

## **Peer Review & Enhancement Policy for Academic and Learning Support Staff**

This policy updates and replaces the Peer Supported Review Policy approved by Academic Board in June 2010 (AB/3/10/10) and will be implemented from the start of academic year 2014/15.

Peer Review & Enhancement is a developmental process through which individuals review, reflect on and enhance their practice with the support of colleagues.

The aims of Peer Review & Enhancement are to:

- enhance the professional practice of teaching and the support of student learning through a personalised process of peer review and supported development;
- promote and enhance the scholarship of learning and teaching through reflective practice;
- provide academic and learning support staff with a reliable method to remain in good standing as academics.

## **Principles**

The Peer Review & Enhancement process:

- continues to include all student-facing staff whose role directly impacts on student learning e.g. academic, learning support, technical, and administrative staff, including those in part-time roles;
- contributes to the requirement of all staff accredited as Fellows of the HEA to remain in good standing;
- addresses the needs of individuals within the evolving contexts of subject and inter-professional groups, the institution, and professional and regulatory bodies;
- is supported by peers, based on:
  - development for mutual benefit;
  - trust, respect and the open sharing of practice;
  - professional integrity;
  - appreciative and supportive observation of practices;
  - peer reflection, action planning and joint enterprise.
- reflects the diverse environments used by academics while teaching, including curriculum design and delivery, assessing and feeding back to students, supporting students and evaluating practice;
- is a flexible process to accommodate differing needs and contexts, changing roles and evolving environments;
- is supported by University, Faculty and Departmental processes;
- is simple and efficient to operate, linking with existing processes to create a coherent professional development and review cycle.

## Policy statement

All academic and learning support staff<sup>1</sup> will:

- undertake Peer Review & Enhancement each year in order to,
  - o continue to develop the quality of their teaching and their support for student learning practice<sup>2</sup>;
  - o remain in good standing as professionals in higher education.
- select from a range of methods, which they determine to be appropriate, to review, reflect on and develop their academic practice<sup>3</sup>.
- where staff are involved in teaching students, Peer Review & Enhancement will normally include observation. This involves observing peers and being observed by peers in order to critically reflect on and develop the ways they engage their students in key teaching environments<sup>4</sup>.
- identify and share significant outcomes of their Peer Review & Enhancement activities to further enhance the practice of teaching teams and the wider academic community in general.

## Implementation

The University and Faculties will support staff to engage in Peer Review & Enhancement (PRE). A consistent university-wide approach is set out in the PRE Handbook, which includes information about coordinating engagement, guidance materials approaches to PRE including observation methods. Forms for supporting the Peer Observation of Teaching and recording engagement with Peer Review & Enhancement are also included. Faculties and Departments are required to set out and communicate their Peer Review & Enhancement structures and processes, and to monitor, review and report on the scheme as part of their annual quality review processes.

The University will identify professional development and course development priorities linked to the Learning & Teaching Strategy to inform the selection of Peer Review & Enhancement activities. The general *outcomes* of the Peer Review & Enhancement process will inform part of the discussion at annual Appraisal and inform individual personal development planning and Faculty, Departmental and University plans.

## Approved by Academic Board, June 2014 (AB Minute 14/42 refers)

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<sup>1</sup> Professional services and technical staff engaged in student-facing support for learning and teaching

<sup>2</sup> The scope of teaching and learning support, and the scope of academic practice in this policy therefore, is defined by the five Areas of Activity set out in the UK Professional Standards Framework: (AoA1) The design and planning of learning activities and/or programmes of study; (AoA2) Teaching and/or supporting learning; (AoA3) Assessing and giving feedback to learners; (AoA4) Developing effective learning environments and approaches to student support and learning; (AoA5) Engagement in CPD relating to the scholarship of teaching and learning.

<sup>3</sup> Guidance on the range of effective peer review and enhancement methods is being rolled out to support the implementation of this revision.

<sup>4</sup> Guidance on the range of effective observation methods and key teaching environments can be found in the PRE Handbook which accompanies this revision.