



The Growth Company

Observation of Teaching,
Learning and Assessment Policy

June 2020

Introduction – Make a difference

The Growth Company are committed to providing outstanding quality teaching, learning, assessment and coaching to promote a quality impact within learning, progression and achievements. This policy and procedure document relates to improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through observation across the Growth Company, Education and Skills. The implementation of this policy and procedure is intended to improve the impact of learning, making a positive difference for all.

“It is important that, in order to make lesson visits and scrutiny more accurate, inspectors know the purpose of the lesson (or the task to be completed), how it fits into a sequence of lessons over time.” EIF, Inspecting the curriculum.

1.0 Intent - policy

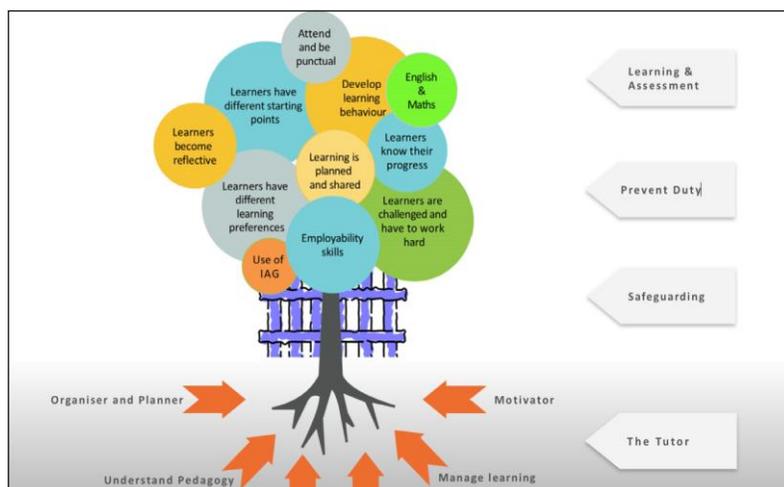
The aim of the policy is to set out the objectives and the key features of teaching, learning and assessment observations (OTLA) for The Growth Company delivery team and any partners involved in the education, learning and skills training of learners. **Leading us to outstanding quality.**

The outcomes will provide accurate and comprehensive judgements and development areas based upon sector benchmarks on the overall effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment across all provision. Added value will be supported further by a structure of peer observation and line management support which enhances the development of staff in their teaching, training and assessment roles. **Empowering our people to support each other.**

1.1 Intent - values

The process of observing teaching, learning and assessment enables clear development for delivery staff. The process highlights areas of strength and development, which are supported by clear and smart objectives to improve. Observational evidence will be used by staff and managers for the purpose of both business and staff self-assessment, appraisal and performance management. Intentions include having a clearly defined choice of either a ‘learning walk’ or a longer ‘observation’ process to best serve the purpose of quality scrutiny and support measures for all learner-facing staff (see appendixes for example documentation).

The five key drivers informing our approach to assessing the effectiveness of teaching and learning work alongside the **values** and missions of The Growth Company:



- The process should be conducted in an open and transparent manner – **doing the right thing**
- Assessing the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment should result in standardised judgements and areas for improvement to **build on success**
- Only approved, experienced and trained observers will undertake observations of teaching learning and assessment. **Making a positive difference** to the standard of QTLA.
- The process should underpin the drive for quality improvement across the organisation, will include all key aspects of managing and supporting learners and be integrated within the staff performance management system. **Empowering people** through support and challenge.
- A defined process to allow an appeal against an observation grade is in place and all appeals will be dealt with in accordance with policy. **Ensuring we are stronger together.**

*Subcontracted providers, who have their own policies for observation of teaching, learning and assessment, must ensure that their policies meet our required standards. This must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of The Growth Company, who reserve the right to carry out further observations during the quality assurance/improvement process.

