review.

Brinko, KT (1993) The Practice of Giving Feedback to Improve Teaching: What is effective?. *Journal of Higher Education* 64 5 pp574-593.

A substantial review of the literature on what works and what does not in the process of giving feedback with additional advice from the author's own experience. Advice ranges from the platitudinous (feedback is more effective when it is relevant and meaningful to the recipient) to the contentious (feedback is more effective when negative information is given in the grammatical first person).

Brown, S., Jones, G. and Rawnsley, S. (eds) (1993) *Observing Teaching*. SEDA Paper 79, SEDA Publications, Birmingham.

A useful collection of short papers describing several authors' experience of implementing observation of teaching. The articles are practically orientated and include advice on how to implement POT schemes and many examples of feedback sheets and checklists.

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2000) *The Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. Menlo Park, CA: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

This brochure outlines the three major areas of work being taken forward by the Carnegie Foundation and its collaborators. Although not directly related to peer review per se, each of the programmes has elements which address peer review either through project activity or through other university-led initiatives.

Centra, J.A. (1993) *Reflective Faculty Evaluation: Enhancing Teaching and Determining Faculty Effectiveness*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

The contents of this book cover the full range of assessment activities possible for a systematic review of teaching. Chapter four in particular considers the key issues related to peer review of teaching.

Cerbin, W. (1994) 'The Course Portfolio as a Tool for Continuous Improvement of Teaching and Learning,' *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching*, 5: 95-105.

The abstract of this paper states that, 'This article explains how to use learning-centred course portfolios to improve teaching and learning. It also reports on collegial review of the author's portfolio as an example of peer review.'

Claydon A. and Edwards, A, (1995) *Teaching Process Recall: a resource pack for teachers and educational developers in higher education*, University of Northumbria, (Video programme and user guide).

These materials were developed as part of the scheme described in Claydon and McDowell, 1993. The video and user guide cost £45.

Claydon, T & McDowell, L, 'Watching yourself teach and learning from it' in Brown. S. et al, *Observing Teaching*, SEDA Paper 79, 1993.

Teaching Process Recall (TPR) is a professional development model adapted by Northumbria for POT. The tutor talks about the experience of teaching in the company of other tutors using a video-recording as a prompt. TPR began as a non-evaluative model, but evaluation has been built into a revised model in response to participants' requests (see Teaching Process Recall in these resources)

Cosh, J. (1998) Peer Observation in Higher Education - A Reflective Approach. *Innovations in Teaching and Training International* 35, 2, pp 171 - 176.

Cosh argues strongly against feedback as a judgmental process and promotes a reflective approach following a Schonian model. The paper describes implementation of the model in a department of languages and emphasises the value of self development for the observer (rather than the observed).

Cove, G. and Lisewski, B. (2001) *Peer Observation for Teaching: Code of Practice*, Salford.

Doidge J and Smith B (1998) 'Using staff development as an agent of change' in Stephenson J and Yorke M eds *Capability and Quality in Higher Education* pp 112-8. Open University Press/ Society for Research into Higher Education, Buckingham.
Describes the implementation of the Sharing Excellence project at Nottingham Trent University as a vehicle for institution wide change, based on peer review including observation of teaching (see Sharing Excellence in these resources).

Fullerton, H (1999) Observation of Teaching. In Fry, H, Marshall, S and Ketteridge, S (eds) *A Handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: Enhancing Academic Practice*. Kogan Page.

A good summary of principles for engaging in and benefiting from observation of teaching, aimed at beginner lecturers. Includes aspects for observation, stages in the process and giving feedback.

Gosling, D. (2000) "Using Habermas to Evaluate Two Approaches to Negotiated Assessment", *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 25 (3), 293-304

Using ideas from the German philosopher Habermas, the theoretical basis for peer interactions within an introductory course for tutors is discussed. The paper argues that there are contextual limits to 'ideal' peer communication between tutor and staff participants on courses of this kind.

Hutchings, P (ed.) (1995) *From Idea to Prototype: The Peer Review of Teaching - A Project Workbook*. AAHE Washington DC.

The first of its kind this workbook takes the reader through all the essential tasks and materials

needed to develop a campus-based peer review programme. The description of the contents on the frontispiece states: 'materials, examples, analysis and resources from a twelve-campus national project coordinated by the AAHE Teaching Initiative in cooperation with Stanford University'. It contains an excellent annotated bibliography as well.

Hutchings, P (ed.) (1996) *Making Teaching Community Property: A Menu for Peer Collaboration and Peer Review*. AAHE Washington DC.

The issues related to peer collaboration and peer review are explored through case study examples of a wide range of American universities engaged in the development peer review. It is a rich resource of detailed information on the many examples provided. Also available online: <http://www.aahe.org/pubs/making.htm>.

Jarzabkowski, P. and Bone, Z. (1998) A 'How-To' Guide and Checklist for Peer Appraisal of Teaching. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*. 35 (2): 177-181.

