



## PEER REFLECTION ON EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the Peer Reflection on Educational Practices Policy across Keele University provision. The policy applies to all academic and professional services staff and postgraduate researchers who teach and support learning across Keele provision. Peer Reflection is organised and managed by Schools, with the Head of School and any named nominees responsible for its implementation.

#### 1.1. Purpose

Keele University has a longstanding commitment to enhancing teaching and learning through reflective practice. The University aims to establish and encourage a culture in which reflection and scholarly dialogue on educational practices are celebrated and supported. The Peer Reflection on Educational Practices policy aims to support academics, professional services staff, and postgraduate researchers who teach and support learning to reflect on their educational practices, and align them with School, and University priority areas. As a quality enhancement mechanism, the policy is intended to support teaching staff in developing their understanding of learning and ensure continuous improvement of students' academic experience across the University. The policy contributes to the University's commitment to supporting staff professional development and supports the delivery of our strategic priorities for inclusive education by promoting reflective teaching practices. This process is developmental and non-evaluative and does not contribute directly to appraisal, probation, capability, or disciplinary processes.

#### 1.2. Scope

The policy applies to all Keele University staff (academic and professional services), postgraduate researchers, and other members within the University who are actively involved in teaching and learning delivery across Keele-awarded provision. All staff and postgraduate students with teaching responsibilities are expected to participate in the Peer Reflection on Educational Practices process annually as both a teacher (observee) and peer reflector (observer).

Staff undertaking the Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education are expected to participate in School-level peer reflection. Outputs from peer reflection may be used, where appropriate, to support professional learning and PGCert assessment.

The policy applies to all aspects of teaching and learning delivery, including, but not limited to, live, recorded, online and blended delivery, the creation of learning materials, assessment and feedback practices, curriculum and module design, digital learning environments (e.g. KLE, Canvas), asynchronous learning activities and the support of student learning directly associated with teaching delivery.

The policy is implemented and managed by Schools for all staff and postgraduate researchers with teaching responsibilities. The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that all relevant staff take part in peer reflection on an annual basis in accordance with the accompanying guidance (see 'Related Policies and Procedures').

## **2. POLICY**

### **2.1. Supporting collaboration and professional development**

Keele University's approach to peer reflection is developmental and collaborative. It provides a space for colleagues within and across Schools to reflect on one another's educational practices, share good inclusive practices, and identify opportunities for development to enhance students' learning experiences.

The peer reflection process is independent of formal appraisal and probation processes. However, individuals may draw on their learning from the process as evidence in recognition claims (e.g. AdvanceHE Fellowship) and SPRE and PPRE discussions focused on teaching development.

### **2.2. Expectations of staff and postgraduate students who teach and support learning**

All staff and postgraduate researchers who are engaged in teaching and learning activities will be expected to participate in the peer reflection process annually as both the teacher (observee) and peer (observer). The process includes reflecting on their own and their colleague's educational practices, as well as completing a peer reflection form to capture good practice and identify developmental needs. The recommended process is detailed in the Peer Reflection on Education Practices Guidelines.

The peer reflection process is based on honest, constructive and professional critical dialogue with the shared goal of supporting staff development and the enhancement of our learning and teaching practices. It must be conducted in a way which is inclusive. No staff members or postgraduate researchers should feel excluded from the process on the basis of career stage, mode or type of employment, or any protected characteristics outlined in the [Equality Act \(2010\)](#).

### **2.3. Areas for peer reflection**

In recognition of the diverse teaching and learning contexts across the University, the Peer Reflection policy encourages colleagues to focus their peer reflections on a wide range of

educational practices and educational resources, including but not limited to teaching delivery, assessment and feedback practices, curriculum design, digital learning environments and support for learning associated with the delivery.

Schools may identify shared thematic priorities, agreed in advance, informed by School, Faculty, or University strategies. Themes should remain broad and flexible to support local relevance and staff autonomy.

The focus should also be informed by School, Faculty and University priorities (e.g. education strategy, Access and Participation Plan), adhere to the Keele University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, and respond to actions related to student feedback and national survey results.

#### **2.4. Management and operation of policy**

The annual Peer Reflection scheme is owned and managed at School level.

Heads of Schools will have overall responsibility to ensure that the policy is implemented, including establishing the method of matching peers or groups, monitoring participation, and reporting on the outcomes to the Faculty Education Committee on an annual basis. Reporting will cover an annual summary of emerging themes, actions, and generic professional development needs identified through the peer reflection scheme.

Schools may adopt locally appropriate pairing models (e.g. allocation, structured choice, randomisation), provided these support developmental integrity and avoid conflicts of interest. Cross-disciplinary or cross-School pairings may be used where pedagogically valuable.

#### **2.5. Student Involvement in Peer Reflection**

Student involvement in peer reflection is optional and must not be mandatory.

