

FORMATIVE PEER REVIEW OF TEACHING

Why do formative peer review of teaching?

USQ has adopted a voluntary and formative approach to the peer review of teaching to facilitate continuous improvement in teaching excellence at USQ. Your participation in the program will contribute to building your track record in university learning and teaching by:

- providing evidence of your reflections and efforts to improve your teaching in your portfolio, CV, teaching award applications, or promotional applications
- engaging with constructive feedback about your teaching practice;
- developing strategies to improve your teaching;
- sharing conversations about continuous improvement and best practices; and
- creating collaborations for potential teaching improvement projects or scholarship of teaching and learning projects.

What are the key principles of formative peer review of teaching?

- The primary focus is on the improvement or enhancement of teaching and learning, not on evaluating or reporting on teaching quality.
- The primary goal is excellence in teaching, not conformity to minimum teaching standards.
- Peers are recognised as a valuable source for ideas and insights on teaching and serve as collaborators in teaching improvement rather than as auditors or judges.
- The responsibility for improving student learning and outcomes lies with the teacher, rather than with an external regulatory group.

What are the key elements of effective formative peer review of teaching?

- Effective peer review is voluntary. Although it may be suggested by supervisors or support units, individual teachers must commit to peer review themselves.
- The outcomes of peer review may not be mandated for promotion or rewards. A teacher may decide to inform a supervisor, promotion panel, or award application of such outcomes, or they might decide to include aspects of the feedback received and consequent teaching changes. However, the release of the information remains at the discretion of the teacher, not their supervisor.
- Although the identification of problems or issues can be a useful aspect of peer review, the focus should be on identifying excellent practices and creating new innovations for continual improvement.
- The peer review process should be organised and planned. Casual observation of someone's teaching can provide useful impressions, but a clear review plan and objectives will provide focus and maximise outcomes.