This is a step-by-step approach to peer appraisal based on experience at University of Sydney. The paper also includes some personal reflection on the authors' own experience of undergoing observation of teaching.

Kagan N. 'Interpersonal Process Recall: basic methods and recent research' in D Learson (ed) Teaching psychological skills, Brooks Cole, 1984

Developed with health workers at Michigan State University in the 1960's IPR is a vehicle for non-judgemental professional development. Designed to improve communication between health workers, its principles can be applied to POT as used at Northumbria University (see Teaching Process Recall Resource)

Kahn, S. (1993) 'Better Teaching Through Better Evaluation: a guide for faculty and institutions,' *To Improve the Academy*, 12: 111-125.

The author places peer review in the context of other sources of evidence and review, arguing for a multi-faceted approach to evaluation---one that captures 'the complexity and diversity of effective undergraduate teaching', and can therefore serve improvement.

Lewis, J.M. (1993) Teaching Styles of Award -winning Professors. In Ellis, R (ed.) *Quality Assurance for University Teaching* pp 149-164. SRHE/OU.

Provides evidence of common features of excellence in teaching based on Kent State University . Useful for thinking about what is excellent teaching.

Mack, D., Partington, P., Simmons, C., van Ments, M. and Wilson, A. (1996) *Making the Grade: Achieving High Quality Assessment Profiles*. HESDA and Loughborough University, Sheffield.

This resource pack was originally produced to assist departments preparing for Subject Review. It includes two videos of examples of teaching as well as guidelines and commentary. Videos are very useful as materials for staff development on POT.

MacKinnon, M. M. (2001) Using observational feedback to promote academic development, *International Journal of Academic Development*, Vol 6, No 1, 21 - 28

Mackinnon considers how the educational development consultant can help academics gain insight into their teaching through POT. She proposes a three step approach to giving feedback - time-log review, enumerating strengths and weaknesses and the focusing summary. Example from practice are included with a critique of the experience.

Martin, G. and Double, J.M (1995) Developing higher education teaching skills through peer observation of teaching , *Innovations in Education and Training*, vol 35, No 2, 161-169,

The authors consider the aims of POT and recommend a process for implementation. They describe what is needed for a pre-observation meeting, observation and feedback meeting. The paper includes an evaluation of POT based on a pilot scheme in a department of Chemical Engineering with some interesting quotes from participants.

Menges, R.J. (1991) 'Why Hasn't Peer Evaluation of College Teaching Caught On? paper presented to the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL., USA.

Menges' report of peer evaluation at a research intensive public university presented in 1991 reminds of how long it takes to change ideas in higher education. This is a must read to gain perspective on the process of change management.

O'Neill, M. & Pennington, G. (1992). *Evaluating Teaching and Courses from an Active Learning Perspective*. CVCP, London.

General text on course evaluation in the Active Learning Series published by CVCP.

Quality Assurance Agency (1997) *Subject Review Handbook* October 1998 - September 2000. QAA, Bristol.

Includes the aide-memoire for reviewers undertaking observation of teaching. Good example of POT being used to collect evidence in a quality assurance context. Each class observed was graded on a 1- 4 scale by external reviewers.

Shulman, L. (1993) *Teaching as Community Property Change*, 25: 6-7.

In this piece Shulman challenges the long held view that teaching is a private activity. He argues that to increase the value of teaching in universities it must be part of the scholarly community. Teaching must become community property. He suggests three strategies to achieve this change.

Smith, B. (1998) Adopting a Strategic Approach to Managing Change in Learning and Teaching, in *To Improve the Academy: Resources for Faculty, Instructional and Organizational Development*, POD Network, vol 17, 225-242

Smith describes how a major externally funded peer observation project (the FDTL project: Sharing Excellence) at Nottingham Trent was used to facilitate major structural change to support development and enhancement of learning and teaching. Detailed account of the project and its mangement (see Sharing Excellence resource for brief overview).

Wagenaar, T.C. (1998) 'Peer Review of Teaching,' in C.B. Howery et al. *Departmental Resources Group Training Session Peer Review of Teaching*, American Sociological Association Meeting.

This paper addresses seven key questions related to peer review: 1) Why the interest in peer review?, 2) What is peer review?, 3) Why use peer review?, 4) What needs to occur before the review?, 5) What happens during and after the review, 6) What problems might occur and 7) What really is good teaching?

