



Evaluating Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Guidance Handbook

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Process for Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Rationale for all observation

It is DH Associates policy to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment from the viewpoint of the learner but more importantly a focus on the development feedback for our delivery staff.

- Observations are not intended to be reactive and bureaucratic but to lead to genuine improvements through the provision of constructive feedback and subsequent professional development.
- Observations focus on the learner's experience and will cover as much of the teaching and assessment process as possible.
- Observations of the induction process will have a dual focus and will provide judgements on the quality of the induction process and all of its components along with a separate judgement on the start of the learner journey.
- DH Associates will use the results of the observations to feed into the Self-assessment report and to support judgements made against Quality of Provision of the Common Inspection Framework.
- The Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (OTLA) process looks to use the excellent practice within observation and facilitate the identification, sharing and developing excellent practice among peers.
- Feedback given once observation is completed will be detailed, constructive and developmental of staff.
- Development needs will feed into appraisal system and inform future CPD.
- Provide and ensure consistency, validity and rigour within the observation process.

Learner Walks and Peer Observations

Learner Walks will be conducted by members of the observation team or a designated external consultant throughout the year. Learner Walks are designed to be an informal process that focuses on either a snapshot of learning or a particular theme e.g., beginning of lessons. Peer walks focus on the sharing of excellent practice between deliverers.

All deliverers will receive feedback and an opportunity to discuss required development needs.

During learning walks, observers will match and talk to learners, tutors and others in a range of environments or social spaces in order to better understand the everyday learner experience.

The Categorisation of the Observation Process

The Quality Director is responsible for the observation process and the formulation of the summary outcome profile. The formulation of a profile continues to be of importance to monitor our distance travelled in improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and in meeting our challenging KPI's.

Protocols and Timings

DH Associates will conduct observations on a scheduled basis.

Those observed will:

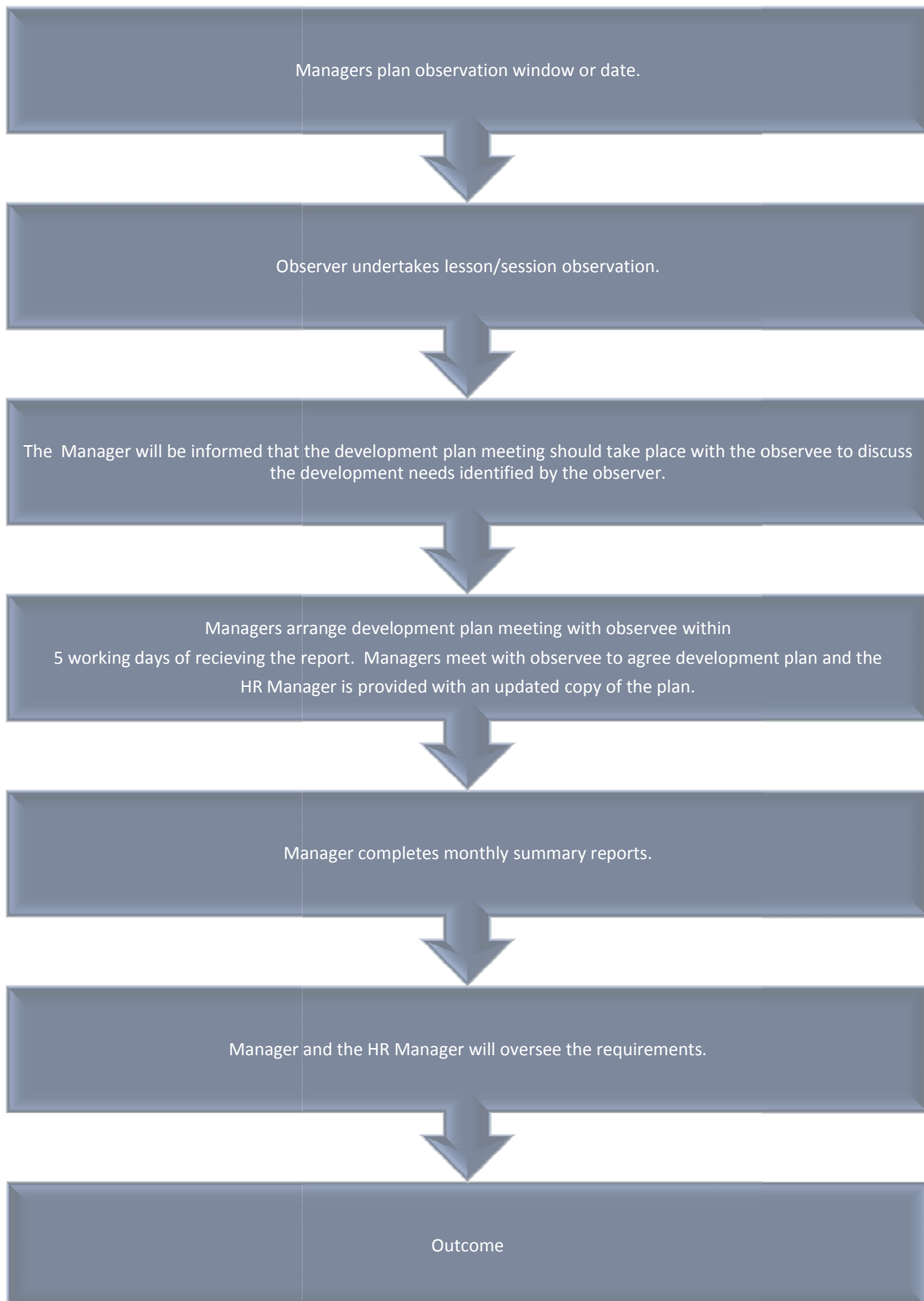
- Be informed of the outcome and a brief overview of strengths and weaknesses and a focused discussion on the required development points as soon after the observation as possible.
- Will receive written feedback within 5 days of the observation included in a copy of the observation report and associated development plan.
- Be asked to provide feedback on the process
- Delivery staff may be asked to support others and/or allow their colleagues to peer observe sessions/lessons.

