

## School of Law – Peer Review and College Review of Teaching

### Introduction

Academic staff are encouraged to engage in peer review of each other's teaching on a regular basis to provide enhanced awareness of differences in teaching techniques and approaches and to provide opportunities for renewal and improvement in teaching through the process of critical peer review.

There are two teaching review processes that run concurrently in the School of Law:

1. Peer Review (School of Law) – our standard review process that has run for a number of years
2. College Review (Faculty of Humanities) – an enhanced form of peer review

With effect from January 2015, a new Faculty Peer Review of Teaching Policy was introduced on a phased basis. Each School has its own Peer Review College of Teaching. This will include a limited nominated group of teaching colleagues who will also review colleagues' teaching in other disciplines. When the policy is fully implemented, there will be two reviewers: a member of academic staff from within the School and a member of academic staff from another teaching area who has been trained to assess teaching fairly across the range of disciplines within the Faculty and to provide thoughtful and sensitive feedback to reviewees using a Humanities report form. These colleagues will be selected on the basis of demonstrating their broad teaching experience and their training will ensure integrity, rigour and consistency in their approach. The reports of peer review sessions/ observations will be copied to Teaching and Learning Support Services. On an annual basis a Faculty panel will review all forms received and summarise findings within an anonymised annual report. The report will be considered by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee to identify and share best practice and identify common trends with regard to training and development needs.

For more details see:

<http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/humnet/our-services/teaching-and-learning/policy/documents/#d.en.422077>

There are two key differences between these processes that reflect the enhanced nature of the College Review process:

1. College Review is conducted by two colleagues, one of whom will be from the School's Peer Review College
2. Reports produced as a result of College Review will be shared with the Humanities Teaching and Learning Support Services

### When will your teaching be reviewed?

Every member of teaching staff should normally have a Peer Review of their teaching at least once in every two years. They will also be reviewed under the College Review process once every six years. Peer review can also take place more often if, for example, applicants for promotion want to use the

results of peer review in their applications or if it is felt that an individual colleague would benefit from additional support and guidance.

For those staff on probation, teaching will normally be reviewed on an annual basis as follows:

Year One – Peer Review  
Year Two – College Review  
Year Three – Peer Review

Should probation be extended to a fourth year, there will be a College Review of teaching.

### **Who will be the reviewer?**

For those staff on probation, Peer Review will normally be undertaken by the mentor. Other staff will normally be allocated a reviewer who teaches in a broadly similar area to the reviewee.

In the case of College Review, there are currently three colleagues who have completed the Faculty training: Becki Bennett, Phil Handler and Claire Fox. The pool of College Reviewers will be expanded over the next few years. College reviews will be undertaken by one of these trained reviewers, plus another reviewer who teaches in a broadly similar area to the reviewee.

A rota for teaching review will normally be circulated before Reading Week in Semester 1 identifying who is to be reviewed, and by whom.

### **What is the scope of Peer and College Review?**

Peer and College Review should take a holistic view of the reviewee's teaching, considering written materials and online and blended learning resources as well as observing at least one face-to-face session.

Reviewers should consider:

- Design of course materials (written documentation), such as the course unit outline, content, learning outcomes and assessment requirements WHERE APPROPRIATE, recognising that not all reviewees will be responsible for and have input in to course materials
- The balance of teaching methods employed and whether it is appropriate for the stated aims and learning outcomes.
- Methods of feedback & assessment, including materials provided online, hand-outs, assignments or exam scripts, assignment guidance and marking schemes etc.
- Online & blended learning resources.

The reviewee will arrange for reviewer/s to be granted access to relevant Blackboard materials for the required time period via the local PSS staff with Campus Solutions access. Please contact Zoe Day in the TSSO who will ensure that reviewers have access: [zoe.day@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:zoe.day@manchester.ac.uk)

### **What happens after your teaching has been reviewed?**

The purpose of teaching review is primarily to ensure that colleagues are provided with any support that may be needed and to share best practice in the School. Reviews can also be used to provide evidence of teaching excellence for the purposes of promotion and, where appropriate, teaching quality for probation.

A teaching review form should be completed for each peer or college review (form attached). This is an updated version of the Peer Review form that was used previously. The reviewee should be provided with a copy of the completed form and be given the opportunity to comment and discuss the feedback with the reviewer/s. Forms should be returned to the Staff Resources Office and will be made available to the Deputy Head of School and the Director of Teaching and Learning.

In the case of College Review, where there are two reviewers, ONE form should be submitted. Reviewers should reach agreement on the content of the feedback.

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