◆ Deakin

- Academic development online modules:

Assessment - <http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/assessment/index.php>

Designing flexible courses -

<http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/documents/developcourses.ppt>

Effective Lecturing - <http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/teaching-approach/effective-lecturing/index.php>

Effective tutoring - <http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/teaching-approach/effective-tutoring/index.php>

First year teaching -

http://learningandteaching.unsw.edu.au/content/LT/teaching_support/first-year.cfm?ss=2

Graduate attributes - <http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/curriculum/grad-attrib/index.php>

Preparing a Study Guide - <http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/scholarly/studyguides/index.php>

Teaching for diversity - <http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/teaching-approach/culture/index.php>

Teaching in laboratory settings - <http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/teaching-approach/prac-labs/index.php>

Teaching large classes - <http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/largeclasses/>

Teaching portfolios - <http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/scholarly/portfolios/index.php>

Understanding student learning -

<http://www.iml.uts.edu.au/learnteach/enhance/understand/index.html>

Using SETU results - <http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/scholarly/setu-ceq/index.php>

◆ Other Higher Education Institutions

- **Case studies** - from the ALTC *Peer Review of Teaching in Higher Education* project booklet

University of Bristol

<http://escalate.ac.uk/resources/peerobservation/10.html>

University of Cambridge

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/education/lts/news/ltsn3.pdf>

University of Nottingham

<http://escalate.ac.uk/resources/peerobservation/09.html>

Shenandoah University, School of Pharmacy

<http://www.ajpe.org/aj7002/aj700232/aj700232.pdf>

- **Resources**

Cardiff University - <http://www.caerdydd.ac.uk/learning/themes/peerrev/index.html>

University of Kent staff resource pack

<http://www.kent.ac.uk/uelt/ced/themes/archive/files/peer-review.pdf>

University of Nebraska, Lincoln

<http://www.courseportfolio.org/peer/pages/index.jsp?what=rootMenuD&rootMenuId=4>

University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

Review of teaching materials, assessment of students and of observation of teaching

<http://web.wits.ac.za/NR/rdonlyres/61629582-0048-4C61-842C-413E383CC72D/0/PeerReviewReport.doc>

- ◆ **Further Reading**

Bernstein, D., Jonson, J. & Smith, K. 2000 'An examination of the implementation of peer review of teaching' *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, No. 83, Fall 2000.

Blackmore, J. 2005 'A critical evaluation of peer review via teaching observation within higher education' *The International Journal of Educational Management* 19 (2/3), 218

Cosser, M. 1998 'Towards a design of a system of peer review of teaching for the advancement of the individual within the university' *Higher Education* 35, 143-162.

Hammersley-Fletcher, L. & Orsmond, P. 2005 'Reflecting on reflective practices within peer observation' *Studies in Higher Education*, 30 (2), 213-224.

Keig, L. & Waggoner, M. 1994 'Collaborative peer review: The role of faculty in improving college teaching, ASHE - ERIC Higher Education Reports 94-2, vol. 23-2. Digest available online - www.ntlf.com/html/lib/bib/94-2dig.htm

Lomas, L. & Nicholls, G. 2005 'Enhancing teaching quality through peer review of teaching' *Quality in Higher Education*, 11(20) 137-149.

Macdonald, J. & Kell, C. 2006 'How to develop your teaching through peer review' *Education for Primary Care*, 17, 404-407.

Morehead, J. & Shedd, P. 1997 'Utilising summative evaluation through external peer review of teaching' *Innovative Higher Education*, 22 (1), 37-44.

Switkes, E. 1999 'University of California peer review system and post-tenure evaluation' *Innovative Higher Education*, 24 (1), 39-48.

APPENDICES

Checklists

There are many different styles of checklists available.

It is recommended that faculties and schools and even individuals select, adapt and/or design checklists to suit their own particular purposes and contexts.

A Selection of Checklists

◆ Web

University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

<http://web.wits.ac.za/NR/rdonlyres/61629582-0048-4C61-842C-413E383CC72D/0/PeerReviewReport.doc>

University of Western Australia

http://www.catl.uwa.edu.au/_data/page/75634/peerfeedback.pdf

University of Bristol

http://www.epi.bris.ac.uk/undergrad/docs/2006_11_06_Peer%20review%20template.doc

University of South Australia

<http://www.unisa.edu.au/ltu/staff/practice/documents/lecture-checklist.doc>

<http://www.unisa.edu.au/ltu/staff/practice/documents/peer-assessment.doc>

Flinders University

http://flinders.edu.au/shadomx/apps/fms/fmsdownload.cfm?file_uuid=76DEDBAC-CD29-A164-7C99-F52E0F37330B&siteName=flinders

◆ Deakin Library

Maureen Bell, University of Wollongong

<http://encore.deakin.edu.au/iii/encore/record/C%7CRb2124891%7CSmaureen+bell%7COrightresult?lang=eng&suite=def>

Phil Race and Sally Brown *The Lecturer's Toolkit*

<http://encore.deakin.edu.au/iii/encore/record/C%7CRb2339472%7CSphil+race%7CP0%2C1%7COrightresult?lang=eng&suite=def>

