

Teaching observation and peer review of teaching policy

1. This paper sets out the policy of The London Institute of Banking & Finance (LIBF) on teaching observations at Higher Education (HE) level. Reference should also be made to LIBF's Code of Practice [Chapter 12 on Staff Development](#).

Context

2. In line with the Higher Education sector requirements, whereby organisations holding degree-awarding powers must have staff development and appraisal opportunities, LIBF has formal processes for staff development and appraisal as set out in The London Institute of Banking & Finance LIBF's Code of Practice [Chapter 12 on Staff Development](#). LIBF recognises that teaching observation, whether administered centrally in the context of an appraisal, or informally in the context of peer observation, comprises a significant developmental opportunity, enabling the identification of best practice, and promoting dialogue relating to higher education learning theory and pedagogy.

Aims

3. The aim of the policy on teaching observations is to establish the context within which teaching observations are undertaken, and the purposes for which they are undertaken. The policy also aims to identify the different forms of teaching observation undertaken at LIBF.

Definitions

4. Teaching observations in the context of the appraisal process involve the observer attending a lecture, seminar or workshop for between 1-2 hours. The teaching platform and/or observation may be face-to-face or digital. In the context of informal peer observation, they can be negotiated between the parties, with the Dean or Head of Academic Development facilitating as required.
5. Observations of online teaching may also involve the observer having access to the lecturer's online forum, pre-recorded videos, and webinars. In most circumstances it will be sufficient for the observer to look at one academic session for one module, though the observer will have the option of looking at more than one session.
6. Peer observation comprises academic community members observing each other's classes to enable reflective learning, the dissemination of best practice, and on-going professional dialogue relating to learning and teaching.

Principles

7. Teaching observations are supportive and developmental. The broad purpose of observation is to identify and disseminate best practice in learning and teaching. The observer is present to support the observed, offering encouragement of their existing practice, while identifying areas the observed may wish to reflect upon and, if applicable, areas where there is scope for improvement. The observer may also share with the observed examples of good practice they have witnessed in other observations, or current research that may be relevant to the lecturer's practice. Academic community members teaching online or face-to-face can normally expect to have their teaching observed every year.

Arrangements

8. Teaching observations in the context of the appraisal process are arranged between the observer (Head of Academic Development) and the observed. Pre- and post-observation dialogue between observer and observed is an integral part of the process. Following the observation, a written report is sent to the observed for agreement and comment, shared with the Dean and then retained by the Head of Academic Development.
9. Informal, peer observations of teaching are facilitated through the Head of Academic Development.

Policy Review

10. This policy is subject to review approximately every 12 to 18 months by the Head of Academic Development.

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