Thank you for agreeing to act as a ‘Support Colleague’

The Learning Through Teaching Program (LTTP) is a collegial process through which ULT participants develop their teaching skills.

As a Support Colleague you observe two of your colleague’s classes and provide feedback. Your colleague also observes one of your classes and discusses your teaching method with you afterwards.

Your role is to offer useful feedback on what you observe in a non-judgmental and non-threatening manner. You will be helping your colleague to reflect on their teaching. You may be able to offer ideas and suggestions.

The LTTP is not an appraisal. It should feel like a collegial process and be a collegial process.

As you will appreciate, being observed can be an uncomfortable feeling for some teachers, regardless of their expertise or experience. Your sensitivity and tact will make the program more effective.

Thank you for your time, effort and support!
Summary of LTTP Process

Cycle 1
- You and ULT participant meet with LTTP Coordinator
- ITT participant plans first class, provides you with plans, discusses plans with your.
- Observe ULT participant’s class.
- Meet with ULT participant, give feedback and discuss the class.
- ULT participant writes Interim Report and receives written feedback from LTTP Coordinator.

Cycle 2
- ULT participant observes your class.
- Meet with ITT participant and discuss the class
- ULT participant writes reflection

Cycle 3
- ULT participant plans another class, provides you with plans, discusses the plans with you.
- Observe ULT participant’s class.
- Met with ULT participant, give feedback and discuss the class
- Student Feedback
- ULT participant arranges to get student feedback at some stage during the program (for example, CEDIR survey, online survey, informal questionnaire, discussion).

LTTP Final Report
- ULT participant writes final report and Teaching Platform.
Planning
Before each teaching observation your colleague should provide you with a:

- LTTP Observation Plan
- Teaching Plan Section 1
- Teaching Plan Section 2

Please discuss the plans with your colleague before the class.

Some examples of observation methods can be found in the participant’s handbook.

Which classes to observe?
The ULT participant should plan the LTTP to meet their own needs. For example, they might ask you to attend the same class each time so you can observe improvements or innovations. On the other hand they might ask you to observe one large lecture and one small tutorial.

Observing
During the observation, carefully observe and make notes (or complete a checklist) about the teaching and learning activities within the class. Please provide detailed comment. If you think everything the teacher did was effective, explain what specifically made it so effective, for example, “Every student made a useful contribution to solving the problem – this was encouraged by your use of brainstorming”.

Please give your observation notes/checklists to the ULT participant.

Some ideas to support your colleague
You might begin by discussing some broad questions about learning and teaching, for example:

- How do students learn in our discipline?
- What might be the impact of our own teaching on student learning?
- What ‘evidence’ would we need to answer these questions?

Feedback meetings
Meet after each observation. When you have been the observer start by asking them how they thought the session went, how well they met their aims, what the students learned, etc. Try to focus on teaching and learning and avoid discussing content.
Start by asking for the participant’s response to the class they taught

Use the participant’s Lesson Plans to begin the discussion, exploring what they had intended to achieve.

Ask your colleague for their own thoughts on the teaching and learning that took place, for example:

- How did you feel the class went?
- Did you achieve their aims?
- In what ways?
- What were you pleased about?
- Were the students actively engaged in learning?
- What did you think you did well?
- What might you have done differently?

Explain what you observed

Then listen carefully to their responses.

Remember this is not a performance appraisal program. Please do not judge performance but rather help your colleague to evaluate their own teaching actions.

Help them to identify some of their strengths and things to try

Don’t disillusion a colleague by providing a list of ‘problems’.

At the end of the discussion help them identify skills, ideas, techniques they would like to try out in the next observation cycle.

Please provide notes

You are not required to write anything other than feedback for your colleague. Please give your written notes to the participant after the discussion. (The participant appends your notes to their report).

Being observed

One cycle of the LTTP required your colleague to observe you teaching, and afterwards, to explore your ideas about teaching and learning. The emphasis in this program is on sharing ideas among colleagues so please provide this learning opportunity for your colleague. You are not required to complete any of the ULT proformas or write a report, however you may use the proformas if you wish. This observation of your teaching by the participant may be the second or third cycle of their LTTP.