Observable Characteristics of Effective Teachers

- ◆ Begins class promptly and in a well-organized way.
- ◆ Treats students with respect and caring.
- ◆ Provides the significance/importance of information to be learned.
- ◆ Provides clear explanations.
- ◆ Holds attention and respect of students, practices effective classroom management.
- ◆ Uses active, hands-on student learning.
- ◆ Varies his/her instructional techniques.
- ◆ Provides clear, specific expectations for assignments.
- ◆ Provides frequent and immediate feedback to students on their performance. Praises student answers and uses probing questions to clarify/elaborate answers.
- ◆ Provides many concrete, real life, practical examples.
- ◆ Draws inferences from examples/models and uses analogies.
- ◆ Creates a class environment which is comfortable for student...allows students to speak freely.
- ◆ Teaches at an appropriately fast pace, stopping to check student understanding and engagement.
- ◆ Communicates at the level of all students in class.
- ◆ Has a sense of humor!
- ◆ Uses nonverbal behavior, such as gestures, walking around, and eye contact to reinforce his/her comments.
- ◆ Presents him/herself in class as "real people."
- ◆ Focuses on the class objective and does not let class get sidetracked.
- ◆ Uses feedback from students (and others) to assess and improve teaching.
- ◆ Reflects on own teaching to improve it

Source: University of Minnesota <http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/resources/peer/guidelines/index.html> accessed 2 March 2009

Critical Incident Questionnaire

Guiding Questions	Responses
1. At what point in class this week did you feel students were most engaged with what was happening?	
2. At what point in the seminar this week did you feel students were most distanced from what was happening?	
3. What action that you took in this class did you find most affirming and effective?	
4. What action that you took in this class did you find least effective?	
5. What was it about the class this week which surprised you the most? (This could be something about your own reactions to what went on, or something that someone did, or anything else that occurs to you.)	

Source: adapted from <http://tep.uoregon.edu/resources/diversity/methods/methodsgettingfeedback.html> and from Stephen D. Brookfield *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher* (1995 San Francisco: Jossey Bass)

Pre-Peer Observation of Teaching Guidelines

Meeting Between Observer & Observee Before the Observation
The purpose of the observation: e.g. - formative or evaluative - developmental or quality assurance - one off or ongoing mentoring
The observee's teaching philosophy & topic objectives
The observer's teaching philosophy
The aspect(s) of teaching the observee wants observed: e.g. - lecture style/presentation - student response to the teaching - clarity of communication - language suitable for student level
Should the observee introduce the observer to students?
The location of the observer in the classroom
In what form and to whom will feedback be given?
When will the feedback be given?
Who does what following the feedback?
Other questions/concerns

Source: adapted from <http://teachingacademy.wisc.edu/archive/Assistance/MOO/reviewer.htm> - accessed 25 May 2009 and http://cms.jcu.edu.au/hr/promotion/info/JCUPRD_042038 - accessed 25 May 2009

Post-Peer Observation of Teaching Guidelines

Post-Observation Meeting Guidelines

- [General post-observation questions](#).
- Additional [specific questions](#) based on your observation notes.
- Provide [constructive feedback](#).
- Help the instructor articulate his or her [next steps](#).
- If a [written report](#) of the observation is produced ...

Begin with general post-observation questions:

1. Was this a typical class meeting?
2. What is your impression of how this class went?
3. What were the strengths of this class session? How did it meet your instructional goals?
4. If you were to teach this particular class again, what might you do in the same way? What might you choose to do differently?
5. What teaching strengths could you apply to make these changes and enhance your teaching skills?
6. How does this class compare with the other(s) you teach?

You may have additional specific questions based on your observation notes. For example,

- "When you were talking about _____ what was your sense of how the students were following you? "
- "I noticed that some students were participating a lot more actively in the discussion than others. How do you feel about the way students are participating?"

Provide constructive feedback.

Constructive feedback:

1. is descriptive, rather than evaluative
2. is specific, rather than general
3. focuses on behavior, rather than on the person
4. is directed toward behavior that the receiver can do something about
5. emphasizes sharing information, rather than giving advice
6. comes in amounts that the receiver can use, rather than everything that could possibly be said
7. is checked to insure clear communication

adapted from Bergquist & Phillips (1975), *A Handbook for Faculty Development*. New York: Danville Press.

Help the instructor articulate his or her next steps.

Based on your observations and your discussion with the instructor, help the instructor identify one or two specific areas to learn more about or continue developing in. For example, work with the instructor to fill in the blanks in statements like these:

- "As a result of this observation and discussion, I would like to work on improving my skills in the following areas ... "
- "As a result of this observation and discussion, I plan to learn more about _____ and apply that learning to my teaching."

If a written report of the observation is produced:

Meet with the instructor to discuss your observations before you draft the report that is to be filed. Allow the instructor to review and respond to ~~the~~ initial draft before a final draft of the

observation is filed.

If a report goes into a permanent file, be sure to file observer reports and instructor responses together.

Source: <http://depts.washington.edu/cidrweb/resources/post-observation.html> - accessed 23 February 2009.