Where student involvement is included, it should have a clearly articulated purpose that supports reflective dialogue and enhancement of educational practice. Any student contribution should be carefully designed to avoid replicating existing evaluative feedback processes and should be distinct from mechanisms used to judge teaching performance. Schools and individuals should also give due consideration to the potential for bias and the impact of student involvement on staff wellbeing. Appropriate guidance, support, and safeguards must be put in place to ensure that any such activity is conducted sensitively and constructively.

Existing mechanisms, such as module evaluation questionnaires and student surveys, remain the primary routes through which student evaluative feedback is gathered.

#### **2.6. Confidentiality**

The Peer Reflection on Educational Practices process is confidential. Discussions should be kept between the teacher (observee) and observer, with the exception of participation

dates, any agreed areas of good practice, and staff development needs to be shared more widely within Schools and at Faculty Education Committees to support wider enhancement of teaching and learning. For professional development purposes, individuals may wish to use peer reflection outcomes as evidence in recognition claims (e.g. AdvanceHE Fellowship) and SPRE discussions focused on teaching development.

### **3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **3.1. All staff with teaching responsibilities**

All individuals who teach or support the learning of students across Keele's provision are responsible for the following areas, irrespective of whether they are part-time, full-time, sessional staff, or postgraduate researchers:

- Participate in the School's peer reflection process annually as both a teacher (observee) and observer.
- Contribute to the development of peer reflection as a process of scholarly dialogue to enhance student learning and experiences in their School.
- Treat colleagues with dignity and respect when engaging in peer reflection activities and discussions, promoting an inclusive environment where all individuals are respected and valued for their approaches, perspectives, and contributions to teaching and learning across Keele's provision.
- Maintain the confidentiality of discussions between teachers and peer reflectors, making sure to agree on any more widely shared information, e.g. good practice examples and personal learning gains.
- Individuals may also wish to share their learning and good practices via internal and external channels, such as the Keele Education Conference.

Staff are additionally required to:

- Use the standard pro forma to report the completion of the peer reflection process to the Head of School (or named nominee), along with any agreed areas of good practice to support wider enhancement of teaching and learning.
- Ensure students are fully informed of the peer reflection process and that, where appropriate, permission is sought from the student(s).

#### **3.2. Heads of School and named nominees**

- Ensure implementation of the peer reflection scheme each academic year, including identifying any shared foci for peer reflection, methods of pairing or grouping peers, and approaches to collating and sharing themes and good practices that emerge from peer reflection activities. Schemes should be aligned with the School, Faculty

and wider University's education strategies and priorities.

- Ensure all teaching staff are clear about the purpose and importance of the scheme for professional development and enhancement of the student experience and ensure that all can access relevant documents and related resources that they will be expected to use.
- Heads of Schools may nominate a named individual to implement the scheme, with responsibility for monitoring participation and reporting an annual summary of the outcomes, actions and generic professional development needs identified through the peer reflection scheme for consideration at School and Faculty levels.
- Ensure students are informed of the use of peer reflection within the School through appropriate channels, for example Student Staff Voice Committees (SSVCs).
- Maintain summary records of all staff with teaching responsibilities in a given academic year to record that a peer reflection event or activity has taken place and to use these data to calculate participation rates.
- Monitor participation rates and ensure all staff can take part in the process to ensure that no individuals or groups are excluded on the basis of contract, teaching load, experience, or other factors.
- Produce a short summary report to the Faculty Education Committee annually, outlining outcomes of the School's operation of the process.

### **3.3. Faculty Education Committees**

- Receive and discuss the annual summary of the implementation of the scheme at school level, and encourage the sharing of learning, good practice and generic development needs at the Faculty Education Committee and other relevant channels.

### **3.4. KIITE**

- Support peer reflection as a learning and development enterprise for individuals, Schools, and Faculties by providing written guidance and staff development training on the practice and philosophy of peer reflection.
- Support a university culture where self- and collaborative reflection on teaching are valued by providing opportunities for staff to share their outcomes and learning from the peer reflection process through educational networks, including the Keele Education Conference.

## **4. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

This policy should be read in conjunction with, but not limited to, documents such as:

- [Keele Learning Principles](#)
- [Marking and Moderation Policy](#)

- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#)
- [People Strategy](#)
- [Access and Participation Plan](#)
- [Dignity and Respect Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Advance HE Professional Standards Framework](#)
- [Assessment and Feedback Code of Practice](#)
- [Inclusive Education Framework](#)

## 5. REVIEW, APPROVAL & PUBLICATION

This policy will be reviewed by the Keele Institute for Innovation and Teaching Excellence every three years in consultation with Faculty Education Committees, University Education Committee, Keele Students' Union, and Keele Postgraduate Association.

The policy will be approved by the Senate Committee.

## 6. ANNEXES

Other documents supporting this policy include:

- Peer Reflection on Educational Practices Guidance
- Peer Reflection on Educational Practices Form (for observees and observers)
- Peer Reflection on Educational Practices Monitoring Form (for Heads of School or named nominees)
- Peer Reflection on Educational Practices Annual Report Form (for Heads of School or named nominees)

## 7. DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION

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