

4

PEER OBSERVATION OF TEACHING



This resource is for you if you want to:

- ✓ Receive feedback on your teaching from your peers
- ✓ Improve your awareness of your practice to identify areas to work on
- ✓ Develop an action plan (resources, manager support for professional development decision-making)
- ✓ Reflect and continually enquire about the effectiveness of your teaching to meet the learning needs of your students

Peer observation is a developmental and collegial activity between teachers that can support and enhance learning experiences and outcomes for students. The four-step process is made up of a pre-observation meeting, the teaching observation, a post observation meeting and the development of a teaching practice action plan.

Setting up a peer observation

Step 1: Pre-observation meeting

The observing and observed teachers meet for a short discussion during which the observed teacher identifies particular areas in which they would like feedback – use **Pre-observation meeting form**.

Step 2: Teaching observation

The observation occurs at an agreed time and place for a set duration - use **Teaching observation feedback form**.

Step 3: Post-observation meeting

A discussion is held between the two teachers based on what was observed using **Teaching observation feedback form**. The aim of this meeting is for the observer to provide constructive feedback and for both parties to identify what went well and what could be changed to improve the student learning experience.

Step 4: Development of a teaching practice action plan

The teacher reflects on the points raised with the observer and a teaching practice action plan is developed - use **Teaching practice action plan**. The action plan can be shared with the teacher's programme coordinator/leader and used as a professional development planning tool. Opportunities for ongoing professional development are identified. For example:

- Participate in relevant externally provided training
- Complete internal training opportunities
- Participate in communities of practice
- Use a mentor or coach
- Complete tertiary qualifications

Pre-observation meeting form

Pre-observation meeting		
Observed (Tutor/Lecturer)		
Observer		
Date:	Time:	Duration:
Session topic/focus		
What the students should get out of the session (learning outcomes, skills to be gained)		
What I'd particularly appreciate feedback on		
What are the specific learning objectives/outcomes planned for this session? (knowledge and understanding, key skills, subject specific skills including practical/professional skills)		

Teaching observation feedback form

Observation areas	Guidelines/examples	Observations
What processes or techniques did the teacher use to actively engage students in the learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraged students to practise/ attempt new tasks • Provided regular feedback • Used engaging and relevant activities • Gave students opportunities to discuss and question 	
How were students given opportunities to draw on their own experiences?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were asked for their ideas and opinions • Students were given opportunities to share their own stories 	
How were learning outcomes clarified to ensure student understanding?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations of learning were explained clearly • Clear connections were made between learning outcomes and assessments 	
How were students' strengths and learning needs identified and acknowledged?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback was provided to students on their progress • The teacher recognised the need to adapt their teaching and learning approach • Formative questions were asked 	
How did the teacher address the learning needs of all students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied their teaching delivery, which allowed for all learning styles (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic) • Used a range of approaches and learning activities 	
How was feedback sought from the students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities were provided for students to comment and contribute • Students were regularly questioned 	
What strategies were used to evaluate student understanding of the learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written and/or verbal demonstration of understanding by students • Regular opportunities for students to ask questions • Use of formative questions by the teacher • Exercises and strategies used enabled checking of student understanding and application of learning 	

Observation areas	Guidelines/examples	Observations
How did the teacher create positive relationships with the students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledged student contributions • Encouraged students to contribute/participate in learning activities • Invited students to share their own experiences and ideas • Showed interest in the individual students 	
How did the teacher create positive peer relationships between students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created opportunities for students to work collaboratively and encouraged interdependence 	
How did the teacher accommodate the students' cultural differences?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built positive relationships with students • Showed interest in students' backgrounds and experiences • Encouraged students to learn from each other • Showed an appreciation of student views that differed from their own 	
What aspects of the learning environment created a safe and welcoming place for students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Room/furniture layout supported individual and/or group learning • Use/display of student work • Respectful teacher-student interactions 	
What strategies were used to evaluate student understanding of the learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written and/or verbal demonstration of understanding by students • Regular opportunities for students to ask questions • Use of formative questions by the teacher • Exercises and strategies used enabled checking of student understanding and application of learning 	

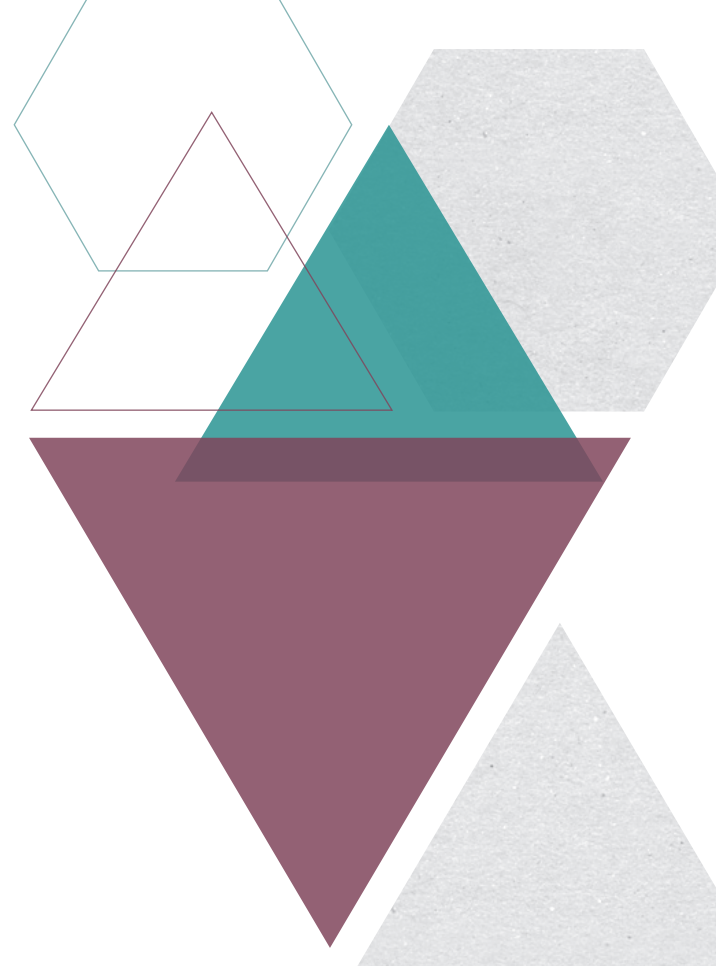
Strengths

Areas to build on

Agreed areas for possible professional development

Teaching practice action plan

What actions will I take to improve student learning? (identify realistic targets)	Support needed to assist with implementation (mentor, professional development activity)	How will I evaluate the action taken after it has been implemented? (outcome, impact on student learning)
<p>Action to improve student learning</p> <p>How will this improve learning?</p>		
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About this resource

This work was supported through the Ako Aotearoa National Project Fund 2012. This resource is one of eight developed as a result of the study by Honeyfield et al (2016). *Research Report: Professional Development Decision-making to Support Under-25 Student Success*. These resources, the research report and a literature review can be downloaded at www.ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/projects/professional-development-improve-outcomes-under-25-learners. The resources are also available for purchase at www.shop.ako.aotearoa.ac.nz.

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