ESCAPE STUDIOS

1   Escape Studios is committed to continuing staff development and sharing of best practice in order to enhance teaching quality and the learning opportunities available to students. Peer Observation is an essential element of this commitment which equally benefits both the observer and the tutor who is being observed.

2   Peer observation is a regular feature of teaching on all programmes at Escape Studios. Its purpose is to:

   (a)   allow both the observer and the tutor an opportunity to reflect on their teaching practice;

   (b)   provide the tutor with useful feedback which encourages the further development of good features and enhances his/her practice;

   (c)   identify areas of good practice for wider dissemination;

   (d)   identify areas that may need to be addressed as part of the staff development programme either individually or on a team basis;

   (e)   monitor and improve the standard of teaching;

   (f)   foster collegiality and useful discussions amongst tutors.

3   It is the Dean's responsibility to ensure that tutor observations are taking place for regular tutors on the following basis:

   (a)   All new full- time tutors should be observed by a peer during their first term of teaching. Teaching practice should have already been observed as part of the interview process)

   (b)   Experienced tutors should be observed at least once during each academic year.

   (c)   All new tutors should undertake an observation of a peer during their first year of teaching.

   (d)   Experienced tutors should undertake an observation of a peer at least once during each academic year.

4   Tutors should be given at least two weeks' advance notice of a proposed peer observation of one of their classes and an arrangement should be made for tutor and observer to meet prior to and shortly after the class. The observer will ensure they gain an awareness of the proposed content and activity in advance and complete the Peer Observation Form during or shortly after the relevant class and discuss his/her comments with the tutor . The tutor will then add his/her own comments to the form and both tutor and observer will sign and date the form and return it to the programme leader, or nominee, as an electronic copy (typed signatures are acceptable).

5   The programme leader, or nominee, will send electronic copies of completed Peer Observation Forms to the Registry to form a central record. They will also keep a record of all Peer Observation forms.

6   The programme leader will regularly review Peer Observation Forms and take appropriate action in connection with any recommendations, and may discuss common issues with staff at team meetings. For example, depending on the recommendation, this may take the form of:

(a)   extracting an element of commended practice for wider dissemination, for example at a staff training event or as a report to the Academic Board;

(b)   following up any concerns expressed about facilities or resources with the appropriate department;

(c)   identifying a training need and arranging appropriate follow-up;

(d)   highlighting stories of best practice and success to Student Experience, Deans, marketing or other departments, as appropriate

This is not an exhaustive list.

7   The Peer Observation Forms may be used, as appropriate, as part of the evidence for staff appraisals, both of the tutor and the observer.

8   The Annual Programme Monitoring Report will include a short section reporting, in general terms, on peer observations. If appropriate, the Action Plan of the APMR may include actions taken or proposed as a result of the peer observations.

9   All new tutors will be given training on the peer observation policy and procedure as part of their induction training, and will be encouraged to plan dates at the start of each term.

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