

9A - PEER REFLECTION ON EDUCATION PRACTICE (PREP): Policy and Procedure

1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy and procedure is intended for all BU academic staff. This includes full and part time/fractional staff as well as categories of staff that directly support the student learning experience, e.g. Demonstrators, Post Graduate Research Students (PGRS), Library and Learning Support staff and Learning Technologists.
- 1.2 The main purpose of the Peer Reflection on Education Practice Scheme (PREP) is to provide a systematic yet flexible framework to review and enhance the quality of the learning experience for students. This document outlines the requirements of PREP.
- 1.3 PREP reflects a collaborative model of peer support (Gosling and Mason O'Connor 2009) which offers the instructor suggestions about how to improve and develop their teaching quality (Crabtree and Scott 2016).

2. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 **Education Committee:** to maintain oversight of the PREP.
- 2.2 **Academic Quality:** to maintain and review the policy and procedure.
- 2.3 **Faculties:** to maintain responsibility for the operation of the PREP.
- 2.4 **FLIE:** to offer leadership and evaluation of University-wide initiatives, drawing upon data collated by Faculties.

Policy

3. PRINCIPLES FOR OPERATION

- 3.1 Bournemouth University recognises the value and importance of PREP in developing a culture that is collegiate and fosters discussion and dissemination of good practice relating to the student experience. All Faculties will engage with this process on an annual basis **with a focus on quality of teaching to enhancing student learning**. The principles underpinning PREP are that it is:
 - designed to improve the student experience, giving emphasis to how learning can be promoted;
 - developmental not judgmental, enabling staff to engage in constructive feedback through peer dialogue and reflection;
 - reciprocal, all parties are expected to gain from the process;
 - inclusive of all aspects of teaching and learning in a variety of settings and including course design, assessment, blended learning and online learning;

- inclusive of all categories of staff who support the student learning experience in a teaching capacity;
 - confidential and collegiate to determine appropriate support and address developmental gaps independent of management processes relating to performance management and review;
 - linked into staff development activities: opportunity for personal and professional development of staff;
 - undertaken on an annual basis as part of the ongoing enhancement of educational practice;
 - an enhancement tool providing opportunities to promote and disseminate good teaching and further enquiry into teaching and learning;
 - to feed into the Teaching Excellence Framework as part of the BU narrative for excellence.
- 3.2 Each Faculty will be responsible for managing their PREP scheme with a named individual responsible for the process. This would normally be a Deputy Dean or equivalent. A flexible approach will enable Faculties to tailor the scheme according to changing demands and issues raised within their own context. Alternatively, the Centre for Fusion Learning Innovation and Excellence (FLIE) may propose PREP activities in which all Faculties engage.
- 3.3 Monitoring and evaluation of the overall scheme should be done on an annual basis by each Faculty and reported to Education Committee. Operational review should be undertaken also on an annual basis. Accompanying documentation and reporting processes should however be kept to a minimum to ensure that the focus of the scheme remains as collaborative, peer-supported activity.

Procedure

4. OPERATION OF THE SCHEME

- 4.1 Faculties identify their PREP approach at two levels:
- i) peer observation of teaching practice
 - ii) education enhancement themes included in the AMER outcomes for the faculty, departmental and/or programme

Faculties may also engage in a BU-wide PREP initiative that is proposed by FLIE. The activity should be reviewed annually. PREP activities should align with existing practices e.g., team meetings, Faculty away days, programme reviews. FLIE will provide guidance for Operationalisation of PREP and Timelines.

- 4.2 **Focus:** the focus of the PREP scheme can vary from year to year. Faculties should consider their student feedback on their teaching and learning practices including, NSS scores, MUSE data, SUBU SIMON data, AMER reports and best practice from external benchmarks such as TEF as part of the decision process.
- 4.3 **Organisation:** the organisation of PREP activities should suit the needs of Faculties and individuals. Faculty executive will determine appropriate approaches for colleagues to explore in a critical and self-reflective way aspects of the student experience. This can be done in either pairs or groups as agreed by the Faculty executive.
- 4.4 **Maximising Participation:** Faculty procedures for implementation should maximise participation and be inclusive of all staff e.g. full-time academic staff, part time hourly paid (PTHP), PGRS, demonstrators. Staff who support learning, who are based in the central Professional Services, should also be encouraged to participate (e.g. library support staff and learning technologists).