Employees may request a follow up meeting with their observer should it be required.

The Observation Team

Observers will have undergone rigorous observation training and new observers will have a buddy observation with an experienced professional to moderate the process. All observers must participate in regular standardisation and moderation activities. Observers will be respectful and act professionally throughout the process. DH Associates will use external consultants to conduct or moderate observations. The Directors will receive monthly profiles for each team detailing the current percentage of exceeds, meets and below expectations.

The Process



Guidelines for a session that meets expectations:

- Setting of clear objectives which are made known to the learners
- Enthusiastic and interesting training which provides an enjoyable experience for learners
- Activities that are suitable for all learners, whatever their age, ability and cultural background, and which are suitably demanding
- Awareness of different individual's needs
- Effective questioning of learners to check their understanding
- Learners demonstrating their achievements through improved knowledge, understanding and skills
- Skilful leadership of discussions to ensure that learners' contributions are encouraged and valued
- Clear explanations, particularly of the links between theoretical knowledge and its practical applications
- Accurate and up to date technical knowledge
- Sensitivity to equality and diversity issues
- Embedding of personal development, behaviour and welfare issues
- Advocate British Values and instil the Prevent Ideology
- Staff to promote equality and diversity in teaching and learning
- Clear writing on dry wipe boards, interactive boards and flipcharts
- Staff develop, where appropriate, learners' English, Mathematics, ICT and Employability skills to prepare them for their future progression
- Learners can articulate personal skills they have developed
- Interesting and relevant use of ICT
- Good quality handouts that are well produced, free from errors and which contain references where appropriate
- Sufficient coverage of ground in the topic
- Effective management of any transition between individual and group work
- A crisp end to the lesson/session, summarising what has been learned and avoiding 'tailing off'

Discussion and developmental feedback

This takes place following the observation to enable delivery staff to build on what they are doing well and feel confident about introducing change where necessary. Any actions agreed as a result of the discussion should be practical and achievable and leave the deliverer feeling that they can make progress.

At the beginning of the discussion it is helpful to restate the purpose and structure of the meeting and, where necessary, to clarify any points about the session. It is important to highlight when the discussion is beginning and to end with a summary of the key points and the agreed action plan.

At all times the observer should focus on how effective the session was in enabling learning to take place and the way in which the teaching and activities contributed to it. When making their judgement, observers should always refer to the evidence they are drawing on and be mindful of the criteria against which their judgements are being made.

Feedback Guidelines

During the discussion it is important to:

- Remain courteous and objective
- Focus on factual observations rather than personal judgements
- Clearly identify strengths and areas for improvement and how they contribute to the overall categorisation
- Avoid identifying standard practice as a strength
- Distinguish clearly between description and evaluation
- Give praise where it is deserved and always be constructive
- Lead to the development and agreement of a clear action plan for improving teaching, learning and assessment

The most effective discussions are when:

- The discussion clearly conveys the key judgements made
- Focuses on the key issues and avoids feeding back every detail observed
- Enables the staff member to feel that the experience will contribute to their professional development
- Provides the opportunity for the observee to reflect on the session and identify actions to be put in the plan

Less effective discussions are when:

- The observer dominates the discussion
- The observer fails to discuss issues raised by the tutor/trainer
- The discussion is not taken seriously by either party
- The discussion is rushed
- The observer is apologetic about the judgements or over-prescriptive in their suggestions
- The observer bases judgements on personal views rather than objective criteria
- The observer avoids discussion giving difficult messages

Some advice on giving difficult messages in a discussion

- Focus on the issues and not the person
- Concentrate on the learners' learning and on what did or did not contribute to this
- Be succinct and direct, avoiding ambiguities
- Illustrate the points being made with examples from the session observed
- Own the judgement message, not becoming apologetic or defensive
- Allow the lecturer time to respond and to give their assessment
- Listen carefully and acknowledge what the observee has to say
- If the observee constantly refutes the judgements, reiterate the evidence in a quiet, assertive manner
- Identify achievable targets for improvement

Feedback can be challenging for the observer if the observee:

- Is primarily focused on the outcome rather than improvement
- Is not motivated to listen to the feedback
- Is uncommitted to taking action to improve
- Is shocked, upset or angry
- Finds it difficult to accept their areas for improvement (and in some cases their strengths)

DOCUMENTATION

The following documentation must be used in accordance with the procedures outlined above.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment paperwork

DH Associates Doc: Observation feedback form
DH Associates Doc: Learning Walk Form
DH Associates Doc: Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Procedure
DH Associates Doc: Observation Form
DH Associates Doc: Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy

Further Guidance for Information

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/553864/Further_education_and_skills_inspection_handbook_for_use_from_September_2016.pdf