

Al-Maktoum College of Higher Education

Peer Review of Teaching – Policy and Procedure

Department/Team	Policy & Procedure
Academic	Policy and Procedure 002
Reference No.	Version No.
ALM/ACD/PAP/002/RV6	5

Approved by:

Board/Committee	Date
Academic Council	26.09.2024

Date of next review:
July 2025

Introduction

1. This Policy and Procedure outlines how the College will conduct peer review of teaching and how the individuals who will be involved in reviews will be identified.

Purpose of Peer Observation

2. The main purpose of engaging in peer review of teaching is to:
 - Enhance ongoing personal practice;
 - Promote reflection on teaching and learning by both the person being observed and the observer;
 - Engage in reflective, constructive and analytical discussion with a peer;
 - Share good practice and allow for ongoing professional development;
 - Enhance new members of staff's teaching practice, and act as a tool for academic development review;
 - Enhance the students' learning experience through the discovery of new ideas for teaching and learning.
3. Unit/Module evaluation should be treated as a separate quality assurance process from peer observation which is a tool for development and enhancement of teaching practice rather than evaluating the performance of academics or a module.
4. Peer review will normally involve classroom observation where appropriate; this might include lectures, seminars, workshops etc., alternative methods may also be necessary (for example when teaching is undertaken by virtual methods).
5. Key features of peer review include:
 - The reviewer - a peer - uses a record sheet for note taking during the review;
 - Benefits derive from constructive feedback and self-reflection – this makes post-review discussion vital;
 - If areas for change/improvement are identified, suggestions for how to bring about the change are needed (time to re-plan the session/ module; attendance at a training workshop; observing a more experienced colleague etc.);
 - Confirmation that all discussions between the academic and observer remain confidential.
6. Peer review may take place-
 - As part of continuing professional development;
 - As part of the probationary period: when a review of inexperienced lecturers is required;
 - As part of personal development, where individuals may seek review of their teaching from peers.
7. Reviews should be flexible and not adopt an audit approach.
8. Positive and constructive feedback is encouraged and areas of development or action points may be highlighted.

The Process

Before the observation

9. Frequency of peer observation may be conducted as follows:
 - Any academic staff may request a peer observation session to support personal development;
 - All new teaching staff to be reviewed in their first year of employment at the College;
 - Selective auditing should take place at the discretion of 'The Academic Registrar'.
10. Staff should be reviewed by an individual nominated by 'The Academic Registrar'.
11. The observer should have access to the unit/module's Moodle site and are provide with the Unit/module specification and/or programme handbook and any other relevant learning materials. Academics and observers should meet to agree the focus of the observation and to discuss the learning outcomes and content of the session being observed.

During the observation

12. The observer should arrive early, be briefly introduced to the class to assure the students they are not being evaluated in any way, and never intervene in any way in the session.
13. The observer should write notes during the meeting, recording their experience, see appendix 1 and appendix 2 for suggested templates.

Following the observation

14. The College must have a means of recording that peer reviews have taken place. Reviewees are responsible for informing 'The Academic Registrar' when observation has been completed.
15. Once the review is carried out (and no later than 2 weeks thereafter) the reviewer's record sheet should be returned to the member of staff being reviewed. The academic and observer should meet to discuss the observation and reflect on any issues or good practice raised.
16. It is the responsibility of the reviewee to reflect on the peer observation report and discuss any areas with their line manager where appropriate.
17. Where there are examples of good practice it is recommended this be flagged and shared with the Boards of Study and Teaching, Learning and Student Experience committee to enhance teaching practice at the College.

Appendix 1
Template for Peer Observation of Teaching

Observer		Lecturer	
Unit/Module		Level	
Programme		Mode of Study	
Type of Activity			
Lecture <input type="checkbox"/>		IT Session <input type="checkbox"/>	
Seminar <input type="checkbox"/>		VLE Session <input type="checkbox"/>	
Discussion <input type="checkbox"/>		Other <input type="checkbox"/>	
If other, indicate type of session:			
Date of observation and duration		Number of Students	
Additional Information or Comments			

Appendix 2

Checklist for observation (indicative guide only)

Area of observation	Observer's comments
---------------------	---------------------

Learning Outcomes	
Was it made clear to the students what they were expected to learn by the end of the session (cognitive, subject-specific, practical, transferable, professional knowledge and skills)?	
Structure	
Was the material well organised, so that the students could follow the structure or sequence adopted? Were key points clearly signposted?	
Level	
Was the class pitched at a level the students could cope with? Was any provision made for those who experienced difficulties?	
Clarity	
Was the class clearly presented? Were explanatory comments readily understood by the students?	
Use of examples	
Were examples or illustrations used whenever helpful to students in grasping key points? Did these examples engage with students' knowledge and interests?	
Handouts and other materials	
Did the lecturer make appropriate use of handouts or other study materials? If so, were these helpful to the students in summarising, amplifying or reinforcing the material in class?	
Audio-visual aids	
Were audio-visual aids used wherever needed in conveying the subject matter? Did these promote students' understanding?	
Audibility	
Could the lecturer be clearly heard, even by students at the back and sides of the room?	

Pace and timing	
Was the material presented at an appropriate speed? Did the lecturer keep to time?	
Interaction	
Did the lecturer find scope for interacting with students e.g. by giving opportunities for questions or comments, or by drawing upon student interest, concerns or experiences?	