

Quick Guide: Peer review of online teaching

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----------|
| Introduction | 1 |
| PRE-OBSERVATION | 2 |
| 1. Hold pre-observation meeting (reviewee & reviewers) | 2 |
| 2. Provide teaching materials (reviewee)..... | 2 |
| OBSERVATION | 2 |
| 3. Provide context (reviewers) | 2 |
| 4. Announce to students (reviewee)..... | 2 |
| 5. Observe asynchronous online class (reviewers) | 2 |
| 6. Observe synchronous online or hybrid class (reviewers) | 3 |
| POST-OBSERVATION | 3 |
| 7. Seek brief clarifications (reviewers) | 3 |
| 8. Discuss feedback (reviewers and reviewee) | 3 |
| 9. Report disruptions (reviewers & reviewee)..... | 3 |
| Further suggestions for the observation | 4 |
| Online Peer Review Resources | 4 |
| NUS Resources for Peer Review | 4 |
| NUS Resources for Remote Teaching and Online Education: | 4 |

Introduction

This guidance supplements available [NUS Resources for Peer Review](#), which provide details of the Peer Review System and standard procedures for Heads, Reviewee, and Reviewers, all of which remain in force.

Peer review is one source of evidence for evaluation of teaching at NUS. It can also provide useful feedback to teachers. In light of current circumstances, **three common modes of teaching** that can be used for peer review include:

- **Online asynchronous teaching:** e.g. pre-recorded audio/video lectures, online forums, instructional materials distributed to students
- **Online synchronous teaching:** ‘live’ web conferencing and additional pre-recorded video clips or other materials
- **Hybrid on-campus, face-to-face teaching with simultaneous live streaming** for students who cannot attend

PRE-OBSERVATION

1. Hold pre-observation meeting (reviewee & reviewers)
 - Clarify any questions about the session to be observed, including teaching mode (reviewers).
 - Provide context as to the mode of teaching (reviewee):
 - how the activity to be observed relates to prior activities and fits into the overall module (timing/assessment criteria)
 - student mix (profile, characteristics/culture)
 - particular challenges and past experiences
2. Provide teaching materials (reviewee)
 - Provide access to relevant documents, e.g.:
 - module outline / syllabus
 - class outline
 - resources / handouts for students
 - module website
 - LumiNUS pages
 - discussion forums.

OBSERVATION

3. Provide context (reviewers)
 - When completing report, in the first text box **Question 1: Preparation for, organization and effectiveness of the classroom activity in achieving the intended learning outcomes**, explicitly highlight the current situation and teaching mode by including a statement such as: *“Due to the global public health emergency resulting from COVID-19, the review was of an online asynchronous (or online synchronous, or hybrid) class”*.
4. Announce to students (reviewee)
 - Let students know that the module will be reviewed and that as a result they will themselves be subject to observation, but that they will not be disadvantaged. This is essential for putting the students at ease and minimising distraction.
5. Observe asynchronous online class (reviewers)*
 - The focus of the review is on the module site and materials as well as video recordings and other forms of communication with students, since there is no real-time interaction.
 - If there is no observation of recorded video, **Question 2: Quality of faculty member's exposition and delivery** needs to be indicated as “Not Applicable”.

* See p.3 for further suggestions.

- All of the other regular questions in both Section A and Section B of the Peer Review Report apply.

OR

6. Observe synchronous online or hybrid class (reviewers)[†]

- The focus of the review is on the teacher's online activity, student engagement in the online activity, and module materials.
- All of the regular questions in both Section A and Section B of the Peer Review Report apply.

POST-OBSERVATION

7. Seek brief clarifications (reviewers)

- To ensure fair and robust evaluation with convergence of evidence, gather more information before completing the report.
- If clarity is needed about either the session observed or the teaching materials, reviewers might:
 - (1) ask the reviewee to submit clarifications
 - (2) interview the reviewee for additional information
 - (3) talk to students enrolled for the module, with the consent of both the reviewee and the students
- Where reviewers intend to seek direct feedback from students, they should be aware of potential ethical implications and ensure that students not be affected negatively.
- Limit communications with the reviewee to clarifications so as to preserve arm's length evaluation and to avoid any undue influence on the report, whether actual or perceived.

8. Discuss feedback (reviewers and reviewee)

- Once the review has been submitted, reviewers and reviewee may fruitfully meet to discuss feedback on the session.

9. Report disruptions (reviewers & reviewee)

- If a peer review was **disrupted to a significant extent**, for example due to technical failure or connectivity problems, the reviewee and reviewers should report details of the disruption as soon as possible via peerreview@groups.nus.edu.sg. Depending on the circumstances and where possible, the review may be rescheduled.

[†] See p.3 for further suggestions.

Further suggestions for the observation

Given the online nature of the teaching activity being observed, consider paying special attention to:

- *Online course materials, instructions, and broader design issues*, e.g., presentation of the online course site structure/study materials to students; content of online materials – level and clarity; the suitability of the assessment design; and overall course design
- *Instructor's online activity*, e.g., management of the online activity, input into/contribution within a student online discussion (quantity and quality), effort to establish forms of presence in a remote teaching environment, styles of questioning/prompting/developing student input, etc.
- *Student engagement in an online activity*, e.g., amount of student participation, quality of student interaction, and depth of student discussion
- *Program management*, e.g., quality assurance procedures and supporting and monitoring associate online instructors

(Walker, 2019, p.3)

Online Peer Review Resources

Bennett, S. & Barp, D. (2008). Peer observation – a case for doing it online. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 13(5), 559-570, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562510802334871>

Gosling, D. (2002). Guidelines for Peer Observation of Learning and Teaching. Paper prepared for ESCalate Regional Networking Seminars May-October 2000. London: University of East London. Retrieved from <http://escalate.ac.uk/resources/peerobservation/index.html>. Accessed 13 April 2020.

Peer Review of Teaching for Promotion Purposes. Retrieved from <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/teaching-projects/peerreview/>. Accessed 13 April 2020.

Swinglehurst, D., Russell, J. & Greenhalgh, T. (2008). Peer observation of teaching in the online environment: an action research approach. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 24, 383–393.

Walker, R. (2019). Peer Observation and Review of Online Teaching. In M. A. Peters (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Teacher Education*. Singapore: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-1179-6_68-1. Accessed 13 April 2020.

NUS Resources for Peer Review

- **Access to the system:** <https://aces.nus.edu.sg/peerreview/>
- **Procedure for Peer Review of Teaching:** <https://share.nus.edu.sg/corporate/policies/teachingevaluation/PR-procedure.pdf>
- **User Guides for the PR system:**
 - For Peer Reviewers: <https://share.nus.edu.sg/corporate/policies/teachingevaluation/userguide-reviewer.pdf>
 - For Department PR-in-charge: <https://share.nus.edu.sg/corporate/policies/teachingevaluation/userguide-dept-PR-in-charge.pdf>
 - **Contact Email:** For any questions and assistance regarding the online peer review system, please write to peerreview@groups.nus.edu.sg
 - **CDTL page on Online Peer Review System:** <http://nus.edu.sg/cdtl/teaching-and-learning-quality/teaching-evaluation/peer-review>

NUS Resources for Remote Teaching and Online Education:

- **Overview of resources:** <http://nus.edu.sg/cdtl/professional-development/expand/teaching-and-learning-new-norms>