1.2 Implementation

A short learner walk should take a minimum of 20 minutes and a maximum of 40 minutes – please see strategy

A full observation should take a minimum of 40 minutes and a maximum of 60 minutes

Preparation for the direct observation of practice:

- Observer/observee should agree what is being observed and any additional information prior to the observation starting, where possible.
- Observer/observee should agree and clarify the role of the observer during the intervention including how will they be introduced as to not undermine the session of learning.
- The observation should be planned to allow time for immediate feedback to be given to the observee.
- The observee should have opportunity for reflective learning following learner feedback.
- The observee should have the opportunity to reflect and comment on the observer's report

Questions you might want to think about:

- How did you prepare for this session (curriculum, learners, environment, prior learning and so on)?
- What is your purpose, role and responsibility – how does this link to previous sessions (sequencing)?
- What impact are you hoping for?

Post Observation

- What happened, what was achieved – was the impact as you expected?
- Describe your role and the action of others?
- What went well, even better if....
- What action do you need to take next in this intervention?
- What support do you require?

Frequency/observation grading:

Outstanding / Good	6 months formal (informal observations may happen in this time frame)		
Requires Improvement		3 months with a support plan in place	
Inadequate			4 weeks with a support plan in place *

*Should you receive 2 grade fours, then performance management measures will follow.

2.0 Responsibility

The observation and maintenance of the quality assurance process is management-led and supported. Overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation and maintenance of the policy rests with the individual Sector leads.

The Sector leads along with the Quality team are responsible for reviewing this policy every 12 months.

3.0 Strategy for OTLA

All observations at this time will be graded for benchmarking and standardisation.

- A learning walk will be utilised for peer observations and as part of a check and challenge approach
- Full observations are needed for probation and for formal measurements as stated below
- Observation reports will be provided within 2 working days of the observation (individual and Manager)

Where possible observations will be unannounced, mirroring the Ofsted inspection processes.

All learner facing staff will receive at **least two formal**, graded observations per year. Further formal observations will be undertaken where a judgment of *requires improvement or inadequate* has been evidenced. Peer observation activity will be introduced to include developmental feedback in order to share best practice and support across the Group delivery team. The observee RAG rating will be dictated by the level of risk; simply stated as observation grading.

Teaching, learning and assessment focus will be judged on: (EIF)

- Observees have expert knowledge of the subject(s) and courses they teach.
- Observees have extensive and up-to-date vocational experience.
- Teachers present information and/or demonstrate skills clearly.
- Checking learners' understanding systematically, identify misconceptions and provide clear, direct feedback.
- Setting work to learners that is demanding and ensures that learners build knowledge and acquire skills, improving on what they already know and can do.
- Observees encourage learners to use subject-specific, professional and technical vocabulary well.
- Observees use assessment well

**Ultimately ensuring the learner is learning (impact),
rather than the delivery staff is purely 'teaching'(implementation).**

3.1 Monitoring and Evaluation of Performance

Monitoring and evaluation of staff performance and implementation of the observation and teaching, learning and assessment policies and procedures are undertaken through:

- Monthly reporting in Management reports of 'in month' observations (learner walks/observations).
- Quarterly analytical summary reports to the Management team measuring impact of delivery and related support mechanisms in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Quarterly observation moderation activity to feed into performance management structures and improvement planning (cross-group where possible for best practice).
- Annual review of the quality improvement cycle processes, procedures and documentation.
- Emerging trends and themes of identified risks which the Quality and Heads of Learning will analyse mapping planned improvements.

4.0 Procedure for Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

- Observations of Teaching, Learning and Assessment will be carried out by a core team of experienced and trained observers, including Sector Heads, Team Leaders, IQA's and where relevant, external parties.
- New learner-facing staff will be observed no less than twice during their probationary period; *a grade 2 will be required in order to pass probation* (full observations).
- Observations will not necessarily last for the entire duration of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment session. Staff can expect to be observed for approximately 40 minutes.
- A provisional grade, subject to moderation, will be given for each observation and recorded on the OTLA record.
- Except for the arrangements detailed above all OTLA records and feedback are confidential amongst peers
- Planning of OTLA sessions will ensure that all aspects of Teaching, Learning and Assessment have been observed over a period of time (ensuring that a solid baseline of activity has been observed).
- As a consequence of the OTLA activity learner-facing staff will receive a personal development improvement action plan.
- Resulting personal development plans from the observation will be monitored by the appropriate line manager.
- Reports will be returned within a maximum of 2 working days following the observation

4.1 Peer Observation

The aims of the peer observation framework and processes are purely developmental. These should empower staff to enhance and improve their own teaching and assessment methods/styles through sharing best practice with colleagues and ensure that learners receive good value for money and quality learning experiences. These should be undertaken on the learner walk paperwork.

