

**Peer Review and Enhancement of  
Learning Teaching and Assessment  
Framework  
University of Suffolk**

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## Scope of Framework

The University Peer Review and Enhancement of Learning and Teaching framework provides developmental opportunities for all staff delivering learning teaching and assessment on degree programmes and on apprenticeships at the University of Suffolk. This framework is applicable to staff working both within Schools and Professional Services.

## The Peer Review and Enhancement (PRE) of Learning, Teaching, and Assessment Framework

PRE forms part of our commitment to the delivery of high-quality learning, teaching and assessment. It is a vehicle of Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) for driving improvements and fulfilling our commitments as detailed in the Learning, Teaching, & Assessment Strategy.

PRE brings balance to, and compliments, CELT's wider approach to professional development, connecting directly with 'in-practice' delivery and the student learning experience. The framework provides the essential structures for sharing best practice, peer-coaching, curriculum development, and professional and peer learning. The flexible design accommodates different contexts whilst not becoming burdensome, encouraging excellence and innovation in professional practice throughout the university through a range of peer review activities. There is a scarcity of research into the effectiveness of professional learning approaches specifically in UK-based Higher Education Institutions, and it is difficult to isolate and attribute the impact of specific approaches to outcomes. However, the principles of PRE at the University of Suffolk (including promotion of peer-learning and collegiality, structured autonomy, reflection upon practice and follow-up) align with CPD design features which are said to have a demonstrable and sustained positive impact upon aspects which mediate the quality of the student learning experience broadly in the education sector (Cordingly *et al*, 2015; De Rijdt *et al*, 2013; Kneale *et al*, 2016; O'Leary *et al*; 2019; Roxa *et al*, 2011).

Cordingly, P., Higgins, S., Greany, T., Buckler, N., Coles-Jordan, D., Crisp, B., Coe, R., and Saunders, L. (2015) Developing great teaching - Lessons from the international reviews into effective professional development. Teacher Development Trust.

De Rijdt, D., Stes, A., van der Vleuten, C. and Dochy, F. (2013) Influencing variables and moderators of transfer of learning to the workplace within the area of staff development in higher education. Educational Research Review, 8 (1) 48-74.

Kneale, P., Winter, J., Turner, R., Spowart, L., Hughes, J., McKenna, C., and Muneer, R. (2016) Evaluating teaching development in higher education – 'Towards impact assessment: Literature review'. Higher Education Academy.

O’Leary, M., Smith, R., Cul, V., and Dakka, F. (2019) The role of leadership in prioritising and improving the quality of teaching and learning in further education. Project for Further Education Trust for Leadership.

Roxa, T., Martensson, K., and Alveteg, M. (2011) Understanding and influencing teaching and learning cultures at university: a network approach. Higher Education, 62, 99-111.

### Peer Review and Enhancement of Learning Teaching and Assessment of Apprenticeships

Delivery of learning teaching and assessment on apprenticeships can take a number of forms; peer observation, lesson observation, review observation, deep dives, learning walks, assessment and feedback health checks, and external / cross university and PgCAP. These different activities are designed to ensure that the University has clear sight of the quality of delivery and its impact on learners in achieving their learning targets. The University also has expectations in relation to the quality of intentional design in asynchronous and synchronous activities in the OLE, and for the design of assessment and delivery of feedback.

#### *Types of observation and quality enhancement activity.*

Type	Scheduler	When?	Description	Notice period
Peer Review	Peer & Partner	Anytime	Directed peer observations are a good way of sharing good practice and supporting improvement. These can be used in a targeted way as an action following formal observation.	Agreed with manager/allocated observer. PRE observation weeks.
Lesson Observations	Manager/Quality Assurance/CELT	PRE observation weeks	At least one observation per year. However, more than one observation per year may be undertaken if required.  Verbal and written feedback. Observers will comment on teaching, learning and assessment, and key strengths and areas for development will be identified.  Professional discussion considering planning practices and meeting student needs.  Action plans are set and discussed.  Actions are followed up within 8 weeks and further observations may be required.	Sessions will be observed within the observation window, with at least 5 working days’ notice.
1-to-1 Tripartite, Personal Academic Coaching (PAC), or review observation	Manager/Quality Assurance/CELT	Anytime	Practice Educators will have one review observed per year.  Verbal and written feedback. Observers will comment on strengths and areas for development from the review.  Professional discussion considering planning practices and meeting student needs.  Actions are followed up within 8 weeks and further observations may be required.	Sessions will be observed within the observation window, with at least 5 working days’ notice, with the expectation that the student is also informed in advance by their reviewer/ Practice Educator/ or PAC.

