



PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES FOR PEER EVALUATION OF TEACHING QUALITY

Name:	Principles and Guidelines for peer evaluation of teaching quality	
Reference number: <i>(supplied by Office of the Registrar)</i>		
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1. INTRODUCTION

Peer evaluation is the norm in higher education but in the area of teaching it has not been mainstreamed, although it is an essential component in evaluating teaching quality. Used primarily for formative professional development, it also has potential summative application for promotions and other institutional or national awards that recognise teaching excellence.

Peer evaluations provide evidence of the effectiveness of an academic's teaching from the perspective of one's peers and adds an important dimension in the development and evaluation of teaching quality. Peer evaluation reports complement information gathered from student evaluations of teaching and together, they provide a source to triangulate information when teaching quality is evaluated.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 These principles and procedures apply to academic staff.
- 2.2 The practice of peer evaluations on teaching quality covers teaching and learning, supervision of post-graduate student and all related activities at the University.
- 2.3 These principles and guidelines must be read in conjunction with the Quality Promotion and Assurance Policy and with all the UKZN policies that govern and regulate teaching, learning, and assessment; with the Principles and Guidelines on Academic Staff Promotions and the amended University Strategic Plan (2007-2016).
- 2.4. Peer evaluation at UKZN can be conducted in diverse teaching contexts, including, but not limited to the following:
 - 2.4.1 Undergraduate or postgraduate teaching
 - 2.4.2 Tutorials
 - 2.4.3 Seminars
 - 2.4.4 Clinical instruction
 - 2.4.5 Laboratory teaching
 - 2.4.6 Studios
 - 2.4.7 Supervision
 - 2.4.8 Teaching at a distance
 - 2.4.9 On-line teaching
 - 2.4.10 Experiential learning

3. DEFINITION OF TERMS

- 3.1. **Formative Evaluation:** refers to assisting and supporting learning by providing feedback about teaching as part of a developmental process that is part of continuous professional development. The purpose of formative evaluation is to gather information to understand strengths and weaknesses in order to improve teaching and learning.
- 3.2. **Peer evaluators:** one or more colleagues who are selected for their knowledge and expertise in the field to provide an evaluation of the quality of one's teaching.

- 3.3. **Peer Evaluations:** evaluations based on actual observation of teaching practices and includes documentary evidence as specified in the Procedure and Guidelines for Academic Promotions. They can include the viewing of a recording of teaching as part of the review of a teaching portfolio.
- 3.4. **Summative Evaluation:** an evaluation that enables an overall evaluation of the candidate's performance as judged by peer evaluators. It can include the evaluation of a teacher's performance over a period of time and several formative evaluations.

4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1. Peer evaluation focuses on the teaching process and practice and the relationship of these to student learning.
- 4.2. There should be an agreement between the peers on the scope of the evaluation.
- 4.3. The peer-evaluator(s) should be colleagues who engage in similar teaching activities and shares appropriate levels of disciplinary expertise and experiences, and should preferably be senior or more experienced than the academic undergoing an evaluation.
- 4.4. Peer evaluations may be formative for on-going professional development or summative for inclusion in promotion, probation or performance management processes.
- 4.5. Peer evaluators should provide both verbal and written feedback (complete the Peer Evaluation Questionnaire) to the academic being evaluated.
- 4.6. Peer evaluator should obtain background information (amongst others from student evaluations, lecture notes, course outline, modules guidelines and module guidelines and materials) to provide a basis and context.
- 4.7. All engagements in the peer evaluation process should be ethical and free of any conflicts of interest.
- 4.8. A relevant line manager can request a peer evaluation as part of professional development or on the basis of reports of poor performance or evaluation of a module or programme.

5. GUIDELINES

- 5.1. The selection of the peer evaluator(s) is made by the line manager or mentor in consultation with the academic.
- 5.2. The academic who will be evaluated needs to provide peer evaluators with background information on his/her teaching to give the process context and meaning (see 4.6.).
- 5.3. There should be a pre-observation discussion where context, purpose and aims of the session are agreed upon and to outline areas of focus for the evaluation.
- 5.4. There should also be a post-observation discussion of the draft report and the candidate should be given an opportunity to seek clarification.
- 5.5. The candidate should be afforded the opportunity to reflect on the final report and outline in a separate statement how she/he will be responding to the recommendations of peers.