The Growth Company are keen to foster a culture of excellence partnered with continuous self-improvement where all staff feel able to openly discuss their professional practice with colleagues and actively engage in the peer observation process benefiting learners and their own delivery practice.

The peer observation model is intended to:

- Share good practice between learner-facing staff.
- Provide information from a trusted and respected colleague on the characteristics of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Enable learner-facing staff to gain valuable feedback from others who are graded good or outstanding.

- Encourage discussion between colleagues in order to support the planning and implementation of changes in practice and inform quality improvement planning processes.

4.2 Moderation

- OTLA moderation meetings will be chaired on a quarterly basis by a member of the Quality Team. All OTLAs completed in the previous period will form part of the moderation activity for that meeting.
- Moderated OTLA records will be stored electronically on a shared but secure drive

4.3 Impact

It is expected that observations, learner walks and long observations will positively impact the learning experience for each learner. The short-term impact should positively affect motivation, engagement and attendance as well as a deeper more satisfying learner journey. The long-term impact, where appropriate, should increase learner-facing staff support, engagement and overall achievement of their learners.

1. We will provide an excellent learning environment and outstanding motivational environment.
2. We will provide a challenging, inclusive and engaging curriculum.
3. We will ensure that assessment is part of the learner experience, so progress becomes part of daily discussions.
4. We will ensure that learner personal and professional progression is centric to all we do.
5. We will ensure we are responsive to local labour market needs creating skilled workforces for the future
6. We will ensure that staff are lifelong learners, fully engaged with their own professional development.

5.0 Grade Descriptors

For more detail surrounding the grading criteria please see appendix 2.

6.0 Appeals

If an observee disagrees with the observer's report or judgement then initially this should be discussed with the observer within 5 working days of receiving the final OTLA report.

If after subsequent discussion the observer and observee cannot agree, the observee must contact the Head of Quality in writing within 14 working days. On receipt of the appeal the Quality and Curriculum Director will review the relevant paperwork and contact the observer to discuss the issues. A decision will be made and communicated to the observee within 14 working days to uphold the original grade or to carry out a second observation with the individual using an alternative observer as soon as possible.

The decision of the Quality and Curriculum Director at the end of the appeals process is final.

Observation Form

Classified: Internal Personal and Confidential
Developmental Observation



Name of observed			FT / PT	Level	Entry	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
Observer			Date:	Attendance	On register:	Present:	Male:	Female:		
Observation time	Start:	End:	Min:	Learner type (tick)	14-16	16-18	19+	Apps	Mixed	
Delivery type	Remote		Face to Face		Lesson type (tick)	Classroom Practical	1:1	Mixed Tutorial / Review	IAG	

Intent of the session:

Summary of the impact of teaching and learning on learner progress:

Prompts	Impact of teaching on learning	Areas for development
Planning - Intent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impact of planning on meeting the needs of learners? 		
Teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intent explained, outcomes, targets & expectations shared Session offers variety Individual and group activities Balance of teacher vs learner input English & maths Motivational 		
Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment for learning Challenging questions Attitudes & behaviour Standards of work New learning Learning vs doing Was it taught or was it learnt? 		
Wider skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality, diversity, Prevent and British Values applied to work Are learners safe? Employability skills and workforce/team behaviour evidenced? 		



Additional Observer Notes:

Developmental Feedback (Use this sheet to provide the tutor with supportive feedback on not just what to improve but how)	
Developing planning to improve learning:	
Developing teaching strategy to improve learning:	
Getting more from Learner support:	
Developing life, vocational and employability skills:	
Issues flagged for Leadership and Management to address. Include any aspects of good practice to be shared.	

