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| **QU Health Guidance | Teaching Observation & Review for:**New faculty Faculty applying for contract renewalFaculty seeking academic promotion |

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 | **Version Number: 1.0** |
| **Effective Date:** enter a date. |
| **Approved by:**  |

# Source

This guidance was developed by the Academic Quality Department (AQD) at QU Health to outline the procedures and processes for ‘Teaching Observation and Review’ within QU health. The primary objective is to offer a clear and standardized approach for all QU health colleges, serving both new and current faculty members undergoing renewal or seeking academic promotion.

# Purpose

The purpose of this guidance is to institute standardized procedures that ensure fair evaluation of teaching effectiveness for new faculty serving a probation period, and for existing faculty undergoing contract renewal or seeking academic promotion. It also aims to provide reviewers with insight into their responsibilities in reviewing and assessing the instructional effectiveness the faculty member under observation.

# Who should know this guidance?

[x]  Vice President of Health & Medical Sciences

[x]  Dean

[x]  Director / Head of Department

[x]  Faculty

[ ]  Student

# Definitions & Glossary

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| **AQD** | Academic Quality Department |
| **HoD** | Head of Department or relevant administrator (as designated by the Dean) for colleges that do not have heads of departments |
| **Teaching observation** | An evaluation exercise which ‘*intends to provide instructors with formative & constructive feedback on their instructional practices in a class session and is an effective means to explore ways to strengthen instructional practices and achieve goals for student learning*’[[1]](#footnote-2)  |

# Scope

QU Health recognizes that standardizing teaching observation and review processes is crucial for a fair and rigorous evaluation of teaching effectiveness for new faculty serving a probation period, and current faculty undergoing contract renewal or seeking academic promotion.

The guidelines described in this document are applicable to **all full-time faculty members** who are:

1. **Newly appointed** into teaching, research, or clinical tracks.
2. **Due for contract renewal** (faculty retention form must be submitted through the Faculty Success Portal)
3. applying for **academic promotion,** irrespective ofthe duration spent at QU.

These guidelines do not extend to faculty members who occupy solely administrative roles while on academic tracks.

# Procedures & processes

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| **Teaching Observation & Review Committee (TORC)**  | * The Teaching observation & Review Committee (TORC) is constituted to evaluate the instructional effectiveness of faculty members at QU health.
* The TORC members include:
1. Head of Department to which the faculty under assessment is affiliated.
2. Associate Dean for Academic Affairs within the college to which the faculty under assessment is affiliated (or Head of another Department within the same college).
3. A representative from the Academic Quality Department.
* TORC members evaluate the instructional effectiveness of faculty members under observation according to the criteria specified in the teaching observation & review forms [**appendix**].
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| **Timeline of teaching observation & review sessions** | 1. For *new* faculty (serving a probation period), the teaching observation & review session is scheduled during the 2nd semester [between weeks 2 and 7] after joining their respective college at QU Health [**figure 1**].
2. After completing their probation, faculty must undergo a teaching observation & review session during their ‘*second contract renewal cycle*’. The session must be scheduled during the semester immediately preceding the final year of the faculty member’s second contract [[2]](#footnote-3) [between weeks 2 and 7] [**figure 2**].
3. Faculty seeking ‘*academic promotion*’ within six years of their initial appointment to their respective college must participate in an *additional* teaching observation & review session. The session must be scheduled during the semester immediately preceding the deadline for academic promotion portfolio submission (QU academic promotion cycle due dates are 1st October and 15th March of each academic year) [**figure 2**].
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| **Evaluation of the observed faculty member** | * Within the *first two weeks* of the designated semester (items 1, 2, and 3 above) each college shall compile and submit a list of faculty members undergoing teaching observation & review (pertaining to probation, contract renewal, and academic promotion). The list specifies the faculty names and specific session details session details intended for observation & review [**appendix**].
* The AQD assigns a representative for each session (as part of the TORC).
* The college appoints the other two TORC members.
* TORC members are required to observe only the *first hour* of the teaching session, irrespective of its total duration.
* TORC members evaluate the session of the observed faculty member based on the criteria delineated in the teaching observation & review forms [**appendix**].
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| **Documentation post-evaluation** | * Each member of the TORC must individually complete the designated form [**appendix**] and forward it to the head of department to which the observed faculty is affiliated.
* The Head of Department aggregates the inputs from the three forms, producing a summary document [**appendix**] detailing *average* scores and *anonymized* feedback from TORC members. The summary circulated among the TORC members for their signature, finalizing the report.
* The Head of Department convenes a meeting with the observed faculty to deliberate the feedback provided.
* The head of Department and the observed faculty member jointly sign the final report, with a copy subsequently forwarded to the Dean’s office.
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# Timeline

Table 1. Process & Timeline for teaching observation & review process for **new** faculty (serving a period of probation)

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| **Task** | **Timeframe**  | **Responsibility** |
| **Second Semester from initial appointment** |
| Submit the list of *new* faculty members undergoing teaching observation & session details | Week 1 | HoD (prepare the list)Associate Dean (send the college list to the AQD) |
| The AQD appoint a representative as part of the TOR committee | Week 1 | The Director of Academic Quality Department |
| Teaching Observation & Review | Week 2 – 7 | TOR members, HoD  |

Table 2. Process & Timeline for teaching observation & review process for faculty applying for **contract renewal** post-probation (**2nd contract renewal cycle**)

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| **Task** | **Timeframe**  | **Responsibility** |
| **Semester immediately preceding the FINAL year of their *current* contract**  |
| Identify and submit the list of faculty members undergoing teaching observation & session details | Week 1 | HoD (prepare the list)Associate Dean (send the college list to the AQD) |
| The AQD appoint a representative as part of the TOR committee | Week 1 | The Director of Academic Quality Department |
| Teaching Observation & Review | Week 2 – 7 | TOR members, HoD  |

Table 3. Process & Timeline for teaching observation & review process for faculty applying for **academic promotion** (within the first *six years* of their initial appointment in their respective college)

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| **Task** | **Timeframe**  | **Responsibility** |
| **Semester immediately preceding the deadline to submit the academic promotion portfolio (1st October or 15th March of each academic year)**  |
| Submit the list of faculty members undergoing teaching observation & session details | Week 1 | HoD (prepare the list)Associate Dean (send the college list to the AQD) |
| The AQD appoint a representative as part of the TOR committee | Week 1 | The Director of Academic Quality Department |
| Teaching Observation & Review | Week 2 – 7 | TOR members, HoD  |

# Appendix

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| Appendix-1  | QU Health | Teaching Observation and Review Form for **lectures, seminars** [faculty & teaching assistants] |  |
| Appendix-2 | QU Health | Teaching Observation and Review Form for **laboratory sessions** [teaching assistants] |  |

1. <https://teaching.utoronto.ca/teaching-feedback-services/teaching-observation/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. For instance, if the faculty member was appointed in Fall 2023, the 1st TOR session is scheduled in Spring 2023. The 2nd TOR session (for contract renewal purposes) is scheduled in Spring 2028 (assuming the 2nd 3-year contract expires in Spring 2029). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)