Sample Teaching Design Observation Summary
Enhancing Classroom Teaching Dynamics
Sample Teaching *Design* Observation Summary

Date of session observed	01/01/09
Subject Code	XYZ123
Type of presentation	Lecture
Lecturer	Flash Gordon
DLTS observer	Olive Oyl

Preliminary remarks by observer:

The purpose of this observation as discussed with the lecturer was to produce an objective report that detailed all demonstrated elements of a well-designed teaching session. Prior to the observation, I was provided with a copy of the subject outline and informed about the objectives of this subject. I was also told about the contents of the preceding teaching sessions and how these related to the session under observation. The students were informed of the reason for my presence in the class prior to the commencement of the lecture.

Provides initial learning focus for the session

- As the topic was being introduced in this session, the learning objectives for the topic were presented at the start via OHP.
- The relevance of this topic in relation to other topics in the subject was provided briefly.
- A link was made to the topic dealt with earlier.
- The lecturer stressed that the relevance of this topic would become clearer as subsequent topics were completed.

Organises content and structure of the session

- An overview of the session's structure was presented via OHP detailing the main points and sub-points of the lecture.
- Began by recalling previous knowledge and used this to introduce new material.
- Frequently sign-posted aspects of the session so that students were aware of the nature and significance of a particular phase in the lecture. e.g. "Now what is to follow is particularly significant..."
- The development of the content was interspersed with relevant examples.
- Real-life situations were called upon to demonstrate the relevance of the points being presented in the lecture.
- Periodically stressed the significance of a particular point and linked this to a point presented earlier.

Encourages student interaction and participation in the session

- Raised questions that helped prepare students for important aspects of the lecture related to the learning objectives.
- Assisted students to respond to the questions by asking probing questions. e.g. "What would occur if the situation was reversed?"
- Assisted student responses by providing hints.
- Began by asking simple questions that evoked a high rate of responses.
- Provided positive feedback to student responses.
- Probed for the correct response when students provided answers that were not fully correct or were incomplete.

Invites, seeks and provides feedback to monitor student learning

- When students provided an answer that was not correct or partially correct, the lecturer invited answers from others in the class.
- When needed, the lecturer provided specific feedback to some responses, indicating why those responses were not fully correct.
- Instructed students to put their pens down and listen.
- At the end of a teaching point, the lecturer invited the students to jot down the main ideas within that point.
- The lecturer then presented the main ideas on an overhead.
- Students were asked to compare their jottings with the ideas presented on the overhead.
- Hypothetical questions were used to help clarify learning. These questions began with "What would happen if.....?"

Closes lesson with focus on learning objectives

- Put up once again the session structure on the OHP to summarise the main points of the lecture.
- Reinforced all the key points that were covered.
- Reminded students of how these points were inter-related.
- Indicated to students what was to be covered in the next lecture.
- Asked students to read a particular section from the textbook in order to prepare for the next lecture.

General comments

- Lecture was clearly structured.
- Sign-posting was used to help students know where they were.
- Questioning techniques were extensively used to obtain responses as well as to facilitate thinking and reflection.
- A comprehensive summary at the end provided closure to the session.
- Through the main lecture points, through the emphasis of certain key points, through the ascertaining of the extent of learning and through illustrating with examples a clear and observable link was established between this lecture and the subject objectives as stated in the Subject Outline.

Comments by lecturer

The observation helped me to structure the lecture more deliberately and to stick to the structure in the delivery. I was aware of some of the aspects documented above. I am now more fully aware of those activities during the lecture that actively help student learning. I shall now endeavour to be more conscious of these positive aspects so that I can introduce these in future interactions with my students. I found the discussions with and observations of the observer most helpful and I have requested a follow-up session to reinforce some of the ideas I have obtained.

Flash Gordon

Signature of lecturer:

Date: 05/01/09

Olive Oyl

Signature of DLTS observer:

Date: 05/01/09

Source: <http://www.csu.edu.au/division/lts/services/teaching-dynamics/index.htm> - accessed 23 February 2009

Self Reflection Guide

Reflection Checklist For Seminars And Tutorials		
<p>The following checklist can be used to reflect on seminars and tutorials. It is suitable for individual reflection after a class or for use with a colleague as an observer. It can also be used in conjunction with an audio- or video-recording. 1 = needs improvement 2 = good 3 = excellent</p>		
<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Planning - planned content and activities		
Time management - planning and execution		
Organisation - prepared teaching materials		
Introduction - purpose established at start		
Activities - clear direction and management		
Questioning - managed discussion with questions		
Questioning - used range of prompts and probes		
Flexibility - adapted plans in response to feedback		
Debriefing - summarised key concepts		

Source: http://www.routledge.com/textbooks/9780415420259/checklist/semi_tuto.pdf accessed 25 February 2009.

Class Observation Proforma

This Record is designed to be used as a **three-stage process**, set out in the next three sections.

- The **first** section allows the person who will be observed to explain to the observer his or her intentions for the class - how the students should have prepared for the class, what they should gain from the class, and how that will be checked or tested.
- The **second** section gives suggestions for points that the observer can look for during the class, in the context of the purpose of the class.
- The **third** section encourages the person who was observed to reflect upon the observer's comments, and upon his or her own views of the class, in the context of the purpose as set out in the first section.

