

Peer-Supported Review of Practice

Purpose

Peer-supported review of practice (PSRP) provides staff involved in teaching and pedagogic practice with the opportunity to engage formally and informally in dialogue about the scholarship and practice of teaching and learning. The process is intended to make a significant contribution to an individual staff member's professional development and to enhance the teaching and learning process across the University.

Overview

This policy sets out the objectives, expectations and principles that underpin PSRP at the University. Responsibility for implementing PSRP is devolved to Schools (and professional support departments that wish to implement such a scheme). Individual Schools have flexibility in designing the scheme to meet their own needs and priorities, but there should be a commonality of purpose and principles. Guidance on implementing a scheme at School/Departmental level is included.

PSRP is intended to be all-encompassing for the various forms of staff development that occur throughout the University. PSRP is about formalising a learning conversation about an initiative, approach, or experience between two peers, who meet as colleagues, both of whom will have experience of teaching. This is so that the colleague can support the development of their colleague's learning and teaching. This means that the principal role of the colleague is not to give 'feedback' in the traditional sense of the word, but rather to ask questions which will encourage reflection and analysis of their colleague's practice.

PSRP gives staff control over the choice of topic of the review, and to a large extent the findings, however, if it is to be outcome-based please ensure an appropriate baseline measure is in place to enable an appropriate comparison, please see the appendix for examples of how this can be undertaken. PSRP is intended to be non-judgemental, and this approach is key to engagement. The other benefit of this approach is its inclusive nature, as it can be adopted by professional/service departments so that all staff involved in supporting student learning can be included.

Scope

The PSRP policy applies to all Schools within the University. Professional support departments engaged in supporting student learning are encouraged to adopt a PSRP Scheme.

The Policy

1 General

1.1 All university staff who teach or support student learning are expected to engage in personal and professional development to develop both knowledge and understanding of their subject area as well as their teaching and learning practice and this is one way it can be documented.

1.2 The Peer Supported Review of Practice (PSRP) is intended to provide space and structure for professional reflection and dialogue to enhance teaching practice for the benefit of individual staff, their peers, and the learning experiences of students.

1.3 PSRP is designed to be supportive and developmental in nature and provide the opportunity for peers to interact with each other in a teaching and learning context. It has the following defined purposes:

- a. To enable staff to reflect on their own teaching practice and take responsibility for their ongoing professional development needs.
- b. To provide an opportunity for staff to learn about different teaching and learning styles, approaches, and methods (a cross-University approach is encouraged).
- c. To engage staff in reflective and supported discussions about pedagogic practice.
- d. To share and disseminate effective or good practice with a view to enhancing the teaching and learning experiences of students.

1.4 Each School is required to establish and implement, on an annual basis, a PSRP scheme.

1.5 It is expected that all staff involved in teaching and learning will take part in at least two PSRP activities per year (one as peer support (critical friend, sounding board etc) and one as the supported). This includes associate lecturers, and research students who contribute to teaching and learning support, however, it should be viewed as an opportunity for development and there is expectation that it is undertaken. Peer-supported review can be of any activity related to learning or supporting learning, including lectures, seminars, workshops, practical classes, setting up of online sessions, supervision, tutorials etc.

2 Guiding Principles of PSRP

- a. PSRP respects the professional autonomy of staff and gives control over the process to peers.
- b. PSRP requires the staff to undertake self-evaluation through reflection on their practice.
- c. PSRP is a developmental process designed to **support** peer learning among colleagues.
- d. PSRP requires colleagues to work collaboratively based on mutual trust and support.
- e. The focus of PSRP is on the enhancement of professional practice, leading to an outstanding student learning experience.
- f. While conversation and dialogue are at the heart of the process, other available evidence should also be made accessible to the colleague supporting, e.g. online materials.
- g. PSRP needs to be workable for participating staff and should not be burdensome in terms of time and administration.
- h. Schools are responsible for implementing PSRP and for reporting annually on the process in the School Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement Evaluation Development Plan.

3 Recording and Reporting

3.1 A record of the review is produced (using the MS Form (<https://forms.office.com/e/deSzvNF3th>) which has a range of through to an open submission). Records will be collated centrally, and a copy will be provided to the School Learning and Teaching Co-ordinator and retained as evidence of the process.

3.2 The School Learning and Teaching Coordinator (or nominee) will write an overview report on the implementation of PSRP as part of the School Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement Evaluation Development Plan. The report should comment on implementation, participation (including the number and percentage of staff engaged in PSRP), and its key outcomes, together with the identification of any professional development needs/plans for the School or groups of staff.

4 Suggested Plan for Implementation

4.1 *Each School's Learning and Teaching coordinator ensures all members of the School/professional support department involved in teaching or supporting learning are assigned a peer. For example, this might involve organising inter-disciplinary/subject cluster groups, each with a designated coordinator.*

4.2 *Groups might be arranged to allow for as wide a range of practices and experience as possible or in line with the strategic Learning and Teaching priorities for each School or the University, e.g. those interested in learning technologies or staff who are seeking to develop a problem-based learning approach to learning and teaching. There may be a group coordinator, whose role is to ensure each member of staff knows who they are reviewing or collaborating with. The cluster could be organised on the 'daisy chain' model i.e. one person supports another member of the cluster, but not reciprocally.*

4.3 **NB** *For professional support departments wishing to take part in PSRP, line managers are to put appropriate arrangements in place.*

4.4 *Prior to the review, colleagues should meet briefly (or communicate via email) to establish the focus. The focus could involve observation of teaching or scrutiny of related professional practice, e.g. innovative assessment practice. The scheduling of the PSRP session or meeting does need to include time for an undisturbed, private, professional conversation.*

4.5 *Those supporting have a responsibility to listen and assist (and in some cases observe). Those supporting can identify strengths and achievements, but also question which prompts reflection and encourages reflective practice.*

4.6 *PSRP is recorded, the staff member completing the record should save a copy and completed forms will be shared with Learning and Teaching coordinators.*

4.7 *The Learning and Teaching Coordinator collates the forms and writes a brief overview reporting on the implementation of the School PSRP scheme in the School Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement Evaluation report. Reports should identify the number and percentage of staff engaged in PSRP, and its key outcomes, together with identification of any professional development needs/plans.*

Related Policies, Documents or Webpages

MS Form (<https://forms.office.com/e/deSzvNF3th>)

Appendix

TASO Evaluation Guidance overview: <https://taso.org.uk/insights-and-evaluation/our-approach-to-evaluation/>.

The following rapid review from TASO summarises a range of psychosocial intermediate outcomes, how they can be measured and their associations with higher education outcomes: [Understanding the impact of interventions to address inequality in the student experience](#).

Approval/Review Table

Item	Notes
Version Number	2.0
Date of Approval	11.12.2024.
Approved by	LTSEC
Effective from	Immediate
Policy Officer	University Lead for Continuing Professional Development in Learning and Teaching
Department	Directorate of Quality and Educational Development
Review date	30/07/2027
Last reviewed	30/07/2024
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)	n/a
Accessibility Checked	12/08/2024

Recent changes

Committee	Date	Change
LTSEC	11 th December 2024	A complete review of this Policy was carried out during the summer of 2024. Several changes were made including the name of the Policy and the Policy Officer.
Academic Board	29 th January 2025	Policy completely reviewed and updated. Approved at AB, following approval December LTSEC meeting.