

<Creative Academy>

<Peer Observation Policy & Form>

Overview

A peer observation policy is a structured, developmental process where educators observe each other's teaching to share good practices, reflect on techniques, and enhance student learning in a non-judgmental way. Typically, it involves pre-observation meetings, classroom visits, and post-observation discussions, often done reciprocally.

Key Components of a Peer Observation Policy

- **Purpose:** Primarily developmental and formative, focusing on improving teaching and fostering a collaborative culture rather than performance management.
- **Scope:** Often mandatory for all staff with teaching responsibilities, particularly those on probation.
- **Process:**
 - **Pre-observation meeting:** Discuss the focus of the observation (e.g., questioning techniques, student engagement).
 - **Observation:** The observer, preferably trained, gathers data on the session, including classroom teaching, online delivery, or seminars.
 - **Feedback/Reflection:** A confidential discussion focusing on reflective practice, strengths, and areas for development.
 - **Documentation:** Completion of a peer observation form, which may be submitted to show compliance without sharing specific, confidential feedback.
- **Confidentiality:** Feedback and discussions between the peers generally remain confidential, though the completion of the process is reported for compliance.
- **Frequency:** Usually, at least one observation is expected per academic year.

Best Practices

- **Reciprocity:** Both colleagues act as both observer and observee.
- **Constructive Feedback:** Focus on observable behaviours and constructive dialogue.
- **Focus Areas:** The observee sets the focus for the observation, identifying specific areas for feedback.

Creative Academy Peer Observation of Teaching Policy

Aims

Peer observation is a collaborative, developmental activity which has the potential to enhance teaching practice and personal development, and improve the quality of the student learning experience while underpinning their individual development. Conversation around ideas and best practice is an essential aspect of peer observation this will help to develop reflection, practice and innovation for both the observer and the observed.

The aim is:

- To enable all teaching staff to learn from each other and mutually benefit from improving understanding and practice;
- To enable and strengthen sharing, discussion and reflection about best practice in learning, teaching and assessment;
- To help staff to identify strengths in learning and teaching, and to identify areas where teaching and student learning could be improved;
- To engender greater awareness, understanding and value for teaching approaches which enhance student learning, and disseminate these approaches within and across programmes;

Guidelines

In support of these aims,

- Senior Lecturers are expected to ensure that teaching staff are peer observed at least once every three years New members of teaching staff who teach more than 20 hours per semester should be peer observed within their second semester of teaching.
- Peer observations will take place at the Creative Academy
- It is expected that peer observation will be arranged locally as part of any collaborative provision arrangement and that this will be informed by the principles of development, dialogue and support which inform this policy.
- Pre-meeting between observers and observed where the person being observed outlines the rules of engagement, identifying focus areas for discussion and observation.
- Observation of teaching, supervision, supporting learning or any other teaching and learning related activity to be arranged at a mutually agreeable time (this will not happen within the Wellbeing Service due to confidentiality and possible conflicts of interest);
- Post-meeting conversation which may be supported by a constructive write-up. This meeting would elicit strengths, areas of shared interest, enhancement ideas (Golden Thread) and examples of best practice to disseminate.
- Written record of observation by the observer, with opportunity for reflection and response by the observed (within policy).

- Peer observation is an intentional activity designed to foster reflection and conversations about teaching, both before and after the session. Team teaching is not the same as peer observation: in team teaching situations, the observer may be distracted by their own responsibilities to teach students and by the activity and dynamic in the room. Peer observations must therefore not be combined into team teaching; the observer must be separate from the teaching activity occurring.
- All peer observation is undertaken to enhance teaching, improve student learning and develop a culture of reflection about learning and teaching. The contents of the discussion remain confidential and are intended to promote enhancement, enrichment and reflection.
- Peer observation will remain confidential between observer and observed, although the observed individual is free to share their peer observation record should they wish, although in cases of low achievement The Creative Academy Manager will be involved in Performance Review and targets
- Peer observation should identify best practice. With the permission of the observer and observed, colleagues are encouraged to share teaching innovations in order to enhance teaching and learning systematically, in cases where these ideas may transfer across disciplines.
- The Creative Academy Manager may want to reflect on insights and enhancements which have occurred through engaging in POT in the annual returns and reports to The University, Steering Committee & Office For Students.

Grade

- 1) Outstanding
- 2) Good
- 3) Satisfactory
- 4) Poor

Curriculum Area

- A. Foundation Degree
- B. BA (Hons) Dance
- C. Technique Classes
- D. ISTD classes

Tutor Name		Observer Name(s)	
Length of Session		Date of Observation	
Curriculum area		No. in Session	
Moderated Grade		Length of Observation	

Teaching	Comment/Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning outcomes are displayed at the start of the session so that learners know what they have to achieve 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The session is well planned with a logical development of content. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The session is well paced. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities are varied and promote learning participation/engagement in tasks. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities motivate, engage, challenge and inspire learners 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-learning is used to enhance learning. (Where applicable) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities have been planned to build on previous learning. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tutor demonstrates a thorough knowledge and understanding of subject matter. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tutor's instructions are clear and understood by all learners so that learning can take place. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tutor is checking that learning is taking place. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differentiation of tasks/assessments takes place. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity and equality issues are adhered to. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching strategies and learning activities promote good working relationships between learners. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safety regulations are observed. 	
Learning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners achieve at their own pace and level to meet their needs and abilities 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners work collaboratively/individually/as a whole group in the session 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners are actively engaged in 	

learning	
• Resources and planned activities assist learning to take place	
• Accommodation is suitable for learning to take place	
• Assessment criteria is known and shared with the learners	
• Assessment takes into account individual needs and relevant additional support is provided.	
• Learners are clear as to how, when and why they are being assessed.	

Strengths	Areas for Development

Any Other Comments

Signature of Tutor:

Date:

Signature of Observer:

Date:

Action Plan

Tutor Name	
Name of Course	
Date of Observation	
Name of observer	

Action Point for Tutor to address identified Areas for Development	Date completed by Tutor	Date observed by Line Manager	Evidence to support Action Point has been completed

Tutor:

Signature:

Date:

Observer:

Signature:

Date:

PRINT FORMS (PAGES 4,5 & 6) FOR USE and complete.

Reviewing this statement or policy

This policy or statement will be annually reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose, up to date and effective. Student representation will be part of the process to ensure that it is fair and clear.

Any changes will be uploaded to the website, ensuring that it is accessible to prospective and current students. For general enquiries and/or complaints regarding this statement, please contact the Creative Academy using the information below:

- By phone - 01753 875400
- By email - info@creativeacademy.org
- By post - Creative Academy, 73a Stoke Poges Lane, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 3NY
- By website - using the contact us page on www.creativeacademy.ac.uk
- For complaints - please see the complaints process on the website