Name and role of person observed	
Programme of study	
Title of module	
Level of module	
Location of class within the module (eg. week number within the total weeks)	
Type of class (lecture, lab, seminar...) or 'teaching episode' within the class	
Number of students	
Name of observer	

<p>1 Preparation - before the class is observed: to be completed before the class by the person being observed, and given to the observer before the class</p>
<p>Broad aims of this class within the programme</p> <p><i>The overall aim(s) of this session is (are) to:</i></p>
<p>Specific intended learning outcomes of this class</p> <p>By the end of the session, students should be able to: <i>For example: describe... explain... define... analyse... carry out... reflect upon... practise... make connections between... identify... justify... show... use... plan... criticise... evaluate... demonstrate...</i></p> <p>></p>

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- >

Students' preparation for this class *How were the students expected to prepare for this class - general reading, specific reading, individual assignment, collaborative activity, other...?*

Assessment of the intended learning outcomes *How/when will these be assessed (whether informally or formally)? How will the students know the criteria for assessment?*

Students' learning after the class *What kind of learning activity will the students be expected to undertake after the class? How will this be set this up during the class?*

2 Observation of the class: to be completed immediately after the class by the observer, and given, with verbal feedback, to the person who is being observed.

Opening the class *Clarity of purpose/intended learning outcomes - review of previous work - links to other classes/module/programme - activity expected of the students in the class - reference to assessment?*

Main part of the class *Appropriateness of structure, presentation and pace - sensitivity to students' reaction - variety of learning activities - conveying enthusiasm? Engagement of students in active learning?*

Closing the class *Summary of learning achieved - further linking to later/parallel work - expectation of learning activity to be undertaken **after** the class?*

Overview *Appropriateness of structure/pace - effectiveness of presentation - encouragement of active engagement with the subject and with skills development - appropriate use of resources - rapport with students - motivation/engagement of students?*

Quality of the apparent student learning experience in this class:

Suggestions for areas to develop

Points of good practice worthy of wider dissemination

Note here any examples of particularly effective approaches to teaching or to the engagement of students in active learning, whether in or between classes. You are encouraged also to copy these points of good practice into a brief Word document and send them, keeping the name of the observed teacher anonymous but stating the name of their School, to the Learning and Teaching Adviser (member of the Educational Enhancement Unit) allocated to your School, so that examples of good and innovative practice in different Schools can be shared across the University.

3 Reflection following the class : to be completed by the person who taught (or supported learning in) the class, following receipt of the observer's comments

Reflection on achievement *To what extent do you feel you achieved your aim(s) for this session? What were you particularly pleased with?*

Reflection on planning *If anything did not go as planned, was it a problem or a benefit? What is there to learn from it with regard to future planning?*

Reflection on observer's feedback *Are these fair comments? Did anything here surprise you?*

What action will you take to build on and share with colleagues the points of good practice noted by the observer, and to follow up any suggestions for development?

Source: <http://admin.exeter.ac.uk/academic/tls/tqa/Part%209/9BAclassobs1.pdf> - accessed 25 May 2009.

It is sometimes helpful to nominate a specific 'teaching episode' or activity for observation, rather than a whole 'class', particularly if it is a long session, or if the person being observed plays a specific role in leading or supporting a particular kind of learning activity.

Sample of a Completed Peer Observation of Teaching Proforma
Enhancing Classroom Teaching Dynamics
Sample Teaching Critique Observation Worksheet

*Some statements in the schedule may not be applicable for the particular session being observed, in which case they should be marked **Not Applicable**. For each section, an overall assessment of the criteria as listed is to be made. **Comments** boxes may be used to expand on identified points in the list or to make comments on additional areas not covered by the list.*

Date of session observed	02/02/09
Subject code	ABC123
Type of presentation	Lecture
Number of students enrolled	75
Number of students attending this session	56
Lecturer	Daisy Teachwell
DLTS observer(s)	Seymore Light

INTRODUCTION OF THE SESSION

How well did the lecturer	Very well	Well	Not very well	Not applicable
▪ secure attention of the students			X	
▪ introduce subject in an interesting way			X	
▪ make the aims of the session clear to students				X
▪ link subject to previous sessions		X		
▪ set tasks appropriately and allocate responsibilities				X
▪ define the topic for discussion		X		
OVERALL, this session was conducted			X	

Comments

See observation summary for details

EXPLANATION OF THE SUBJECT

How well did the lecturer	Very well	Well	Not very well	Not applicable
▪ demonstrate a firm grasp of the subject area	X			
▪ adopt a logical structured approach		X		
▪ move clearly from stage to stage		X		
▪ emphasise key points			X	
▪ provide alternative explanations of difficult points			X	
▪ make good use of audio-visual materials		X		
▪ make good use of student handouts				X
▪ make reference to additional reading material				X
▪ introduce tasks effectively				X
▪ explain tasks clearly and concisely demonstrate techniques				X
▪ use relevant examples and topical illustrations		X		
OVERALL, this session was conducted		X		

