



Standard Operating Procedures for Peer Observation for Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

Internal Quality Assurance Cell – Faculty of Allied Health Sciences (IQAC- FAHS)



Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University

Contents

Contents	
Abbreviations	
Foreword	
The IQAC- FAHS Members	
Standard operating protocol for Peer Observation	
Introduction	1
Benefits of Peer Observation	1
The process of peer observation has the following benefits.....	1
Section A	2
1. General guidelines	2
2. Guidelines and SOPs for Observee	3
3. Guidelines and the SOPs for the Observer	4
Section B	5
1. Structure/sequence of the peer observation process.....	5
a. Pre observation	5
b. Observation.....	5
c. Post Observation.....	6
Role of IQAC in peer observation.....	6

Abbreviations

FAHS: Faculty of Allied Health Sciences

IQAC: Internal Quality Assurance Cell

HOD: Head of the Department

KDU: Kotelawala Defence University

SAR: Senior Assistant Registrar

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure

SO II: Staff Officer Grade II

CTHE: Certificate course in teaching and learning in higher education

ILO: Intended Learning Outcome

Foreword

The purpose of this standard operating procedure (SOP) is to provide a reference point and guidance to all academic staff members of FAHS on peer observation process in order to undertake peer observation of large groups teaching i.e., lectures to enhance quality assurance. This guideline on peer observation for Faculty of Allied Health Sciences (FAHS), KDU, is based on the code of practice on peer observation issued by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of Sri Lanka and along with the consensus among the members of the Internal Quality Assurance Cell of FAHS, KDU who represents all the departments of the faculty. These guidelines are formulated by the IQAC-2022.

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Standard operating protocol for Peer Observation
Faculty of Allied Health Sciences
General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University

Introduction

Peer observation denotes direct peer observation in order to provide feedback given to academic staff members of higher education regarding individual teaching practices, teaching strategies adopted, planning and delivery of lessons and the general teaching and learning environment for improvement of teaching /learning outcomes and the quality of the learning experience.

Peer observation is the practice where a colleague of the academic staff member observes him/her in the act of teaching in order to provide constructive feedback with the intention of assisting the academic staff member to improve and enhance the quality of his/her teaching. Peer observation would complement the practice of obtaining student feedback so that the academic staff member has another reliable source of information regarding the quality of his/her teaching and also suggestions of how it could be improved.

Benefits of Peer Observation

The process of peer observation has the following benefits.

1. Focuses on academic staff member's individual needs and gives an opportunity to learn from and give feedback to peers.
2. It is a core component of creating a professional community and building collective efficacy
3. It can help academic staff members to improve their teaching in ways that better promote student learning.
4. It is an opportunity for continuous professional development.

This document is comprised of two parts, Section "A" and Section "B".

Section "A" gives guidelines for the observer and the observe and information about the peer observation. Section "B" gives the SOP for peer observation process which includes instructions on how to conduct the pre observation, observation, and post observation processes.

Section A

1. General guidelines

1. The objective of peer observation is to improve the teaching skills of the academic staff member
2. The peer observation process should be done in good faith without harming the rights, dignity and the integrity of the individual lecturer who is being observed
3. Peer observation for teaching is not an evaluation or an assessment but a measure designed to help academic staff members to improve their teaching activities. It is a constructive peer feedback process.
4. Peer observation is a highly confidential one-to-one process between an observer and an observee and the confidentiality has to be maintained throughout the entire process.
5. Peer observation should not be conducted unannounced or unscheduled by both the observer and the observee.
6. It is advised to conduct a peer observation of a teacher at least once a semester or at least once a year, preferably before the annual performance evaluation of each academic.
7. Prior to the observation a pre observation meeting between the observer and the observee has to be arranged to discuss the goals of the observation and to set the date for the observation.
8. The peer observation form developed by the IQAC can be used to assist the peer observation process.
9. A post observation meeting can be conducted preferably immediately after the observation session.
10. Approximately one week after the observation session, the observer should approach the observee once he/she is ready with the report. This time duration will allow the observer to reflect on the observation properly.
11. The meeting has to be conducted confidentially in a convenient place for both parties.
12. Observer should first discuss positive aspects of the teaching i.e., constructive feedback. Words, tone and body language should be used to communicate positive performance to improve the outcome of the observation process.
13. The feedback has to be given confidentially and it is not mandatory to show the report to the HOD.

14. It is the responsibility of the observee to take necessary actions to address or to improve any concerns raised by the observer and the time frame for such improvement.
15. The documents of peer observation need to be maintained in an individual file by the observee and he/she is responsible for it.
16. The action plans (If any) of peer observation sessions should be documented so that improvements could be analyzed by the observee over a period of time.
17. A senior lecturer and above can obtain a peer observation from any academic staff member, while lecturers below this grade should obtain an observation from a senior lecturer or above.
18. Peer observation of newly recruited lecturers has to be done once their CTHE is completed.
19. Observee may have the freedom to disagree with the suggestions of the observer.

