

## Teaching Observation Scheme

<b>Responsibility for Policy:</b>	<i>Registrar and Deputy Chief Executive</i>
<b>Relevant to:</b>	<i>All LJMU Staff</i>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<i>Academic Board, 29<sup>th</sup> June 2015</i>
<b>Responsibility for Document Review:</b>	<i>As above and/or Director of the Teaching and Learning Academy</i>
<b>Date introduced:</b>	<i>September 2015*</i>
<b>Date(s) modified:</b>	
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	<i>June 2017</i>

### RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

*List here any documents that relate to the creation of this policy*

*\*This revised Teaching Observation Scheme replaces two former separate schemes: Observation of Teaching, and Peer Review and is approved for transitional implementation 2015/16 with full implementation 2016/17*

### RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS

List here any internal policies or documents that are relevant to this policy e.g.  
*N/A*

# Learning and Teaching Framework

## Revised Teaching Observation Scheme

### 1. Introduction

Within the Learning and Teaching Framework LJMU has operated a *Peer Review* and an *Observation of Teaching Scheme*. These two approaches are complementary, and were differentiated as summarised in the table below.

Characteristic	Observation of Teaching	Peer Review
<b>Who</b>	Experienced staff trained to provide constructive feedback on teaching	Academic colleagues from a common subject discipline.
<b>What</b>	Taught session where observee is delivering academic material to students in a 'classroom' situation.	Covers range of academic roles including assessment, project supervision and use of technology.
<b>Purpose</b>	Improvement of academic practice enhancement.	Critical discourse and self- reflection.
<b>Outcome</b>	Teaching-related actions for improvement.	Discussion and analysis.
<b>Status</b>	Expert diagnosis.	Shared perception.
<b>Relationship</b>	Expertise.	Mutuality.
<b>Conditions for success</b>	Effective central management / oversight.	Teaching is valued and discussed.

The formal Observation of Teaching Scheme was introduced in September 2011. Co-ordination of the scheme was managed by the former Faculty Learning Development Managers and, since September 2013, the Associate Deans Education. Until September 2014 the then Assistant Academic Registrar (EAQS) was responsible for training of academic staff across LJMU as observers. In October 2015, the responsibility for this training was passed to Associate Deans Education.

Whilst the formalisation of teaching observation [feeding into PDPR] has resulted in a more auditable and recognised model of academic practice, the parallel provision of two observation processes has resulted in more limited academic staff engagement in peer review. It is therefore proposed that these two approaches are combined to consolidate best practice into one formal teaching observation scheme called '*Teaching Observation*'. Combining the two schemes will ensure a common approach to enhancing the student learning experience by supporting and developing high quality teaching across the institution.

## **2. Overview**

The purpose of the revised Teaching Observation Scheme is to enable academic staff to gain feedback from a trained and experienced observer as part of a process of reflection on teaching performance with an increased emphasis on the intention to engage academics in critical discussion about learning and teaching.

## **3. Objectives**

- To provide an opportunity for staff to reflect on their practice.
- To identify and disseminate good practice.
- To engage academic staff in self-reflection and critical discourse.
- To link staff development support to strategic improvements in teaching and learning.
- To promote the scholarship of teaching and learning.
- To provide evidence of LJMU's commitment to improving the quality of learning opportunities.

## **4. Principles**

- Teaching observation is a process that enables academic to identify their development needs in relation to teaching.
- Teaching observation is collaborative and centred around a professional and supportive dialogue.
- Teaching observation is applied in an ethical, fair, transparent and consistent manner.
- The Teaching Observation scheme will be annually reviewed and evaluated.

## **5. Participation**

All full-time LJMU staff with regular teaching duties, including teaching assistants, sessional lecturers, part-time staff, and others, should participate in the Teaching Observation scheme on a biennial basis.

Staff enrolled on the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (LTHE) are required to take part in direct observation by a trained Faculty observer. Therefore, they are exempt from additional observation during this period of assessment.

## **6. Identification of Observers**

Each School will identify observers. The choice will remain with the School but all Observers should undertake initial and ongoing preparation for the role with the Associate Dean Education. They should also have experience of observing teaching sessions and providing feedback, for example, through engagement with the PGCertLTHE.

## **7. Organisation of the Scheme**

Associate Deans Education have operational responsibility for the scheme within Faculties. Overall, line managers, e.g. Directors of School or Subject Leaders, are responsible for the implementation of the scheme at a local level. A schedule of observations should be drawn up each year, and approved by the Director of School.

