

Appendix 1: new Peer Observation and Review (POR) Policy and Principles

1. Definitions

Peer observation and review (POR) concerns CCCU staff who teach or facilitate learning. It consists in observing and/or reviewing each other's authentic practice to learn from one another and to focus on individual needs. As well as being a learning activity for your own professional development, it allows you to contribute to your peers' development and learning across the university, including colleagues from other disciplines as well as non-academic staff such as Professional Services. The POR process also aims to build self-awareness, provide a safe learning environment which encourages innovation and improves teaching practice to support an outstanding student experience.

Authentic Practice is a term used to recognise a variety of situations as not all observations will be carried out in a classroom teaching situation. Authentic practice can be a one-to-one tutorial, supervision or feedback session and instruction, online design and delivery, design of assessment guidance, summative or formative assessment feedback (with the student's or apprentice's permission), etc. These can be reviewed through various means by the reviewer.

2. Aims of the Policy

Peer observation and review (POR) of learning and teaching offers academic staff, and staff who support learning, the chance to engage in professional conversation about all aspects of the scholarship and practice to enhance staff's learning, teaching and assessment practice. Specifically, the peer observation and review policy aims to:

- enhance the learning, teaching and assessment process at CCCU, thereby improving our students' and apprentices' learning experience
- make a significant contribution to academic or support staff's continuing professional development in teaching and/or supporting learning
- help maintain consistently high standards of teaching and/or support of students' or apprentices' learning across the University.

3. Objectives of the Policy

- To encourage staff to reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching, learning and assessment practices and to inform their professional development (as per the Learning and Teaching Strategy 2015-2022)
- To offer staff the opportunity to explore ways of enhancing the learning experience of students or apprentices
- To foster discussion and dissemination of effective practice in teaching and learning, and widen the culture of collaborative partnership
- To inform planning for academic professional development
- To contribute to quality assurance and evaluation processes

4. Principles governing the implementation of the policy

3.1 How staff engage with the POR

- Academic staff must engage in an annual review of a peer, and be annually reviewed by one peer. Academic teams may choose to engage with the POR on a more regular basis if they wish, or because they must comply to a requirement of their PSRB.
- For Professional Service roles that teach and develop learning, staff are encouraged to engage in the POR and, where possible, a partnership approach should be fostered to encourage reviews across academic and professional services teams.
- Academic staff at collaborative partners' institutions should engage with the POR process on an annual basis. They can use either the University's POR process, or their own, to achieve this.
- Pairing can occur within and across course teams and with professional services staff, but the pairing should not be linked to line management.

3.2 How the POR is used and monitored

- Reviews are undertaken in a spirit of free and open peer professional conversation on aspects of the reviewer and reviewee's learning and teaching practices
- Heads of School take responsibility for ensuring that the policy is in operation and occurs annually for academic teams.
- Heads of School take responsibility to ensure that any systemic L&T development needs identified by a team are addressed in a supportive manner.
- As per its aims and objectives, engagement with the POR is developmental, and will not be linked with performance management of individual staff.
- Following completion of the POR, staff and their managers use the POR as a basis to identify areas for continuing professional development (CPD).
- Lessons learnt from the POR, including the need for further support for professional development, are highlighted via the annual monitoring process, and reported to the Faculty Directors of Learning and Teaching for planning purposes.
- Each year, departments, schools or faculties can identify, if they wish, any specific foci for that year, e.g. enhancements to assessment practice, use of Technology Enhanced Learning. The list of themes below is designed to provide ideas, but is not exhaustive:
 - Inclusive practice
 - Active Learning
 - Developing assessment feedback practice
 - Embedding academic literacy
 - Embedding professional skills development
 - Developing blended learning
 - Expanding the use of technology enhanced learning
 - Developing the web accessibility of resources

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Version approved by Academic Board	December 2020
Record of Modifications	