Comments

See observation summary for details

PRESENTATION OF THE SESSION

How well did the lecturer	Very well	Well	Not very well	Not applicable
▪ vary the style of delivery		X		
▪ use legible and clear audio-visual material		X		
▪ show enthusiasm		X		
▪ control pace of delivery		X		
▪ speak clearly and concisely			X	
▪ make eye contact with students		X		
▪ maintain an appropriate level of class control and discipline			X	
OVERALL, this session was conducted		X		

Comments

See observation summary for details

STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND INTERACTION

How well did the lecturer	Very well	Well	Not very well	Not applicable
▪ use questions to clarify understanding and involve students		X		
▪ handle student questions and responses appropriately		X		
▪ respond positively to and build on incorrect answers		X		
▪ encourage reasoned argument				X
▪ invite and reinforce participation by non-contributing students				X
▪ restrain dominant students in a non-threatening way			X	
▪ give support and guidance to help students with difficulties				X
▪ keep students involved and maintain student interest			X	
▪ monitor student progress during the session				X
▪ use layout of the room effectively		X		
OVERALL, this session was conducted		X		

Comments

See observation summary for details

CLOSING THE SESSION

How well did the lecturer	Very well	Well	Not very well	Not applicable
▪ reiterate and summarise key points			X	
▪ summarise the discussion			X	
▪ give clear instructions for follow up work			X	
▪ identify link with following session			X	
▪ end the session positively and clearly			X	
OVERALL, this session was conducted			X	

Comments

See observation summary for details

Overall Comments: including reference to any issues affecting the session which were outside the control of the teacher e.g. accommodation, resources

See observation summary for details

Enhancing Classroom Teaching Dynamics Sample Teaching Critique Observation Summary

Date of session observed : 02/02/09
Subject code : ABC123
Type of presentation : Lecture
Lecturer : Daisy Teachwell
CELT observer : Seymore Light

Daisy Teachwell approached CELT through the Educational Designer to request a teaching critique. She feels that this critique will be a positive enhancement to her academic portfolio.

Agreed good practices

- Lecture notes were available for students prior to the lecture on the online forum, the majority of students had printed those off, and had brought them to class.
- A revision of material covered in the previous lecture was provided. It's good that you asked students to give some feedback to you in terms of that revision, rather than providing them with the salient points.
- You move around the lecture theatre well, using the stage and the aisles effectively (this brings you closer to the students, opening the opportunities for better interaction with them). Your body language is open and friendly, and eye contact is good.
- Your delivery is confident and you clearly have a firm grasp of the material. The pace of delivery is appropriate, and you clearly moved from one point to the next, as detailed in the lecture notes which most students had with them.
- Your voice carried well to all corners of the lecture theatre. The lecture notes on overheads were clear and legible, and easily visible from the back of the lecture theatre. They were free of grammatical and typographical errors.
- Students clearly relate well to you, as was indicated after the lecture when several students thanked you. Your personality shone through at some stages - your animation created a dynamic learning environment - the students were absorbed completely in what you were saying. Be passionate about what you're teaching - enjoy it, and show your students that you enjoy it. You'll have them in the palm of your hands more often!

Recommended enhancements to teaching

- The introduction of the lecture was disorderly and noisy. Students who were trying to listen were having trouble hearing. One student had to shout at others to be quiet. If there is housekeeping to be done, and it involves all students, make sure that they're quiet and listening to you. If students straggle in late, wait until they're seated before you speak again. Students who are disruptive create an undesirable and ineffective learning environment for those who are doing the 'right' thing.
- It is very difficult to interact with students when the group is so large. Invariably, while you are interacting with one part of the group, you lose contact with the rest of the group and the learning environment evaporates for most of the students. When you then move on to try to draw other students into the discussion, the discussion is generally doomed because they haven't been paying attention. It might be a good idea for the time being to limit your interactivity to more intimate settings such as tutorial groups where you are better able to practise your questioning technique, and the development of discussion.
- From where I was sitting, the group as a whole remained restless for most of the teaching session.

That was distracting for me, and would have been for those students who were trying hard to concentrate on you. The levels of noise that you tolerate as a teacher, in your teaching space, are up to you, and they will vary greatly from one teacher to another. If you are lecturing from the front of the theatre, you may not even be aware or be able to hear the constant undercurrent of noise from the students. One group of girls sitting in front of me were particularly annoying, to the point where I almost asked them to be quiet. These girls were 'shushed' at various stages by other students, but to no avail. To be fair to everyone, and assuming that they are all there to learn, you need to address this if you can.

