

**Title:** **From Peer Observation of Teaching to Review of Professional Practice: a model for promoting Continuing Professional Development**

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### **Abstract:**

#### **Session Learning Outcomes:**

1. identify potential shortcomings in peer observation of teaching schemes
2. consider the principles underpinning the Review of Professional Practice (RPP) as implemented at University of Gloucestershire
3. discuss the effectiveness of RPP as a form of CPD contributing to meeting professional standards
4. plan the implementation of a similar peer review scheme.

#### **Session Outline:**

Although Peer Observation of Teaching (POT) is being used widely (in the UK) as a vehicle for CPD, its value as a development tool can become limited over time. This is partly because POT focuses mainly on teaching 'performance' to the neglect of other aspects of teaching, learning and assessment, and partly because staff may tend to participate in POT in a mechanistic and unreflective manner after several iterations (Gosling 2005a).

This workshop outlines the development and implementation of a form of peer review of teaching at the University of Gloucestershire designed to replace, and advance from, a previously operating POT scheme. The scheme, known as the Review of Professional Practice (RPP), requires academics and learning support staff to work with a peer to consider a 'problem' (Bass 1999), innovation or issue in their practice relating to any aspect of teaching, student learning, course design or assessment. RPP is founded on the principles of 'collaborative review' (Gosling, 2005) namely, equality between peers, reciprocal benefit and mutual respect. 'Feedback' is replaced by conversation as the basis for mutual learning (D'Andrea and Gosling, 2005) and the outcome is a 'reflective statement.' intended to foster scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) as a basis for further CPD activity.

Workshop participants will consider how RPP was developed, piloted and implemented. A report on the findings of an initial evaluation carried out in summer 2005 will be presented. Participants will consider how this approach contributes to staff achieving professional standards of teaching.

#### **Session Activities:**

Brief introduction followed by small group discussion (and feedback) of the problems of sustaining a POT scheme over time. (10 mins)

Presentation on the development and implementation of the pilot of the RPP process. (8 mins)

Report on the evaluation of the pilot (8 mins)

Small group discussion (and feedback) of the approach adopted for promoting CPD and opportunity to develop an action plan to implement a similar scheme. (18 mins)

## References

- Bass, R. (1999). "The Scholarship of Teaching: What's the Problem?" Inventio 1(1): 1-9.
- D'Andrea, V.-M. and D. Gosling (2005). Improving Teaching and Learning in Higher Education; a whole institution approach. London, McGraw Hill.
- Gosling, D. (2005a). Talking about Teaching: Some Difficulties in Peer Review. International Conference on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: proceedings 2003 and 2004. J. Fanghanel and D. Warren. London, City University: 144 - 158.
- Gosling, D. (2005b). Peer Observation of Teaching: SEDA Paper 118. Birmingham, SEDA.