- 5.6. Since a series of evaluations by colleagues, i.e. evaluation of more than one class, is more representative than a one-off observation, multiple observations are recommended.
- 5.7. The Quality Promotion and Assurance Peer Evaluation Questionnaire should be used.
- 5.8. Feedback should start with constructive comments and then move to areas that require focussed attention, noting that the process is about affirming what is done well in addition to highlighting areas for improvement.
- 5.9. Peer evaluators should endeavour to be as objective as possible and be aware of biases that might emanate from their own personal preferences or style.

ANNEXURE 1: Peer Evaluation Questionnaire

Lecturer's name: _____

Evaluator's name: _____

When evaluation took place: Date: _____ Class: _____ Time: _____

Number of students present: _____

Context: i.e. – lecture, tutorial, laboratory _____

	<i>Not present</i>	<i>requires more Emphasis</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Accomplished very well</i>	<i>na</i>
1. Lecturer was well prepared	1	2	3	4	na
2. Outlined clearly the learning objectives for the session	1	2	3	4	na
3. Links the teaching session to the previous session/s	1	2	3	4	na
4. Provides an introduction to the session	1	2	3	4	na
5. Demonstrates enthusiasm for the subject matter	1	2	3	4	na
6. Uses teaching methods that facilitate accomplishment of learning objectives	1	2	3	4	na
7. Communicates material appropriate for the level 1 of the students		2	3	4	na
8. Explains concepts and ideas clearly	1	2	3	4	na
9. Defines unfamiliar terms	1	2	3	4	na
10. Presents examples to explain/clarify points	1	2	3	4	na
11. Demonstrates command of the subject matter	1	2	3	4	na
12. Highlights major points (e.g. voice, reemphasis)	1	2	3	4	na
13. Listens to student's comments and questions	1	2	3	4	na
14. Encourages student interaction/questions	1	2	3	4	na
15. Responds appropriately to student questions in the session	1	2	3	4	na
16. Strategies used encourage critical thinking and analysis by students	1	2	3	4	na
17. Voice volume appropriate	1	2	3	4	na

18. Rate of speech appropriate and clear	1	2	3	4	na
19. Maintained student interest	1	2	3	4	na
20. Session paced and pitched to allow students to make notes	1	2	3	4	na
21. Appropriate use of technology and other forms of technology	1	2	3	4	na
well prepared and easily read from the back of the room					
22. Summarised major points/concluded the session	1	2	3	4	na
23. Related the session to future sessions	1	2	3	4	na
24. Demonstrates equitable concern for all students	1	2	3	4	na

Where an item mentioned is not applicable (na) please elaborate so that the context is clear. There may be valid reasons why interaction, for example, would not be applicable.

Note any factors affecting delivery e.g. appropriateness or otherwise of the venue

What were the lecturer's major strengths?

What suggestions do you have for improvement?

Overall impression

Module outline

It is important to note here whether the lecturer being observed is involved in team teaching and whether he or she developed the module.

	<i>Not present</i>	<i>Requires more Emphasis</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Accomplished very well</i>	<i>na</i>
Clearly states aims and objectives of the module	1	2	3	4	na
Suitability of the content	1	2	3	4	na
Provides up-to-date references	1	2	3	4	na
Includes a variety of references e.g. books and articles	1	2	3	4	na
Organised logically	1	2	3	4	na
Topics for each session indicated	1	2	3	4	na
Covers an appropriate amount of material	1	2	3	4	na
Assessment requirements clearly stated	1	2	3	4	na
Assessment methods are clearly linked to the objectives	1	2	3	4	na
Assessment methods are fair	1	2	3	4	na

Overall impression of module

Quality of teaching materials used	1	2	3	4	na
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Any comments on teaching material developed/used

Signed (observer): _____