

**Policy for Annual Observation of Teaching Practice at the University of West London**

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| **Responsibility of** | Human Resources and ExPERT Academy |
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| **Impact Assessment:** | |

1. **Overview** 
   1. UWL takes a proactive approach in ensuring that the education we deliver is of a high quality. One of the ways in which we achieve this is through regular developmental engagement with staff through classroom observations, appraisal and continuous professional development activities.
   2. Our approach is transparent and aligned with institutional and national priorities in relation to teaching excellence and student outcomes.
   3. Our approach ensures a system which is supportive and through monitoring and recognition, encourages continuous improvement whilst informing senior managers of the developmental needs of our staff.
   4. The purpose of our teaching observation policy is to ensure that staff have informed feedback on their practice and advice on how to continuously improve, whilst ensuring that as an institution we can recognise outstanding practice where it exists.
   5. The teaching observation process ensures consistent implementation across the institution and ties in monitoring with the annual performance appraisal process providing the required impact on performance and recognition.
   6. This new policy and process ensures consistence in practice and in the dissemination of its outcomes.
   7. In order to ensure compliance with external quality assessment regimes, this policy describes how observation of academic practice will be implemented across the institution and how it dovetails with the annual appraisal cycle.
2. **Definitions**
   1. The Observer is the individual undertaking the observation of a colleagues teaching practice.
   2. The Participant is the individual being observed.
   3. The School refers to all academic units (schools and colleges within UWL) and any professional departments who engage in substantive teaching activities.
   4. School executive refers to those in senior positions responsible for managing and directing the activities of the school/college.
3. **The Observation Process**
   1. The observation process is supported by the Teaching hub <https://campuspress.uwl.ac.uk/teaching/teaching/annual-teaching-observation/> which provides access to this policy and the UWL CPD framework. The second site: <https://campuspress.uwl.ac.uk/teaching/teaching/teaching-observation-process/> provides detail of the process, observer and participant handbooks and the forms that must be completed. Everyone is required to use this site when undertaking observations.
   2. The observation will be undertaken by a member of the individual School Executive who has completed the mandatory training for observers delivered by the ExPERT academy.

* 1. The process is designed to ensure continuous improvement and all data contained in the forms will be analysed by specified members of the Human Resources team and the ExPERT Academy. This is to ensure that relevant information is relayed to Schools, to line managers (for development needs and target setting) and to the Academic Development team in ExPERT to inform the continuous professional development opportunities offered.
  2. For GDPR purposes the data will only be retained for one year post the observation but it will be used to inform reports focussing on examples of good practice and where development is required to help staff address any development needs identified as part of the process.

1. **Being observed**
   1. All those who teach (with the exception of those who teach on apprenticeship programmes or who are on the Pg Cert in professional Academic Practice or the Academic Professional Apprenticeship) must be observed, as a minimum, once every two years within their school. However, best practice is annual observation and where developmental needs are identified, a further observation must be carried out post development.

* 1. Observations begin in semester one (wherever possible). Where development needs are identified, the participant will usually undergo a further observation in semester 2, prior to their appraisal. Wherever possible, the two observations should be carried out by the same observer.
  2. The two observations and any improvements in practice observed between the 2 observations as well as any further improvements required must form part of the appraisal process together with other components of feedback.
  3. Where a development need is identified, the participant must demonstrate completion of that development within the agreed timeframe. It is the line managers responsibility to discuss this at the participants appraisal meeting.
  4. The focus of subsequent observations will be to determine if the individual’s development needs have been met and, where applicable, to feed into the monitoring for those on apprenticeships.

1. **Reporting and compliance.**
   1. A report of observations undertaken, the findings for each school (including the identification of good practice) and the impact of any development undertaken will be provided by HR and the ExPERT Academy to relevant institutional committees with responsibility for ensuring the continuous improvement of teaching and learning for students and apprentices.
   2. Schools will be required to report on their level of compliance with the process and identify areas where good progress has been made and excellent practice has been identified.