

Teaching Observation Policy

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Category	Academic Quality and Standards
Approved by	Board of Governors

Abstract:
The objective of this policy is to enhance the quality of teaching and learning by providing a structured framework for evaluating and improving teaching practices. The policy supports academic management within Fairfield School of Business to assure the quality of teaching and ensure a high-quality student experience.

Applicability:
This policy applies to all taught provision at Fairfield School of Business (FSB).

1. Introduction

The purpose of the Teaching Observation Policy is to clearly identify the way that lesson observations are used and managed at Fairfield School of Business (FSB). The policy provides staff with the opportunity for reflection and evaluation of their teaching and assessment practice

As a Higher Education provider FSB places high value on the quality of learning and teaching within its campuses and utilises assessed and peer observation of teaching to provide opportunities for feedback, reflection, mentoring, and staff development.

The Teaching Observation Policy is designed to enhance the quality of teaching by providing an effective framework for the identification and dissemination of good teaching practice and identification of areas of concern.

The primary objectives of teaching observations are to:

- develop new teachers as pedagogical professionals in line with sector expectations,
- ensure that experienced teachers are fully supported in their teaching practice and their professional development,
- maintain appropriate professional standards and ensure FSB uses teaching observation to ensure that the student learning experience is of a consistently high standard and on a par with the standards of delivery offered by UK higher education institutions,
- develop dynamic approaches to learning and teaching that are: student centred, creative and innovative,
- identify and value the variety and quality of learning, teaching and assessment practice,
- assessed observation and peer feedback forms part of an on-going appraisal process for the School's academic staff, enabling good practice to be identified, good practice to be shared, and for concerns to be identified and support implemented.

2. Scope

As part the Learning and Teaching Framework FSB has operated an Observation of Teaching Scheme and a Peer Review. Assessed Lesson Observation is usually undertaken during the autumn term and Peer Observation is usually undertaken during spring term. In the case of both types of observation, teaching sessions under observation can include large groups, small groups, one to one tutorial sessions, seminars or lectures. Observation may also include discussions on assessment practices or plans for other innovations. These procedures will apply to both face-to-face and online teaching activities.

The two approaches are complementary, and can be differentiated:

i. Observation of Teaching:

- Experienced staff trained to provide constructive feedback on teaching.
- Taught session where observee is delivering academic material to students in a lecture/classroom situation.
- Improvement of academic practice and enhancement of the learning experience.
- Teaching-related actions for improvement.
- Personalised reflection and expert diagnosis.
- Effective central management, enabling academic managers to have oversight of the performance in their area and highlight support needs and areas of good practice.

ii. Peer Observation:

- Academic colleagues from a common subject or discipline will carry out the observation.
- Covers range of academic roles including assessment, project supervision and use of technology.
- Enables critical discourse and self- reflection and sharing of good practice.
- Discussion and analysis of pedagogies.
- Shared perception.
- Teaching is valued and discussed amongst academics.

3. Teaching observation process:

The Dean of Teaching and Learning and the Associate Deans have operational responsibility for the planning and execution of Teaching Observations and Peer Observations and will jointly organise a timetable for observations to take place on campuses, including the observers for the semester and deadlines for completion of observation reports.

Observers should be prepared and guided in the provision of constructive feedback to academic staff on their teaching. Preparation should ensure that observers are familiar with the teaching observation process and are able to provide feedback that will enable the observee to enhance/improve their teaching practice.

Teaching observation pre-planning will usually involve:

1. a pre-meeting with the teacher,
2. the teaching session observation itself,
3. a debrief meeting.

The Lesson Plan must be submitted to the observer at least 24 hours prior to the observation; it is the observer's responsibility to obtain this from the teacher.

When the observations have taken place, observers will complete the Learning and Teaching Observation form for each observation.

Observers must complete an observation outcomes report per campus; good practice must be recorded for wider dissemination through the Learning & Teaching Forums.

4. Post-Observation Coaching and Development Support

The purpose of teaching observations is to support professional growth, enhance teaching practice, and improve learner outcomes. Where an observation identifies areas for development, observees will be offered targeted support through the School's Coaching Team.

Role of the Coaching Team

The Coaching Team provides a developmental, supportive, and non-judgemental approach to professional learning. Its purpose is to work collaboratively with observees to build confidence, develop teaching practice, and address areas identified through the observation process.

