

PARTNERSHIPS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING (PLT) PROTOCOL

Introduction

The PLT describes a process for academic development that is both formative and confidential. It is premised on the understanding that the sharing of good practice among academic staff leads to significant improvements in Teaching & Learning. The process is designed to meet the specific objectives of each of the participants. Observation of teaching may be an element, but the process could also include, for example, a review of teaching materials and assessment methods.

Methodology

It is proposed that each participant will select a partner, either from within or outside their school/discipline area. It is possible, in some cases, that school guidelines could influence the implementation of the selection process.

Each pair will engage in a 3-step process.

Step 1: Initial Meeting

The pair meets to agree the scope of the 'review' (see Appendix A) and define a schedule and mechanisms for formative feedback. It would be very beneficial if, prior to the meeting, each participant takes an opportunity to reflect on their teaching and their objectives for the review. The following questions may prove useful:

- Are there aspects of my teaching or assessment practice that I would like to investigate, or reflect on, further? (Note: this might be to understand better why something works well, as much as something that is not working successfully.)
- Is there an aspect of my teaching or assessment practice that I would like to change?
- What aspects of student learning would be most useful for me to explore?
- What are my goals in teaching my subject? Are they being achieved?

(adapted from Gosling and O'Connor 2006)

Step 2: The Review

Each member of the PLT pair performs the review/observation as defined in the agreed scope. This may, for example, mean that each partner observes the teaching of the other in a real classroom situation.

Feedback can occur immediately after the observation or at an agreed time. Sample reporting and feedback forms will be available from the CELT website (see Appendix B).

Step 3: Overall Assessment of PLT

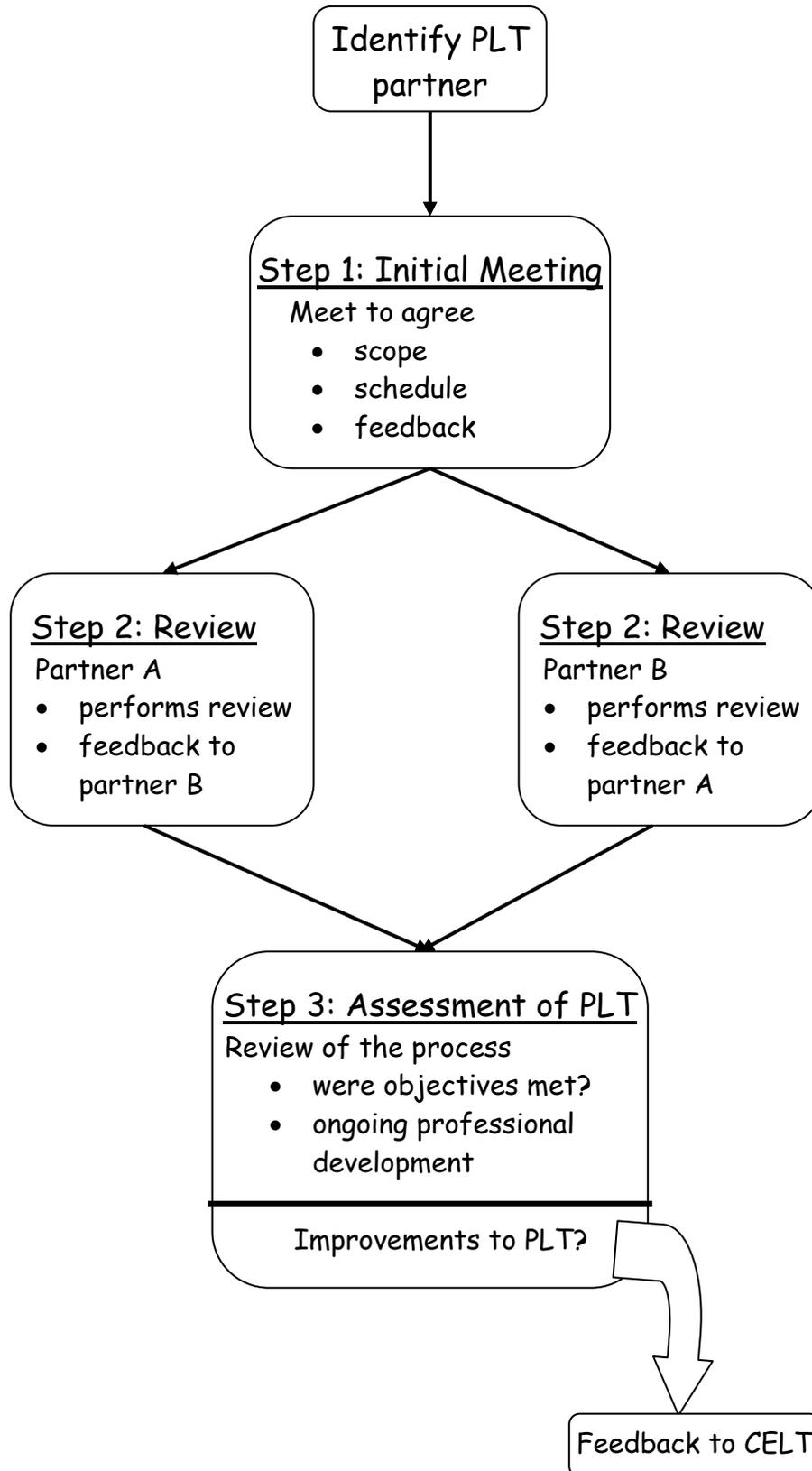
To complete the PLT cycle the pair arrange to meet for an overall review of the process. It will address:

