Appendix 1: Peer observation of teaching policy with sample report

Purpose
The purpose of peer observation of teaching is to enable staff with teaching responsibilities to reflect on and improve their teaching practice. This is a constructive process whereby teachers work together to enable teaching development through discussion and reflection.

Observers, and those they are observing, are encouraged to use the peer observation process to identify and share good practice and this can be used to demonstrate performance for progression and professional recognition.

This process is different from and independent of the peer observation included in the Teaching in Higher Education programme (tHE).

Operation
1. Peer observation is mandatory and must take place at least once during each academic year for all staff delivering teaching although staff are encouraged to undertake peer observation more frequently if desirable.
2. Managers should confirm at PDR whether peer observation has taken place, and staff are encouraged to share their observations with their line manager to demonstrate reflection on and enhancement of their teaching practice.
3. Observers should be University staff members from a cognate discipline, should change each year and the process should not be reciprocal, to ensure the process is fair and effective. Observation from teachers external to the university (e.g. from other institutions or from practice) in addition to undertaking the internal process.
4. The University’s approved peer observation form must be used.

The process is intended to be two-way with active contribution from observer and observed. The observer is expected to remain present for the whole session and to provide detailed comments. Peer observation can cover the full range of teaching activities including lectures, seminars, field trips, and practical classes.

Confidentiality
The process should be confidential and any information should remain confidential between the observer and the observed, unless the member of staff being observed chooses to share the outcomes. Staff who have been observed are encouraged, however, to share observations with their line manager.

Future Development
As a part of the development of the PDR, a question asking the staff member to reflect on their peer observation will be included as a part of the process and the online form.
### Section 1 - To be completed by the teacher prior to session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Jo Smith</th>
<th>Name of Observer</th>
<th>Penny Fortham</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session name</td>
<td>Using reflection to drive practice</td>
<td>Date of Observation</td>
<td>4-4-2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>Dev Studies</td>
<td>Number of students</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level and programme</td>
<td>5 BSc Health and Social Care</td>
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</tbody>
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**Aim of session**
To enable students to engage in reflective practice

**Learning outcomes**
- TSSBAT
  - Identify a reflective model
  - Justify the use of that model
  - Apply the model to practice issues using relevant examples

**Factors in planning - any new aspects?**
This is the first time I have taught this module. The students have had some exposure to practice and so now they are to be introduced to reflection. The session is to enable them to ‘use’ reflection effectively.

**What would you particularly like feedback on?**
As it is a new session I would appreciate feedback on the pacing of the content and how the students seemed to receive it.

### Section 2 – To be completed by the teacher after discussion with the observer

**Reflective response from teacher:**
Overall I felt the session went better than I expected. The students seemed receptive to the notion of reflection and made a good effort to apply it to their experience of practice. That said, some struggled to find a connection to the practice experience some months ago so next time round I will ask that they come with a 500 word account of practice ready. That would help them to remember the detail of the experience and given them an immediate example to reflect on. Having considered the session carefully because of having ‘peer observation’ has helped me to target it to the needs of the student group more clearly.

### Section 3 – To be completed by the observer following the session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Jo had planned the lesson thoroughly – with a lesson plan as it is a new session to him. He covered several elements of the UKPSF (A1, 2, 3, K1, K3, V3 and 4).</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>The focus on reflection was the clear starting and finish point and Jo worked to keep the students to the issue throughout.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching approach</td>
<td>The session was well paced, introducing the new knowledge elements incrementally, using application to test understanding. Jo mixed the lecture style with small group discussions of the units of learning</td>
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</table>
and that seemed to help the students. The group was large and this needed some management but the interest of all students was held throughout.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Link to assessment</th>
<th>This was an area of concern as reflection is not formally tested until the end of the module. Jo set a formative exercise for the students at the end of the lesson, explaining how that would help them to prepare for the summative reflective essay at the end of the module.</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Resources used     | The short PowerPoint presentation was used to:  
(a) introduce the new knowledge  
(b) provide an aide-memoire for the discussion  
(c) outline the formative task.  
The interactive nature of the session meant that no further resources were needed. |
| Student engagement | The students seemed a little reluctant or shy at the start of the session but soon responded to Jo’s relaxed, interactive style. He deliberately linked the content to the student experience, encouraging engagement and the small groups were particularly productive, with students contributing enthusiastically. |
| Strengths          | It was clear that Jo knew this subject very well and was able to confidently enthuse the students with its use. I was impressed with his classroom control of this large group, moving seamlessly from group work to lecture and back. |
| Good practice      | The application of theory to practice was notable – robust new knowledge content, enthusiastically delivered to students, enabling them to try applying it to practice. Canny use of formative assessment to embed the knowledge, linking to the summative and so increasing participation. |
| Areas for discussion |  
- The session exposed the students to one example of a reflective model and we need to discuss when and whether alternatives are offered. If so, there may be scope to link the sessions more explicitly enabling students to understand their choices and the value of having other models available.  
- While Jo was enthusiastic in delivery, he did focus on the students who were struggling with the concept. Some of the bright students could have become restless at this point so we can discuss strategies for managing this. |
| Ideas for improvement |  
- With so many students in the room, it may be useful to think of using clickers in the session to enable student interaction within the lesson.  
- The students have the materials on Blackboard and the model is displayed on screen while the students discuss it. I wonder if letting the students work ‘into’ a printed screen based version would speed up their engagement and encourage them to comment more fully. |

Observer signature ............................................................................................................ (Print name)..................................................................................