## **8. Reporting mechanisms**

Faculty Management Teams will have the overall responsibility for ensuring the scheme is planned, implemented, monitored and evaluated thoroughly and professionally. Associate Deans Education will co-ordinate the scheme within Faculties. The reporting and monitoring systems are as follows:

- The Associate Dean Education will prepare an annual summary report of the operation of the scheme for discussion at Faculty Education Committee.
- LJMU's Education Committee will receive annual reports from Faculties.
- The Director of the Teaching and Learning Academy will compile a summary report which highlights the generic outcomes of the Faculty schemes, which will be reported to the Education Committee.
- The Teaching and Learning Academy will be responsible for evaluating the Teaching Observation Scheme.
- The Teaching and Learning Academy will be responsible for disseminating good practice arising out of the observation process.

## **9. Observer preparation**

Observers should be prepared and guided in the provision of constructive feedback to academic staff on their teaching. Preparation should ensure that observers are familiar with the teaching observation process and are able to provide feedback that will enable the observee to enhance/improve their teaching practice. In providing feedback observers should consider the teaching context of the observation including Blackboard site and academic support materials.

## **10. Areas for feedback on observation**

Feedback may be structured using the headings taken from UK Professional Standards Framework. This is for guidance only, and discussion should be focused on the development of the observee. This form remains confidential between the observer and observee.

## **11. Faculty monitoring mechanism**

The Associate Dean Education is responsible for recording individuals involved in the observation process, i.e. the names of the Observer and Observee. Contextual information will also be recorded including the session type observed (e.g. lecture, workshop, tutorial);

the date of the observation; the number of students involved in the observed session; and the Level.

Any issues that may have adversely affected the session, outside of the control of the observee, for example the data projector did not work, the temperature of the room, the general state of the room, should be documented as a method for identifying space/infrastructure that is not fit-for-purpose and/or of high quality.

Good practice for wider dissemination must be recorded. This should include all aspects of effective academic practice for example the Blackboard site, assessment strategy, as well as teaching approaches.

## 12. The Observation Process

Stage	Staff Involved	Purpose
1. Allocation of observers	Faculty Senior Managers Observers Members of staff to be observed	To agree the schedule and allocate observers.
2. Observers contact observee	Observer and observee	To agree session to be observed and to go through the process
3. Observee provides session plan which is discussed with the observer prior to the teaching session	Observee and observer	To provide information about the observed session/module context and to highlight any specific areas that are to be focused on (agreed between both parties)
4. Observation takes place using university criteria	Observer and observee	To carry out the agreed observation
5. Observer and observee meet for a feedback session (normally take place within 2 weeks of the observation)	Observer and observee	For the observer to provide high quality feedback based on the university criteria
6. Observer completes the observation feedback and summary forms.	Observer	Observer summarises feedback to ensure observee has a record. Observer and observee both sign the feedback form. Form remains confidential. Observation summary sent to ADE
7. Follow up activities (where appropriate)	Observee Other Faculty staff Teaching and Learning Academy staff.	To ensure that the observee is supported with appropriate staff development.

Staff may request an alternative observer to the one allocated, but must be able to provide valid reasons for the request, which will be considered by the person responsible for the scheme within the Faculty.

Any issues related to the observation form will be considered by the Associate Dean Education.

**Before the observation process starts please complete the first 3 rows. Share your intended outcomes and the focus of the observation with your observer.**

**Name:**

**Date:**

**Observer :**

**Venue:**

**Feedback date:**

**Time:**

**Type of teaching session:**

**Subject / topic:**

**Intended outcomes of the session**

**Agreed focus of observation**

**After the observation of teaching please discuss the session with your observer in relation to the prompts below.**

**Please note the feedback remains confidential between observer and observee.**

**Possible areas for discussion**

**Comments and outcomes of discussion**

Impact of the session structure on student learning

The extent to which the intended the outcomes were met

The extent to which the material communicated effectively (pace, timing, audibility)

Assessment of student learning during the session

Provision of opportunities for students to participate in the session

Use of research scholarly activity to support teaching and learning

Contribution of student comments and participation to the delivery of the session

**Observation summary to be completed by observer and forwarded to the Associate Dean**

**Education****Observee name:****Date:****Observer :****Venue:****Feedback date:****Time:****Type of teaching session:****Subject / topic:**

Issues that adversely affected the session, outside of the control of the observee, for example, projection/sound, room temperature, the general condition of the room. *This is to provide a means of identifying space/infrastructure that is not fit-for-purpose and/or of high quality*

Good practice for wider dissemination – please include all aspects of academic practice, for example, the Blackboard site, assessment strategy, as well as teaching approaches.