Coaching support may include:

- One-to-one coaching sessions focused on agreed development priorities.
- Joint action planning with clear, measurable objectives.
- Classroom-based support, including team teaching, modelling of effective practice, and peer observation opportunities.
- Guidance on teaching, learning, assessment, and classroom management strategies.
- Signposting to relevant professional development activities, training, and resources.
- Support with reflective practice and evaluation of progress.

Referral to Coaching Support

Where an observer identifies areas requiring development, they may recommend coaching support as part of the post-observation action plan. Referrals will be discussed with the observee and agreed as a positive developmental intervention designed to support improvement.

The level and duration of coaching will be proportionate to the identified development needs and will be regularly reviewed to ensure progress is being made.

Monitoring and Review

Coaching activities and agreed actions will be documented within the observee's development plan. Progress will be reviewed through follow-up discussions and, where appropriate, further observation activity to evaluate the impact of the support provided.

The focus of all coaching interventions will be on continuous improvement, professional growth, and the sharing of effective practice. Coaching is intended as a supportive process rather than a performance management measure and should be viewed as an opportunity for professional development and enhancement of teaching quality.

Confidentiality

Coaching conversations will be treated with appropriate confidentiality. Information will only be shared with relevant managers where necessary to support agreed development objectives, monitor progress, or fulfil organisational requirements.

5. Peer Observations

Peer Observation are intended to:

- promote a culture in which good teaching is valued and to enhance teaching quality at the point of delivery by encouraging reflection on practice,
- provide a supportive and constructive framework for the college's teaching staff to monitor, reflect upon and improve the quality of their teaching,
- enhance the quality of teaching by providing an effective framework for the identification and dissemination of good teaching practice,
- encourage discussion of ideas and good practice is an essential aspect of peer observation. Discourse helps to develop reflection and innovation for both the observer and the observed,
- ensure that the quality of teaching and learning at FSB is continually refreshed and enhanced.

The School requires all members of staff undergoing Peer Observation or Teaching Observations are treated in a fair and consistent manner.

Peer Observation Process:

i. Each academic year, staff members will engage in peer observation in accordance with FSB's guidelines. Staff will be paired-up according to subject or discipline,

ii. A discussion prior to the observation, which includes an outline of the lesson plan, content and focus to the observation. This provides an opportunity for both parties to discuss what areas of practice they wish to focus their development on,

iii. Observations should be discreet and have minimal impact on the teaching activity,

iv. Post-observation discussion should take place privately, not during the observation,

v. The observer and observee should collectively identify and agree on the aspects of good practice and developmental needs identified through the observation.

vi. Observers must send the relevant completed form with the notes of the observation to the Campus Dean by the deadline specified at the start of the process. A copy of the Lesson Plan must be attached with the form.

vii. The Camps Dean will produce a summary report, drawing together the notes made during the observations.

viii. All documentation (individual peer observations, lesson plans and campus reports) must be returned to the Quality Office. Outcomes will be passed, presented and discussed at Learning and Teaching Forum.

Dissemination:

The Campus Dean will produce a summary report of graded and peer observations covering all findings including areas of good practice and areas for development in order to inform teaching and learning at a strategic level.

The report will be presented at the Learning and Teaching Forum where the reports will be considered. The reports provide evidence of development and enhancement of the learning and teaching practices at FSB in line with Quality Code requirements.

6. Review and Update

a. This policy and the related procedures will be reviewed annually by the Dean of Teaching and Learning to ensure it remains effective and in alignment with all applicable laws and guidance.

b. Changes to this policy will be ratified by the School's Board of Governors.

Document governance

Document owner*	**Dean of Learning and Teaching**
Consulted parties**	Dean of School
Next update due	July 2027
Classification	Public

**Responsible for updates to this content.*
*** To be consulted on updates to this content.*

Versions

Version no.	Description of Changes	Approved by	Date
1-1.3	Original version and subsequent annual edits	Board of Governors	Oct 2019 Oct 2020 Oct 2021
2.0	All sections revised; document rearranged for clarity.	Board of Governors	Jan 2022
2.1	No major changes, review date put forward to September 2023.	Board of Governors	Sep 2022
2.2	No major changes, review date put forward to September 2025.	Board of Governors	Jan 2024
2.3	No major changes. Formatting of document.	Board of Governors	July 2026