Deep dives	Manager/Quality Assurance/CELT	Throughout year	Formal observations to validate local judgements and provide further feedback about performance in an area of the university. Formative and summative assessment and feedback health checks. Discussion with staff and students for insight into the quality of the student experience and progress. Deep dive activity will be organised in conjunction with continuous monitoring activity.	Deep dive will be announced with notice given at least 5 working days before. Any scheduled learning activity can be observed during this period.
Learning Walks	Manager/Quality Assurance/CELT	Any time	Short visits may be themed (e.g. induction, learner progress, English and maths development, attendance etc.). A learning walk template will capture the main strengths and areas for development from the learning walk.	Unannounced or short notice.
External / dual observations	Manager/Quality Assurance/CELT/ External stakeholders/ Representatives from regulatory bodies.	Any time	Observations may be focused on one particular theme and will be used to gain an understanding of cross-university strengths or areas for improvement in relation to teaching, learning and assessment practice. The internal observation team will undertake regular standardisation and moderation activity and will also undertake some dual observation with the observation team each year.	Unannounced or short notice
PgCAP	Manager / Quality Assurance / CELT / PgCAP delivery team	Any time	Principally concerned with helping the course participant to reflect on and develop their practice and as a result are carried out by a member of the course team or an allocated mentor. Observations are a requirement of Advance HE authentication of practice.	As scheduled in the programme.

### *Expectations for observations*

1. All staff teaching on Apprenticeships are required to have at least one live lesson observation each year, via one of the observation types defined above.
2. All staff teaching on Apprenticeships are required to complete one additional PRE reviewing one of the following:
  - Application and use of blended learning, and specifically use of Brightspace (e.g., application of standards, design of content for synchronous / asynchronous learning, inclusion of live streamed / recorded teaching sessions).
  - Review of delivery of a Personal Academic Coaching (PAC) session or Tripartite review.
  - Review of formative or summative assessment and feedback.
3. PRE will be undertaken by one of the following, dependent on the area to be reviewed, or learning walk to be undertaken, and following training to be provided by the Head of Quality Enhancement and TEF:
  - Associate Dean from any School
  - Apprenticeships Quality Manager
  - Senior Lecturer Learning and Teaching Enhancement

- Head of Quality Enhancement and TEF
  - Director of Learning and Teaching
  - External stakeholders approved by the Director of Learning and Teaching
  - Director of Apprenticeships
  - Heads of Apprenticeship or Head of Subject (where there is no Head of Apprenticeship)
- \*The Heads of Apprenticeships/Subjects will be allocated 50% of observations outside of their own respective discipline.

Note, members of the University Board of Directors are not expected to undertake learning walks, but instead delegate responsibility to those listed above who are considered leaders and managers in learning, teaching and assessment practices or the quality assurance of them.

4. All reviews will be documented using a standardised proforma. The document will record areas of good practice and areas for development. Where there is need for significant improvement, an action plan will be developed and reviewed through additional PRE activity and if required, through annual performance management processes. The Head of Quality Enhancement and TEF and Apprenticeships Quality Manager should also be notified following the observation feedback meeting.
5. The observee must receive verbal and written feedback within 5 working days of the observation activity taking place.
6. Observation records must be sent to the Head of Quality Enhancement and TEF and Apprenticeships Quality Manager within 10 working days of the activity taking place.
7. All new observers will undertake a dual observation with either the Head of Quality Enhancement and TEF and Apprenticeships Quality Manager for their first observation as part of observer training. Observers who have received observation training previously will undertake at least one dual observation with another member of the observation team each year as part of ongoing standardisation activity.
8. Guidance for conducting and participating in PRE for Apprenticeships is published at: [Peer Review - Development and Enhancement - Learning and Teaching at University of Suffolk \(uos.ac.uk\)](https://www.uos.ac.uk/peer-review-development-and-enhancement-learning-and-teaching)

### **PRE of non-apprenticeship delivery**

The peer review and enhancement of learning teaching and assessment for non-apprenticeship programmes includes on annual observation of in class activity e.g., lecture or seminar (on campus or online) and one additional area of practice.

PRE will be completed by a colleague from another course within the school to ensure impartiality as far as possible. PRE will also be integrated into the PgCAP as an opportunity to authenticate practice in line with expectations of AdvanceHE.

### *Probation*

PRE will be used formally as part of probation for all staff involved in the delivery of teaching, including those in roles within professional services teams as appropriate, e.g., Library and Learning Services Academic Skills Advisors and Learning and Teaching Librarians.

For the purposes of probation, PRE will be conducted by the line manager. Where staff are participating in the PgCAP, embedded observations to authenticate practice will continue to be required.

### *Expectations for observations*

1. All teaching staff will be required to complete an in-class teaching PRE annually, and those working in professional services teams who contribute to the achievement and progress of students (e.g., those in Library and Learning Services and the Careers, Employability and Enterprise team) will be required to complete PRE activity annually.
2. Teaching staff will be expected to participate in a second PRE activity: This may include:
  - Review of further classroom delivery through observation
  - Review of online learning, including Online Learning Environments (OLEs), asynchronous learning experiences, or synchronous delivery
  - Review of curriculum or module design
  - Review of Assessment and Feedback practices or delivery of feedback to students
3. PRE will be conducted by a colleague assigned annually through CELT, unless it is completed through PgCAP, in which case it will be completed by the assigned mentor.
4. PRE reports and / or actions plans should inform annual appraisal and development activities and objectives.
5. PRE will be used as part of probation.
6. Updates on school level non-Apprenticeship PRE activity will be shared at each CELT committee throughout the academic year by the Associate Deans for Learning and Teaching.
7. Guidance for participating in PRE is published at: [Peer Review - Development and Enhancement - Learning and Teaching at University of Suffolk \(uos.ac.uk\)](https://www.uos.ac.uk/peer-review-development-and-enhancement-learning-teaching)