

## Peer and Stakeholder observation guidelines

The key elements of the DClinPsy **peer & stakeholder observation** system are outlined below. This should be used in conjunction with the teaching observation feedback sheet.

### **Ethos**

- The **peer & stakeholder observation system** is based on the idea that **anyone can observe anyone else**.
- The **aim of observation** is to **help develop the process of learning and teaching** (use of teaching aids, interactive/didactic style, and achievement of learning outcomes) and is **not about advising on the content** of the session.
- The **aim** of observation is: to **help** individual **teachers develop their skills and sessions**; to **help** us **develop a better understanding of teaching across the programme**, and to **share best practice**.
- **Being observed** during teaching is **intended to be helpful** development-focused process rather than something that should be seen as judgemental or anxiety provoking.

## Organisation of the peer observation system

- Peer **observation of teaching** will be **co-ordinated by the Curriculum Tutor and** by the **programme assistant** for teaching.
- **Every member of the programme team** engaged in teaching in a given academic year **should be observed**. In addition, **at least 10% of external teachers** should be observed **every year**.
- If an **external teacher requests to be observed**, the course will **do their best to facilitate** this.
- **External teaching** sessions are **nominated for observation by strand team leads** or others **via the Curriculum Tutor**. When **selected**, the **teachers** of those sessions should be **informed with as much notice** as possible and sent information about the peer observation process.
- **All programme staff** are expected to **conduct observations of teaching**. The number of observations each staff member will be required to conduct will be calculated according to need, but is anticipated to be in the region of **at least three observations per academic year** for a **full time staff member**.
- **Other stakeholders** of the programme are also **encouraged to become observers**, and the **programme provides training in conducting observations** to those interested. **Newly trained observers** will be **invited to shadow and /or conduct their first observations in tandem** with a member of programme staff.
- **Observations** should **last for a minimum of one hour**.

## The process of observation & feedback

1. **Prior to the teaching** session (on the day or beforehand) the observer and teacher should **meet to discuss the observation**. The **observer** should be **given a copy of the teaching plan** for the session. The **pre-observation conversation** should **include**:
  - A discussion about **which section** of the **teaching** it would be **most helpful to observe**.
  - The **overall context** of the **teaching** and what the **teacher is aiming to achieve** (including the learning outcomes for the session or observed section)
  - Some **information about what area(s)** the **teacher would most value feedback** in.
  - The **observer** should **use the information** to **complete the first part** of the **observation feedback sheet**.
2. At the **start of the observation**, the observer(s) should **introduce themselves to the trainees** and **explain why they are there**.
3. **During the observation** the **observer should not take any active part** in the teaching session. They should **make notes** on the **observation feedback sheet**
4. **At the end of the teaching** (or **at a convenient break** after the observation is complete) the teacher and observer(s) must **meet** so that the **feedback** on the teaching can be **given**, and to **complete the final page of the feedback sheet**.
5. The **observer** must then **return the feedback sheet to the programme office**.

## Points to remember when you are debriefing:

- **Focus on behaviour** rather than the person.
- Be specific.
- **Give feedback as soon as possible** after the event.
- **Feedback** should be **confidential** unless otherwise agreed.
- Give **positive feedback first**.
- Be aware of the **balance** between **positive** and **constructive feedback**.
- What is **important** is **how** and **when** you give feedback **not just** a matter of **what you say**.
- Always allow **those being debriefed** to **say something** about their session **first before you give feedback**.
- Make sure **teachers have the opportunity** to **highlight problems** and **possible solutions first**.
- **Effective feedback** should be **focused on the amount of information** that **the receiver can make use of** rather than the amount you feel capable of giving.

**[Peer observation feedback sheet](#)**

**[Peer and stakeholder teaching observation guidelines](#)**