- Some students were very late (up to half an hour) to class, again causing disruption to your teaching and to the learning of the other students. It's not unreasonable for students to be a little late, but perhaps you could stipulate a time that's **too** late, as a courtesy to yourself and to the other students who did make the effort to be there on time.
- The same goes for students who (in my opinion very rudely) left halfway through the lecture without an apology to you for the disruption that their leaving caused.
- More effective use needs to be made of diagrams. When you were talking about XXXX and what happens in it, it would have been much easier for students if you'd put a diagram on an overhead, and spoken to it, rather than just hitting them with lots of words. Sometimes words are enough, sometimes a diagram is enough, sometimes both are needed. Experience will help you choose the correct combination of media to present a concept effectively.
- The diagrams that you used as overheads were not in the lecture notes that students downloaded from the online forum. You should consider at least, in the notes, referring students where appropriate, to textbooks to look at relevant diagrams.
- The text on the diagrams was not legible from where I was sitting. Although you verbally and only partially referenced some of the diagrams, you should reference them in writing on the overheads. Use your diagrams on overhead carefully - only put up what you need to. If you talk in detail to a particular diagram, there's no point in then throwing up another overhead of the same thing but from a different textbook, for a split second and just for the hell of it. Use your multimedia teaching resources purposefully. Put yourself in the students' position in the classroom. Sit at the back of the lecture theatre with the overheads on the screen. If you can't see them clearly, then your students will also have trouble.
- While it's a great idea to spontaneously use the whiteboard to illustrate a concept or a point raised, again, think about it first. The stage of the lecture theatre was in semi-darkness, you used a red marker, and the whole thing was totally wasted because nobody could see what you were drawing!
- If a student asks you a question, try to remember to repeat the question for the benefit of the rest of the group. You did this now and then, but should be more consistent with this. An answer given by you is totally out of context for the rest of the students if they haven't heard the question which prompted it.
- Make sure that you speak clearly and enunciate to the end of sentences (i.e. don't trail sentences off). You should aim to speak a little more loudly than you think you need to, particularly with such a large and sometimes restless audience.

Follow-up session recommended

This lecture was to a large group of students who have a reputation of being somewhat boisterous. Congratulations must go to you for asking that a teaching critique be done with this particular group of students, in the hour straight after lunch, and in the week prior to the commencement of final exams!!! I observed both strengths and those aspects of your teaching that could be improved. Follow-up sessions in a variety of teaching situations will facilitate building on those strengths, and working through ways that will enhance your teaching in general. If you are agreeable, I would like to continue my observations in 2009.

Daisy Teachwell

Signature of lecturer:

Date: 05/01/09

Seymore Light

Signature of DLTS observer:

Date: 05/01/09

Outline for Peer Review Comments on a Course Portfolio

The following headings identify four major topics that could readily be part of a review of a course portfolio. Comments could be made in either a narrative format or as identified single sections. Frank but constructive reactions to what is presented will be very helpful in the development of the course and course portfolio.

1. Intellectual

Please evaluate the quality of the *course's intellectual content*. This may include but is not limited to:

- 1) appropriateness of course material both for the curriculum and the institution
- 2) intellectual coherence of course content
- 3) articulation of intellectual goals for learners and congruence of those goals with course content and mission
- 4) value/relevance of ideas, knowledge and skills covered by the course

2. Quality of Teaching Practices

Please evaluate the *quality of the teaching practices* used in the course.

This may include but is not limited to:

- 1) organization and planning of contact time; congruence between planned and actual use of contact time
- 2) opportunities to actively engage students in the material
- 3) opportunities (in or out of class) for students to practice the skills embedded in the course goals
- 4) particularly creative or effective uses of contact time that seem likely to improve student understanding
- 5) activities scheduled outside of contact time that contribute to student achievement (this may include extracurricular activities, group projects, electronic discussions, or any other planned course related assignments or activities)
- 6) course structures or procedures that contribute especially to the likely achievement of understanding by learners.

3. Quality of Student Understanding

Please evaluate the *quality of student understanding*. This may include but is not limited to:

- 1) appropriateness of student performance, in light of course goals, course level and institution
- 2) performance levels that reflect challenging levels of conceptual understanding and critical evaluation of the material appropriate to the level of the course and of the students
- 3) appropriateness of forms of evaluation and assessment, given the stated goals of the course
- 4) creativity in providing students with ways to demonstrate their understanding of and ability to use the ideas and content of the course
- 5) alignment between the weighting of course assignments in grade calculation with the relative importance of the course goals
- 6) demonstration of an appropriate percentage of students that they are achieving competence in the stated course goals, or identification of reasons why they might not be reaching these levels of competence
- 7) revisions or modifications to the course that could improve performance.

4. Evidence of Reflective Consideration and Development

Please evaluate the *evidence of reflective consideration and development*.

This may include but is not limited to:

- 1) substantive reflection by the faculty member on the achievement of the goals for the course
- 2) identification of any meaningful relations between teaching practice and student performance
- 3) evidence of changed teaching practice over successive course offerings in reaction to prior student understanding
- 4) evidence of insightful analysis of teaching practice that resulted from consideration of student performance.

Source: adapted from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1009&context=englishfacpubs> - accessed 21 May 2009