2. Guidelines and SOPs for Observee

1. The observee has the sole right to choose the observer for the peer observation.
2. The observer has to be identified 2-4 weeks before the observation.
3. The observee has to personally meet the observer and set a date for pre observation meeting.
4. The observer has to explain the goal of the observation to the observee.
5. The observee has to submit the necessary documents to the observer including,
 - a. module details
 - b. ILOs expected to cover
 - c. peer observation form.
6. A convenient date, time and venue for both parties has to be arranged for the peer observation.
7. The seating arrangement of the observer during the session has to be unobtrusive and can be agree upon by the observee and observer.
8. The observee has to take actions to improve his/her teaching according to the comments of the observer.

3. Guidelines and the SOPs for the Observer

1. The observer has to make sure that he/she is capable of addressing the objectives given by the observee for the observation.
2. Observer has to arrive at the setting well in advance on the observation day.
3. Peer observation has to be carried out according to the goals set at the pre observation meeting.
4. The observer should not interrupt the observee during the session.
5. Observer has to take down remarks throughout the session in line with the peer observation form developed by the IQAC-FAHS.
6. The observation feedback has to be goal oriented and constructive.

Section B

1. Structure/sequence of the peer observation process

a. Pre observation

1. Pre observation meeting will help the observer understand the requirement of the observee and identify the elements where the observee needs the most help.
2. The primary goal of this first meeting would be to engage in a dialogue to obtain perspective on the observee's course or module goals, teaching strategies, learning objectives, current issues and challenges in teaching.
3. "What to observe-" should be decided and agreed by both parties.
4. If this is the first observation, it would be useful if the observee can provide some clues and areas about the aspects that need observation. These could be based on information received during student feedback or other feedback mechanisms.
5. For previous peer observation reports can be used if available or if it's a follow up activity

b. Observation

1. The actual observation is the core of the process designed to improve teaching.
2. By this time, the observer and the observee would have discussed what goals or objectives the observer should look for during the peer observation.
3. For the observee to make effective teaching- related decisions, the observer's data collection must be,
 - a. relate to the objectives
 - b. specific
 - c. accurate
 - d. descriptive
 - e. evidence-based.
 - f. Should be carried out using a structured format already approved by the Faculty Board (refer to annexure A)

c. Post Observation

1. The post observation meeting is designed to allow the observee and the observer to discuss the observations. Hence, this meeting should focus on helping the observee to understand the events that transpired during the peer observation.
2. In order for the academic staff member to make effective changes to teaching, the feedback should be,
 - Specific
 - Focused
 - Concrete
 - Action oriented
 - Accurate
 - Clear
 - Honest
 - Positively phrased
3. The peer observation write-up should generate a set of action steps that will positively affect the observee's teaching.
4. This document should be descriptive and non-evaluative.
5. The action plan should serve as a guide for improvement for the observee as well as a basis for follow-up peer observations.

Role of IQAC in peer observation

1. The IQAC does not have the authority to appoint observers to conduct the peer observation process.
2. The IQAC should monitor the process of peer review occurring through the HOD of respective departments.
3. The IQAC has to facilitate academic staff members with workshops and training programs to improve the peer observation process.

End of guidelines

PEER REVIEW FORM

(ON-SITE TEACHING)
FACULTY OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES
GENERAL SIR JOHN KOTELAWALA DEFENCE UNIVERSITY

This peer review form is intended to provide feedback on teaching to academic staff members. It is an opportunity to improve the effectiveness of teaching skills of faculty members and promote engagement of student in learning.

Degree Program:

Intake:

Academic Year and Semester:

Date:

Module Code and Title:

Name of the Academic Staff Member:

When observing the teaching, please take the following criteria into consideration. In each criterion indicate your choice by marking a “√” in the appropriate box.

No.	Criteria	5	4	3	2	1
		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
(1) Verbal/Non-verbal communication						
1	Voice and clarity					
2	Audibility					
3	Pace of delivery					
4	Command of language/ Understandability					
5	Interaction with students /Eye contact, Gestures, etc.					
COMMENTS ON (1):						

(2) Organization					
1	Objectives (Intended learning outcomes) clearly stated				
2	Clear introduction and organization of lesson plan				
3	Connectivity to the previous lesson				
4	Relevance/ importance in context of practice				
5	Clear and logical sequence of topics				
6	Concluded with summarizing main ideas				
7	Overall time management				
COMMENTS ON (2):					
(3) Content					
1	Clarity of main topics and subtopics				
2	Sufficient use of examples				
3	Encouraging students for critical thinking				
4	Emphasis on key points/concepts/ideas				
5	Inclusion of research knowledge/current trends				
COMMENTS ON (3):					
(4) Delivery					
1	Academic staff member's enthusiasm				
2	Confidence of subject				

3	Clarity of visuals and/or handwriting on board					
4	Asking questions and providing time for answers					
5	Chosen delivery method/s to suit the level and size of the class					
6	Motivating the students to ask questions					
COMMENTS ON (4):						

Global Rating Scale for Overall Impression (Place a “√” in the appropriate box)

Very good	
Good	
Average	
Weak	
Very weak	

Debriefing Session

The observers and the academic staff member meet again immediately after the lecture session and review the observation regarding the goal/s the academic staff member set for the day’s session.

This meeting should focus on:

- Academic staff member’s attempt towards goals
- Students’ response towards gaining knowledge
- Areas in which the observer believes the academic staff member is strong and/or has to improve.
- General comments

Comments (strengths, areas need improvement and other concerns):



.....
Signature of the Observer 1

.....
Signature of the Observer 2