



GUIDELINES ON PEER REVIEW OF TEACHING

Approved by Academic Senate meeting of 14th November 2017

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I. Introduction

These guidelines set out the importance of peer review of teaching and provide to UR/ Colleges/Schools and Departments the general rules and principles to observe when intending or undertaking that exercise.

II. Purpose of peer review of teaching

2.1. The purpose of a peer review of teaching is to enhance teaching and learning through identification of strengths and weaknesses of teaching staff by peers, discussions and suggestions of areas of improvement by individual development or capacity building training in teaching and learning.

2.2. A peer review system allows academic staff to compile evidence of their effectiveness in teaching and enables them to develop a teaching portfolio.

2.3. Moreover, an effective system of peer review leads to the dissemination of good practice in teaching and learning at Departmental, School, College and University -level and to an improvement of the student learning experience.

2.4. It serves also as a clear evidence of quality assurance matters.

III. Scope

These guidelines apply to all lecturers in all UR Colleges, Schools, and Departments and for all taught undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

IV. What is a peer review of teaching?

4.1 Peer review of teaching may be understood as the evaluation, by colleagues or peers, of learning and teaching related activities.

4.2. It comprises of, but is not restricted to, the direct observation of face-to-face teaching in a traditional classroom setting such as a lecture or practical class.

4.3. A peer review also includes the evaluation of a wide range of other modern, active and innovative learning and teaching practices such as: 'virtual' teaching ; preparing online content for a module; the 'flipped classroom' approach; collaborative learning; case studies; enquiry-based learning; problem-based learning; project-based learning as well as the supervision; planning and design of assessment, and feedback to students.

4.4. In these cases, peer review may take the form of a 'professional conversation' between 'peer reviewer' and 'peer reviewee' concerning a specific aspect of the reviewee's teaching practice, rather than a direct observation.

V. Planning of a peer review of teaching

5.1. All lecturers are strongly encouraged to perform a peer review of teaching to another staff on annual basis.

5.2. Departments and Schools are required to have an annual plan and schedule of this exercise. The plan should be communicated to all academic staff before the commencement of the academic year.

VI. Selection of peer reviewers

6.1 Peer reviewers of teaching shall normally be academic staffs who have demonstrated enough knowledge and expertise in the discipline and in teaching by producing a successful teaching portfolio.

6.2 They are selected from the same programme, the same subject or the same department with the reviewee and may be appointed by the School Dean for a specific period of time (normally one year) to undertake all peer teaching observations.

6.3 The lecturer to be observed may be granted the opportunity to propose one or more of the observers. This system is very interesting as it builds trust and open discussions.

VII. Procedures of peer review

7.1. Peer review of teaching shall normally follow three steps: a briefing, an observation of teaching and learning and, a feedback to the reviewee.

7.2. The lecturer under observation should initiate the briefing in contacting personally the reviewer.

7.3. During the briefing, it is essential that:

a. The reviewer understands from the beginning how the teaching session to be observed is linked to other learning activities within the module and the programme to achieve the expected learning outcomes.

b. The reviewee should be made confident in order to raise any questions or issues that he/she would need to get feedback and/or support.

c. The reviewer and the reviewee shall discuss and agree on the key aspects to be observed during the teaching and learning practice.

7.4. Although at the briefing stage, the reviewer and the reviewee may have agreed on the major focus of the observation, the reviewer may wish to make some general comments during the observation session.

7.5. The observation made by the reviewer and agreed on by the reviewee should focus on the following different aspects related to the learner-centred pedagogy encouraged and recommended by UR:

- To what extent do students find the lesson in line with the previous and the future work?
- To what extent do students find the lesson planned, structured and organised?
- To what extent is there any evidence that demonstrates that the content of the lesson enables students to improve their knowledge and skills?

- To what extent are there opportunities for students to participate and engage actively in their own learning?
- To what extent do students learn collaboratively?
- To what extent do the teaching activities during the observation session appear to be aligned to the intended learning outcomes of the module/programme and to the UR Graduate Attributes?
- To what extent do the teaching methods and strategies enable students to achieve the expected learning outcomes and acquire the UR Graduate Attributes?

For each of the above checklist questions, evidence shall be provided.

VIII. Peer review monitoring and reporting

8.1. Heads of Departments, Deputy Deans of Schools and College DTLEs are required to monitor the peer review exercise and to ensure that all lecturers are peer reviewed annually

8.2. A peer review template (Appended) shall be completed by the reviewer and the reviewee. It may serve as evidence of teaching effectiveness when developing a teaching portfolio.

8.3. Heads of Departments, Deputy Deans of Schools and College DTLEs shall collect copies of the peer reviews and use them to produce an annual report summarizing the outcomes of the peer review in their Department, School and College, including examples of good practice, strengths, weaknesses or areas for improvement.

8.4. College peer review annual reports shall be submitted to the UR Director for Teaching and Learning Enhancement and discussed by the UR Teaching and Learning Committee.

8.5. The UR Director for Teaching and Learning shall then prepare a report which shall include recommendations of the Teaching and Learning Committee.


Professor Nelson Ijumba
Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research



Appendix 1

Peer review of teaching reporting form

To be completed by the reviewer and retained by the reviewee

School:-----

Department:-----

| | | | |
|--------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| Name of Reviewer | | Name of Reviewee | |
| Observation date | | Observation period | |
| Year of study | | Semester | |
| Module code | | Module Title | |
| Subject/Discipline | | Lesson observed | |
| Number of credits | | Number of students | |

| |
|--|
| Feedback on questions and issues specifically raised by the Reviewee |
| |

| |
|--|
| Other feedback |
| |

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| Comments on strengths and improvement needs, particularly in relation to the intended learning outcomes of the module. A checklist is provided to assist the Reviewer and Reviewee | | |
|--|-----------|-----------------------|
| Checklist of the observation | Strengths | Areas for improvement |
| Introduction of the lesson to the students | | |
| Lesson planning, structure and organisation | | |
| Physical environment | | |
| Social environment | | |
| Content | | |
| Methods and strategies | | |
| Delivery | | |
| Use of teaching aids and materials | | |
| Coverage of Intended Learning Outcomes | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Extent of Student participation and engagement | | |
| Lecturer-student interaction | | |
| Assessment practices | | |

| |
|---|
| Please indicate any other information you consider useful to the Reviewee |
| |