

Peer Review: 9 Dimensions of Teaching

Dimension 1: Students are actively engaged in learning

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include:

- fostering a supportive, non-threatening teaching/learning environment
- encouraging students to express views, ask and answer questions, and allow time and opportunity for this to occur
- using questioning skills which encourage student engagement
- providing immediate and constructive feedback where appropriate
- demonstrating enthusiasm for teaching and learning
- (for smaller groups) fostering extensive interaction
- (for very large groups) presenting in such a manner as to achieve maximum engagement

Dimension 2: Students' prior knowledge and experience is built upon

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include:

- being fully aware of and/or determining students' prior knowledge and understanding
- building on students' current knowledge and understanding, and taking them conceptually beyond this level
- where appropriate, using and building upon student contributions and preparation

Dimension 3: Teaching caters for student diversity

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include:

- demonstrating an appreciation of the different levels of knowledge and understanding in a group
- addressing, as appropriate, different learning needs and styles within the group
- focussing on building confidence, enthusiasm and intrinsic motivation
- fostering students' responsibility for their own learning, encouraging them towards being self-directed learners, (as distinct from teacher-directed learners)
- using appropriate strategies for different needs, balancing discursive interactive strategies with those that are more didactic (where simple transmission of knowledge is needed)
- recognising, at times, the need for teacher-directed strategies such as explaining, and being able to implement these effectively
- exercising balance between challenging and supporting students
- designing activities/tasks that allow students of differing abilities to participate/engage and demonstrate/enhance their learning
- providing examples or opportunities for discussion that cater for cultural diversity

Dimension 4: Students are aware of key learning outcomes

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include:

- ensuring students are progressively aware of key learning outcomes
- focussing on learning outcomes at key points in the presentation
- ensuring a synthesis of key learning outcomes is emphasised towards the conclusion of the session so that individual student follow-up work is well focussed
- encouraging each student to accept responsibility for learning issues to follow-up and consolidate
- ensuring students are aware of the link between key learning outcomes and assessment (formative and summative), as appropriate

Dimension 5: Students are encouraged to develop/expand their conceptual understanding

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include:

- helping students bridge the gap between their current conceptual understanding and the next "level"
- helping students become aware of what the next levels are
- encouraging students to become self-directed learners by using the "lecture"/presentation as the stimulus for individual study/learning
- challenging students intellectually e. g. by extending them with question/answer/discussion components where students' conclusions must be justified to the teacher and peers. This usually involves questions such as "What do you think is going on"; "Why"; "What if...?" etc.
- encouraging students to internalise or "construct " their individual conceptual understanding (ultimately the learner must be responsible for his/her own learning)
- encouraging deep (intrinsic) rather than surface (extrinsic) approaches to learning
- working cooperatively with students to help them enhance understanding
- clearly demonstrating a thorough command of the subject matter

Dimension 6: Actively uses links between research and teaching

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include:

- emphasising, where appropriate, links between research outcomes and learning
- using research links appropriately, given the level of student conceptual development
- raising students' awareness of what constitutes research

Dimension 7: Uses educational resources and techniques appropriately

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include:

- using IT techniques effectively, e. g. PowerPoint or multimedia presentations of a professional standard
- using, as appropriate, a balance of IT and other strategies
- using available classroom resources to support student learning effectively
- supplying resources, materials and literature to support student learning
- using specific educational strategies and techniques in the design and delivery of teaching sessions, to achieve key objectives

Dimension 8: Presents material logically

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include:

- providing an early brief structural overview of the session
- developing this structure in a coherent manner, ensuring students are constantly aware of the development of the session
- providing time for reviewing at key stages, including closure
- establishing closure, aiming at helping students draw together and understand major issues and identify individual learning needs and short-comings

Dimension 9: Seeks feedback on students' understanding and acts on this accordingly

Indicative teaching strategies for demonstrating this dimension may include

- seeking feedback progressively during the session e. g. through constant observation of interest level and engagement and by using specific questions to test understanding
- modifying the presentation to accommodate feedback messages
- seeking feedback towards the conclusion of the session to assist student to determine individual work to be consolidated

Adapted from: Crisp, G et al (2009) Peer Review of Teaching for Promotion Purposes: a project to develop and implement a pilot program of external Peer Review of Teaching at four Australian universities, University of Adelaide, an ALTC-funded project, 2007-8. Final Report June 2009