

## Peer Review of Teaching

---

Peer Review of Teaching (PRT) has come more into focus in Australian higher education in recent times. There is increasing recognition that as with peer review of research, peer review of teaching can positively impact on teaching effectiveness and practice.

In recent times, there have been some significant national projects focusing on PRT. For example,

[Develop and implement a pilot program of 'External Peer Review of Teaching' in four Australian Universities](#)

[Peer Review of Online Learning and Teaching](#)

[Peer Review of Teaching in Australian Higher Education](#)

At Deakin in 2008, a STALGS project involving the Faculty of Science and Technology and the Institute of Teaching and Learning developed a model of peer observation for new and inexperienced sessional teachers in the faculty. As a result of this project, the model was implemented in 2009, and a handbook detailing a framework for developing PRT was written. This handbook is accessible at <http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/pd/tl-modules/scholarly/framework-peer-review09.pdf>.

In order to support this handbook resource, a set of proformas and guidelines for potential use in a peer review program has been developed. These proformas/guides act to direct various aspects of PRT, and may be adapted and adopted for use at Deakin. This set of proformas/guides is not exhaustive and not prescriptive, as there are many different approaches that can be taken in a Peer Review of Teaching program.

The following proformas/guides have been developed to provide practical resources in support of the Deakin handbook on PRT:

Proforma/Guide	Purpose
<b>ALTC Good Teaching Criteria</b>	provides details of the ALTC's five criteria of 'good teaching'
<b>Assessment Practice Review</b>	guides a review of a colleague's assessment design
<b>Critical Incident Questionnaire</b>	provides a structure for reflecting on one teaching session.
<b>Good Teaching Indicators</b>	collates from several sources the common 'principles' of good teaching practice
<b>Peer Observation Proforma</b>	for use whilst observing a colleague's teaching session
<b>Pre-Observation Guide</b>	guides a collegial discussion between observer and observed before the teaching session
<b>Post-Observation Feedback Guide</b>	provides advice for a collegial discussion between observer and observed after a teaching session
<b>Unit Design and Content Review</b>	suggests criteria to look for when reviewing a colleague's unit

### **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
- 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.

### **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
- 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.

Use:



Purpose:

Guide for reviewing assessment practice – design, validity, suitability.

<p><b>Relationship between learning objectives, learning activities and assessment tasks</b> e.g. task requires students to apply learning to a new scenario so as to demonstrate understanding</p>	
<p><b>Variety and complexity in assessment tasks</b> e.g. multi-choice test and essay and reflective journal</p>	
<p><b>Suitability of assessment tool for purpose</b> e.g. a group essay may not assess individual student understanding</p>	
<p><b>Validity of assessment task design</b> e.g. the task actually assesses the achievement of learning objectives</p>	
<p><b>Timing and timeframe for assessment tasks</b> e.g. sufficient time, suitably spaced so as to allow feedback between</p>	
<p><b>Students are informed about all assessment requirements</b> e.g. task requirements, due dates, marking criteria, grading rubric</p>	
<p><b>Fairness</b> e.g. you could expect every student to have a reasonable chance of success with the task</p>	
<p><b>Diversity catered for</b> e.g. some choice for students, clear and neutral language in instructions</p>	
<p><b>Marking criteria published</b> e.g. how marks will be allocated provided to students before task is commenced</p>	
<p><b>Feedback opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>for students</b> e.g. between assignments</li> <li>- <b>for teachers</b> e.g. after marked assignments are returned to students</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Moderation practices</b> e.g. sample marking for consistency, examples of N, P, C, D and HD shared</p>	

\*\* Source: adapted from Harris, K. 2005 *Guide for Reviewing Assessment*, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne.

## Critical Incident Questionnaire

---

Use:



**Purpose:**

A guide to analysing and reflecting on one teaching session, face to face and/or online.

Guiding Questions	Responses
<b>1. At what point in this session did you feel students were most engaged with what was happening?</b>	
<b>2. At what point in this session did you feel students were most distanced from what was happening?</b>	
<b>3. What action that you took in this session did you find most affirming and effective?</b>	
<b>4. What action that you took in this session did you find least effective?</b>	
<b>5. What was it about the session 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.)</b>	

## Good Teaching Indicators

---

**AUSSE Subscales** [AUSSE Australasian Student Engagement Report 2008](#) - Appendix 2, p.62

AUSSE SCALE	AREA OF INTEREST
Active Learning	students' efforts to actively construct knowledge
Academic Challenge	extent to which expectations and assessment challenge students to learn
Student & Staff Interactions	level and nature of students' contact and interaction with teaching staff
Enriching Educational Experiences	students' participation in broadening educational activities
Supportive Learning Environment	students' feelings of legitimation within the university community
Work Integrated Learning	integration of employment-focused work experiences into study

**Deakin – Student Engagement** = <http://www.deakin.edu.au/itl/student-engagement/index.php>

Example:

**Outcome Measure: Higher Order Thinking**

Participation in higher order forms of thinking

- analysing basic elements of an idea
- synthesising and organising ideas
- making judgements about value of information
- applying theories or concepts.

Source: Table 13 AUSSE outcome measure descriptions and items-[AUSSE Australasian Student Engagement Report 2008](#)

### **Deakin Principles of T&L**

1. [focus upon learning outcomes](#)
2. [recognise and celebrate student diversity](#)
3. [courses that are relevant and future-oriented](#)
4. [courses that are flexible](#)
5. [teachers who are innovative and motivate students to learn](#)
6. [teachers who are scholarly and professional](#)
7. [a learning environment that is flexible and responsive to student support needs](#)
8. [a learning environment which provide engagement with the university community](#)

Source: <http://www.deakin.edu.au/staff/teaching-learning/principles/index.php>

### **ALTC**

1. approaches to teaching that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn
2. development of curricula and resources that reflect a command of the field
3. approaches to assessment and feedback that foster independent learning
4. respect and support for the development of students as individuals
5. scholarly activities that have influenced and enhanced learning and teaching

Source: <http://www.altc.edu.au/system/files/documents/2008%20Awards%20Guidelines.pdf>

## Chickering & Gamson

Good practice in undergraduate education:

1. encourages contact between students and faculty,
2. develops reciprocity and cooperation among students,
3. encourages active learning,
4. gives prompt feedback,
5. emphasizes time on task,
6. communicates high expectations, and
7. respects diverse talents and ways of learning.