Grade	
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Targets from previous observation:	Achieved:

	Do you enjoy your lessons in this subject? Why?	Do you feel supported & challenged to achieve your goal / course? How?	Is this a typical session? In what ways? If not, why not?	Work Scrutiny	
				Positives	Areas to improve
Learner 1					
Learner 2					
Learner 3					

Classified: Internal Personal and Confidential
Developmental Observation



Self-reflection: (To be completed by the observee before targets are agreed)
Means of achieving target:
Positives:
Areas to improve:

Action	Target to develop	Planned outcome	When
1			
2			
3			
4			

Signatures	Observer	Observee	Date
Agreed date of next OTL (if 3/4)			



Long
observation.docx

Joint Observation Feedback

Classified: Internal Personal and Confidential

Joint Observation Feedback



Provider		Address		
Joint Observer Names		Telephone & Email		
Trainer Name	18/19 Grade	Area of Learning	19/20 Grades	Area of Learning
Venue:			Date & Time of Observation:	

Joint Observation Criteria

Criteria	Yes / No	Comments
Provider Planning		
Provider Observation Process & Criteria		
Provider Observer Level of Experience		
Provider Observer Identification of Positives & Areas for Development, Key Actions for Trainer² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared findings of grading position - Shared findings of positives matches - Shared findings of areas for improvement - All critical areas for improvement identified 		

Joint Observation Ratification / 2019-20 Draft V 1 July 2020

Classified: Internal Personal and Confidential

Joint Observation Feedback



- Summary of actions for trainer* identified		
Quality of Observer's Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Judgement, example, impact - Good practice identified - Poor practice identified - Sufficient detail to inform future improvements - Summary actions for tutor with timescales clear - Grading of some kind demonstrating positive or requires improvement 		
Provider Observer feedback to Trainer – if practicable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear and unambiguous - Highlights positives - Highlights areas for improvement and why - Details actions with clear timescales for review - Grading of some kind demonstrating positive or requires improvement 		
Recommendation	Yes/ No	Areas for Development for Observer

Joint Observer

Name	Signature

Joint Observation Ratification / 2019-20 Draft V 1 July 2020



Joint Observation Feedback form V02.d

APPENDIX 2

Grade Descriptors

Activity description	Standard (Good / Outstanding)	For development (requires improvement / inadequate)
Explains the expected outcome to learners	Very clear	Confusing
Links how this skill relates to work and employability (prior learning)	Very clear link	Unclear how it links
Explains appropriate risk assessment / H&S / PPE	Well reinforced	Weak or passive reinforcement
All resources required are readily available	Well planned	Resources not available
Learners can easily see what's going on, attentive/engaged	Well organised	Some can't easily see
Attention directed to specific learning points	Very clear	Missed opportunity
Good pace, step-by-step and easy to follow	Tasks well staged	Too fast/too slow
Are learners just watching or active participants?	Learners involved	No involvement

Could technology have been used - mini-cam & screen?	Appropriate	Missed opportunity
Effective linking of theory and practice	Very clear link	Disjointed approach
Learners encouraged to respond, ask questions	Learners are passive	Little inclusion
Good use of Q & A to check learning points	Very effective	Area to improve
Learners get to practise the new skill	Outstanding	No follow up
Did learning take place, can it be evaluated?	Significant	Difficult to evaluate
Learners are safe, Prevent, radicalisation and or extremism	Naturally occurring and managed	Not mentioned/insufficient
Effective use of checking prior learning / sequencing	Clearly utilised	Insignificant
Learning styles are taken into account	Confidently	Ineffective

Version control

Description	Name / Title	Signature	Date
Prepared by	Helen Stevenson-Miller	HStevenson-Miller	29/06/2020
Reviewed by			
Approved by			

Document Change Log Table

Rev. No.	Page No.	Description of Amendment	Approved by	Effective Date