- the extent to which the objectives have been met
- additional opportunities for on-going professional development in teaching and learning
- an assessment of the overall effectiveness of the PLT process and suggestions for improvement. A feedback form for this purpose is available on the CELT website (see Appendix C).

Optional Additional Step for Quality Review Purposes

The PLT pair may choose to submit a declaration to the Head of School, stating that the PLT process has been completed. A declaration form for this purpose is available on the CELT website (see Appendix D). Feedback on issues raised during the review may be included. The declaration form should be signed by both members of the PLT pair.

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APPENDIX A¹

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Focus of a Review

A review can be focused on any aspect of learning facilitation or assessment. The following list is designed to help generate ideas for Peer-Supported Review.

- Face to face teaching sessions
- Feedback on course work
- Assessment review
 - Readability and issues of clarity in assessment instruments
 - Giving timely and appropriate feedback
 - Development of on-line assessment
 - Making effective use of formative assessment
- Teaching/learning material development
 - Developing more varied approaches to the delivery of material
- Using Blackboard effectively
 - Incorporating a Blackboard element to support learning
 - Using Blackboard interactively
- On-line discussions
- Strategies for effective distance learning
- Postgraduate supervision
- Curriculum development
- Module review
- Implementation of a more accessible curriculum
- Clinical teaching
- Fieldwork learning
- Using external speakers effectively

¹ Peer-Supported Review of Learning Teaching and Assessment: An Explanatory Handbook [Available at <http://www.elate.clinicalskillsnetwork.org.uk/resources.htm>]
Peer Review of Learning and Teaching, a Guide for Participants, Cardiff University 2006

APPENDIX B²

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Feedback Form

Part A – the Scope of the Review

The purpose of this form is primarily developmental. Part A should be prepared by both partners at step 1, documenting the agreed scope of the review.

Name of Reviewee:

Name of Reviewer:

Date of Initial Meeting:

Scope of the Review:

This may include, for example: lecture, seminar, tutorial or laboratory sessions; teaching materials, including electronic resources; assessment methods; online teaching sessions.

What are the Reviewee's objectives for the review?

Are there any areas on which the Reviewee would particularly welcome feedback?

Any other issues?

A copy of this form should be retained by both PLT partners.

² Adapted from sample form at the University of Nottingham

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**Feedback Form
Part B – Initial Feedback**

The purpose of this form is primarily developmental. Part B should be completed by the Reviewer immediately after the review has occurred, and returned to the Reviewee.

Name of Reviewee:

Name of Reviewer:

Date of Meeting:

What are the positive points you would like to highlight? If the review involved an observation of teaching, what went well during the session?

What, in your opinion, could be improved or developed? How might this be achieved?

Please comment on areas where the Reviewee invited feedback.

Any other comments or suggestions?

A copy of this form should be retained by both PLT partners.

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**Feedback Form
Part C – Reflection & Assessment**

The purpose of this form is primarily developmental. Part C should be completed by the Reviewee following discussion between both partners at step 3, as a reflection on the effectiveness of the process. A copy should be sent to the Reviewer.

Name of Reviewee:

Name of Reviewer:

Date of final meeting:

What did you feel were the most important points to emerge from your discussion?

What changes, if any, will you make as a result of the discussion?

How well, in your opinion, were your objectives for the review process met?

What ongoing professional development will you consider as a result of the feedback you received?

A copy of this form should be retained by both PLT partners.

APPENDIX C

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Feedback on the process

Comments on the effectiveness of the PLT process

Suggestions / Recommendations for Improvement of the PLT process

Name of Partner A:

Signature:

Name of Partner B:

Signature:

Date:

Please return this form to the Assistant Director, CELT.

APPENDIX D³

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Declaration of Completion

We confirm that a PLT cycle has been completed.

Date process completed:

Type of teaching process reviewed:

Name of Partner A:

Signature:

Name of Partner B:

Signature:

We agree to make the following recommendations:

(may include, for example, recommendations for dissemination of interesting/good practice, staff development, or any other matters that should be drawn to the School's attention)

Please return this form to the Head of School

³ Adapted from sample form at Cardiff University