Source: Chickering, A.W., and Gamson, Z.F. (1991). Applying the Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, Number 47, Fall 1991. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.

## Prosser & Trigwell

Good teaching in higher education involves a continuous awareness of:

1. students' present learning situations
2. contextually dependent nature of teaching
3. students' perceptions of teaching technologies
4. student diversity in classrooms
5. need to continually evaluate and improve teaching

Source: Prosser, M. & Trigwell, K. 1999 *Understanding Learning and Teaching: The Experience in Higher Education* The Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press, Buckingham.

## Ramsden

Principles of effective teaching:

1. interest and explanation
2. concern and respect for students and their learning
3. appropriate assessment and feedback
4. clear goals and intellectual challenge
5. independence, control and active engagement
6. learning from students.

Source: Ramsden, P. 2003 *Learning to Teach in Higher Education*, Second Edition, Routledge, London.

## Online Teaching & Learning

---

### Chickering & Ehrmann

\* the same seven principles as Chickering & Gamson

Source: Chickering, A. & Ehrmann, S. 1996 "Implementing the Seven Principles: Technology as Lever," *AAHE Bulletin*, October, pp. 3-6. Available - <http://www.tltgroup.org/programs/seven.html>

### Salmon

Five stage model:

- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. access and motivation | 4. knowledge construction |
| 2. online socialisation  | 5. development            |
| 3. information exchange  |                           |

Source: Salmon, G. (2000) *E-moderating*, Kogan Page. Available - <http://www.metacrawler.com/clickserver/ice/UriFlag=1?rawURL=http%3A%2F%2Fwww-users.york.ac.uk%2F-ijc4%2Fetutoring%2Fweek%25203%2FGilly%2520Salmon%2520model.doc&0=&1=0&4=67.63.58.36&5=128.184.132.38&9=e295f77d3edf440ea23fa57511aca01&10=1&11=info.metac&13=search&14=239138&15=main-title&17=12&18=5&19=0&20=0&21=12&22=bS4knVSGeSq%3D&40=157mc42FVFCUdQesiZhdzQ%3D%3D&IceUrl=true>

## Peer Observation Proforma

---

Use:



**Purpose:** For guiding your observation of a peer in a face to face teaching session.

<b>Organisation</b>	e.g. opening, learning objectives identified, sequence, evidence of planning, timing, closing.	
<b>Presentation/ Communication</b>	e.g. pace, volume, clarity, suitable vocabulary, non-verbal skills.	
<b>Interaction and Engagement</b>	e.g. use of student names, encourage discussions, acknowledge student contributions, handle difficult students appropriately.	
<b>Questioning</b>	e.g. asked open questions, facilitated discussion, responded well to student questions	
<b>Use of Audio-visuals</b>	e.g. supported teaching, well designed, appropriate	

Comments:

## Pre Observation Guide

---

Use:



**Purpose:**

To ensure common understanding of the process of an upcoming peer observation in a classroom.

<b>Meeting Between Observer &amp; Observee Before the Observation</b>	
The purpose of the observation: e.g. - formative, developmental and collaborative reciprocal	
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	

## Unit Design & Content Review

---

Use:



Purpose:

A guide for reviewing a unit of study.

Evidence of:

<b>Clearly defined learning objectives or learning outcomes</b> e.g. for the unit and for each topic
<b>Academic challenge</b> e.g. higher order thinking skills built into learning objectives
<b>Currency of content</b> e.g. current industry/professional focus
<b>Currency and suitability of readings</b> e.g. up to date, manageable
<b>Logical sequencing of topics</b> e.g. developmental/connectivity
<b>Active learning focus</b> e.g. opportunities for students to build knowledge collaboratively
<b>Acknowledges different learning styles</b> e.g. choice in assessment tasks
<b>Valid assignment tasks</b> e.g. accurately reflect the learning objectives
<b>Additional supporting learning resources</b> e.g. self-study resources for deeper learning
<b>Graduate attribute and skill developmental opportunities</b> e.g. clear and valid identification of opportunities to develop attributes

## Post-Observation Feedback Guide

---

Use:



Purpose:

Used to structure feedback meeting after peer observes a teaching session.

### Meeting Between Observer & Observee After the Observation

#### General questions to begin with:

- How do you think it went?
- Would you say this is a 'typical' session?
- How does this session compare with others with this class?
- Do you feel you achieved what you set out to achieve?
- Were you happy with the students' involvement?
- What things surprised you during the session?
- What things weren't you happy with?
- What might you do differently next time?

#### Specific questions to follow with:

- I noticed you used a small group work activity. What were you aiming to achieve with that?
- When Amy asked you that difficult question, how well do you think you handled it?

#### Constructive feedback:

- non-judgemental
- focused on behaviour, not person
- focused on behaviour observee can control
- delivered in manageable lots
- clearly communicated
- conversational rather than advice
- allows for reflection

#### Observee's right of reply:

- allow time and opportunity
- suggest some things you learnt by observing

#### Action Plan:

- agree on some aspects the observee could focus on improving
- discuss need or desire for future meetings
- copies of any written reports must go to the observee
- opportunity for observee to discuss amending written reports if necessary