- 4.5 **Timing:** the timing of any PREP engagement is at the discretion of individual Faculties. There may be key junctures in the academic year however which lend themselves to PREP e.g. in preparation for running a new unit, during the delivery of an online programme or after a meeting.
- 4.6 **Monitoring and review:** each Faculty should decide on how to evaluate their own scheme or contribute to the evaluation of a scheme proposed by FLIE (e.g. aligned with BU's [Digital Pedagogies Framework](#)). Regular feedback of faculty PREP plans is provided to Faculty Education Committee and faculty executive teams for monitoring and review. An annual review of the preceding year's activity should be reported to Education Committee in the autumn. Emphasis should be given to the identification of good practice which has emerged from the scheme. It should also include numbers of staff engaged in PREP, themes identified for review, and any development needs which have emerged from the implementation of the scheme.
- 4.7 Staff may use the outcomes of their PREP activities to aid their career progression and development. This would need to be evidenced based (e.g. feedback from peers, innovations in education practice, contributions to programme enhancements).
- 4.8 **Professional Services Support:** Organisational Development, Academic Quality and FLIE may provide opportunities for training in the skills underpinning the scheme (e.g. reflection, questioning skills, constructive feedback). Staff development needs emerging from PREP will also be supported both at a Faculty and University level.

General

5. REFERENCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

- 5.1 Selected academic references: Please talk to FLIE staff for further information.
- 5.1.1 Bell, A and Mladenovic R. (2008) "The benefits of peer observation of teaching for tutor development". *Higher Education* 55, 6.
- 5.1.2 Byrne, J., Brown, H. and Challen, D., 2010. Peer development as an alternative to peer observation: A tool to enhance professional development. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 15(3), pp.215-228.
- 5.1.3 Crabtree, J.L., Scott, P.J. and Kuo, F., 2016. Peer Observation and Evaluation Tool (POET): a formative peer review supporting scholarly teaching.
- 5.1.4 Engin, M., 2016. Enhancing the status of peer observation through the scholarship of teaching and learning. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 21(4), pp.377-382.
- Fletcher, J.A., 2018. Peer observation of teaching: A practical tool in higher education. *The Journal of Faculty Development*, 32(1), pp.51-64.
- 5.1.5 Gosling, D., 2002. Models of peer observation of teaching. *Generic Centre: Learning and Teaching Support Network*. 8(10), p.08.
- 5.1.6 Gosling, D., and Mason O'Connor, K. (2009) *Beyond the Peer Observation of Teaching*. London: Staff and Educational Development Association.
- 5.1.7 Hammersley-Fletcher, L. and Orsmond, P., 2004. Evaluating our peers: is peer observation a meaningful process? *Studies in Higher Education*, 29(4), pp.489-503.
- Krause, K.L., 2021. A quality approach to university teaching. In *University Teaching in Focus* (pp. 304-327). Routledge.
- 5.1.8 Murphy, C. and Stover, E., 2016. A Peer Observation of Teaching Process for Faculty who Teach Online. *Journal of Applied Educational and Policy Research*, 2(1).
- 5.1.9 Siddiqui, Z.S., Jonas-Dwyer, D. and Carr, S.E., 2007. Twelve tips for peer observation of teaching. *Medical teacher*, 29(4), pp.297-300.

- 5.1.10 Weller, S. (2009) "What Does 'Peer' Mean in Teaching Observation for the Professional Development of Higher Education Lecturers?" *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 21,1, 25-35.
- 5.2 This policy was reviewed according to the University's [Equality Analysis Procedure](#) in June 2014.