



# Lecture Observation Policy

Version 1.0

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<b>Policy Author</b>	Anthony Satariano	<b>Designation</b>	Head QA	<b>Dept.</b>	QA Dept.
<b>Policy Reviewers</b>	QAC	<b>Designation</b>	N/A	<b>Dept.</b>	N/A
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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy outlines the general principles relating to the observation of lectures as part of the Institute for Education's (IfE) approach relating to lecture observations forming part of IfE's quality enhancement programme to refine the learning experience of its course participants. In doing so, IfE's lecturers are provided with developmental and constructive feedback to feed into their own reflective practices. The experiences of the observers and those who have been observed should contribute to the sharing of good practice and offer fresh perspectives on teaching and learning.
- 1.2 The lecture observation process is an integral part of the Internal Quality Assurance and enhancement structure of the IfE. Moreover, it supports the IfE in meeting the principles within the [National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and Higher Education](#) and the [Policy for Quality Assurance and Enhancement](#) of the IfE. The process also supports the IfE in implementing the [Internal Verification Policy](#), the [Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy and Procedures](#) together with the Teaching and Learning Handbook which are available to all lecturers.
- 1.3 The IfE believes in the benefits related to lecture observation as this process can:
- Encourage all lecturers to reflect on the effectiveness of their own teaching and identify their development needs;
  - Enable lecturers to identify strengths in learning and teaching, and identify areas where teaching and learning could be improved;
  - Enable all lecturers to learn from each other and mutually benefit from improving understanding and practice;
  - Foster discussion and dissemination of best practice;
  - Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning at the IfE is continually refreshed and enhanced.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all full-time lecturers as well as those lecturers on a contract for service.

## 3. Lecture Observation

### 3.1 Observations carried out by Head Quality Assurance (QA) or delegate

- 3.1.1 For the enhancement of programme delivery, a sample of lectures within awards and qualifications are observed by the Head QA or delegate to provide lecturers with

opportunity for feedback and to assure that programmes are being delivered in a manner which enables learners to reach the intended learning outcomes.

3.1.2 The observations focus on the overall instructional experience and the quality of course participant learning the content rather than on the content of the specific lecture.

3.1.3 Lecturers are given both oral and written feedback about any observed lecture to feed-forward into future practice. The feedback is provided during a post-observation meeting which is held after every observation carried out by the Head QA or delegate. This meeting takes the form of a friendly discussion between educational professionals and should not be viewed as a moment of delivery of judgment. During the meeting, the criteria used by the Head QA or delegate (which are available on the IfE portal) to guide their observations are discussed. This includes feedback on whether the learning outcomes, teaching and assessment are being aligned and the performance of course participants in assessment is up to the required standards. Other parameters include the vibrancy of the classroom and the ownership of the learning by course participants. Lecturers are well informed that strong module content is also a critical component in the teaching and learning process. Strong module content encompasses comprehensive and relevant course material, augmented by the thoughtful deployment of case studies, examples and classroom discussions and workshops. Feedback on the uploaded online material is also provided. Furthermore, the following questions are discussed:

- What went well in the session? How might the lecturer build on this?
- What could be improved or developed? How might this be achieved?

3.1.4 The feedback provided is used by the Head QA or delegate in consecutive observations to help lecturers in working towards long-term objectives.

3.1.5 The QA Department treats the outcomes of the observation process as strictly confidential.

## **3.2 Peer Conversation on Practice**

3.2.1 Peer Conversation on Practice is a voluntary process whereby lecturers provide opportunities for their peers to observe them, act as a critical friend and share good practices to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. In the process of pedagogical observation, peers are empowered to self-reflect on their pedagogical

practice and identify good practices observed and establish communication about teaching with their colleagues.

3.2.2 The peer conversation on practice process serves as a supportive mechanism towards the enhancement of quality teaching and learning as it:

- Builds a sense of collegiality amongst experts within the same field of study;
- Enhances personal and professional development through the sharing of good practices;
- Engages peers in a reflection process, both on pedagogical methods used and the subject area being taught.

3.2.3 This process is facilitated by the QA Department and is based on the following principles:

- Peer Conversation on Practice is an evolving process;
- Feedback provided is formative;
- The process is sufficiently flexible to respect the pedagogical differences between subject areas.

Further details regarding the procedures of the Peer Conversation on Practice process may be found in the Peer Conversation on Practice Guidebook which is available on the IfE portal.

3.2.4 After the observations are carried out by the peers, a peer-to-peer reflection sheet is jointly compiled during a meeting. This conversation takes the form of a friendly discussion and should not be viewed as a moment of delivery of judgment. During the meeting, the questions listed in section 3.1.4 are discussed. Following the meeting, the peer-to-peer reflection sheet (which can be found in the Peer Conversation on Practice Guidebook) is sent to the QA Department.

3.2.5 The QA Department treats the outcomes of the Peer Conversation on Practice process as strictly confidential.

#### 4. Relevant Documents

- [Internal Verification Policy](#)
- Lecture Observation Template (available on the IfE portal)
- [National Quality Assurance Framework for Further and Higher Education](#)
- Peer Conversation on Practice Guidebook (available on the IfE portal)
- [Policy for Quality Assurance and Enhancement](#)

- [Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy and Procedures](#)
- Teaching and Learning Handbook (available on the IfE portal)

## 5. Version history

Originator	Version	Date	Changes Done
QA Department	1.0	18/04/2023	Initial release of document