Peer Observation of Teaching, University of Liverpool

**Brief guide for Observee**

Your colleague who will act as your Peer Observer has been trained to engage with the process critically and constructively. The aim of the Peer Observation of Teaching is to create an opportunity for both you and the Peer Observer to discuss teaching and student learning by identifying effective practice and sharing concerns. At all times the process must be developmental and not judgmental.

As an Observee you have full control of the process. This includes choice on who will observe you, what will be the focus of the observation, which class you will invite the Peer Observer to observe your teaching and the type of feedback you would like to receive. You can raise most of these topics at the pre-observation meeting that your Peer Observer will arrange with you. During that meeting, we recommend you provide the Peer Observer with the session’s learning outcomes and you can also be specific about areas in your teaching you want them to focus on during the observation.

**During Observation**

At the beginning of the observation, we recommend that your students are made aware of the presence of the Peer Observer. Whether your session has a small or large number of students attending, it is useful for them to know that a process is in place that encourages discussion amongst staff about teaching and learning. It is not necessary for the Peer Observer to engage with students in your class.

Soon after the observation, a post-observation meeting will take place with your Peer Observer. This part of the process tends to be the most valuable one for both you and the Peer Observer. You will have the opportunity to talk about your session, identify what you believe went well and why. You should also reflect on what you believe did not go as planned or as expected.

**Receiving Feedback**

At the post-observation discussion, when the Peer Observer is offering feedback to you, you should try to:

- Listen carefully and critically;
- Trust the feedback you receive is for your benefit and is intended for improving your practice; be prepared to accept constructive criticism;
- Ask for examples or ideas for other approaches that may be useful to you;
- Remember that the Peer Observer has the advantage of observing you and the way students respond to what you do; this may help you to see your teaching through a different angle.

**Moving forward**

The Peer Observer will return to you the completed Observation Form. Check that the information in the form represents the discussion you had and keep it for your records. This form is confidential and you keep the only copy. You may refer back to it in the future as you continue to reflect on your teaching practice.

Some questions for you to reflect upon after the post-observation discussion:

- What aspects of your teaching do you feel you ought to improve?
- What do you need to do in order to improve in the areas you identified?
- Who might be able to help you?
- How will you know when you have improved?

The Summary Form will need to be returned to your department/school/institute to show that the process has been completed. The Peer Observer will ask you to sign all forms used.

For any questions on peer observation of teaching matters, please contact the Educational Development Division – eddev@liv.ac.uk