



Wac Arts College
Session Observation Policy

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The Observation of Teaching Policy and Procedures

1. Introduction

Session observation is an integral part of Wac Arts College quality assurance processes, self evaluation and CPD. It is a key factor to support continuous improvement in the delivery of teaching and learning.

2. Aim

Within Wac Arts College's culture of constructive feedback and support for staff, the Session Observation Policy and code of practice will seek to provide the highest standard of learning experience for all learners.

3. Management of the observation process

Overall responsibility for the Session Observation Policy lies with the Principal who will liaise with colleagues in order to ensure all tutors/teachers are observed at least once a term and whenever possible once every half term. Observations, feedback and recommendations will be shared with the Deputy Principal and Head of Pre 16.

- The observation team will carry out observations across all curriculum areas
- To support the standardisation process a number of observations will be paired
- Standardisation meetings will be held once per term with the Principal and all relevant colleagues
- Observers will have training in line with the requirements of OFSTED

Objectives

It is important that all aspects of the observation process are understood and endorsed by all staff. The process is designed:

- To develop and improve teaching and learning;
- To identify and acknowledge good practice and ensure that this is shared;
- To evaluate the experience of the learners;
- To measure standards of teaching and learning in order to enable national comparisons;
- To inform the self-assessment process;
- To support the assessment of leadership and management at curriculum area level;
- To identify team and individual staff development needs.

4. Procedure

Observations will take place at different stages during the academic cycle. The Principal will co-ordinate an observation timetable at the start of the academic year. Observations of new staff will take place at one month and three months into their probationary period. The outcome of probationary observations will be shared with the Deputy Principal and Head of Pre-16, and this will inform the wider probationary review meeting.

A key function of the scheme will be to offer help, support and mentoring to colleagues as appropriate. As part of the process, peer mentoring and observation will be encouraged and will be coordinated by the Principal.

- All tutors/teachers will be observed at least once per term, together with any resultant re-observations
- Appropriate notice will be given of the commencement of the observation period
- All teaching observations will be conducted against the scale used by OFSTED for lesson observations
- After each observation, the observer will provide a written report which includes feedback on the observation (see appendix 1 –Wac Arts College Session Observation form)
- After each observation formal verbal feedback will be given to the member of staff being observed by the observer as soon as possible, and within five working days of the observation.
- Where there is sufficient cause for concern, an action plan will be agreed on
- The action plan will identify development needs and the required response
- The action plan will be developed and monitored by the Principal. The observation report and action plan will contribute to the PDR process.
- Staff will have an opportunity to appeal against feedback. This should be done in writing within three working days of receiving the written feedback.
- Appeals should be made in accordance with the following procedure:
 - a) An appeal should be made in writing to the Principal stating the nature of the concern together with any appropriate documentation.
 - b) The Principal will arrange for a re-observation to be undertaken by another appropriate colleague within five working days.
 - c) There is no appeal against the second observation.
- Where a session observation highlights areas of inadequate performance the observee will receive mentoring support identified by the Principal. A re-observation will take place within 20 working days of the support agreement being implemented.
- The re-observation will normally be undertaken by paired observers. If the re-observation is graded as satisfactory or better, one further observation will be undertaken within another 20 working days
- If any re-observation or any subsequent observation within one term of the original unsatisfactory grade is graded as unsatisfactory capability proceedings will be instigated.
- Comments from observees on the process will be encouraged and welcomed, and the observation process will be subject to review and validation as part of the PPP's commitment to continuous quality improvement
- All data from the observation process will be held on a database managed by the Heads of Service and HR.

5. Code of Conduct for Observations

Observers should:

- Recognize and celebrate the achievements of staff and pupils.
- Carry out observations with professionalism, integrity and courtesy, recognizing that the process of being observed can be stressful for staff and disruptive for pupils.
- Work with teachers/group leaders to minimize any disruption to pupils which may rise from the presence of an unfamiliar person.
- Evaluate the work s/he observes objectively, basing judgments on sound evidence.

- Report honestly and fairly, ensuring that feedback gives clear guidance on both strengths and areas for professional development.
- Report within deadlines, verbal reports should be given within two working days, and written reports within 5 working days.
- Engage in professional dialogue, taking note of the information provided in class documentation and the teacher/group leader's perspective given during verbal feedback.
- Act in the best interest of the pupils, following up any concerns and maintaining confidentiality

6. External Quality Assurance

We use the appropriate OFSTED descriptors when monitoring teaching & learning.

We have partnerships with Camden LA, Islington LA, Brent LA & the Tri-borough school improvement teams.

Furthermore we have excellent links with all our referring schools, who we provide progress & attainment data to on a regular basis and who visit our provision to assist in the external quality assurance of our observations of teaching & learning.

We also have links with the Institute of Education and London Metropolitan University and provide initial teacher training opportunities which further supports the quality of our teaching & learning.

7. Guidance for observation:

Letter to teachers you are observing

Please ensure this letter or similar is sent to all teachers before they are observed, and sufficiently far in advance to enable them to prepare the documentation you need from them.

Dear

Re: Your lesson observation

I write to let you know that I will be observing your classes on .
This is a routine part of our quality assurance procedures. All teachers are observed regularly to help support and improve you lesson delivery. The lesson observation will last for between 20-40 minutes after which I will give you feedback. I will then give you a copy of the lesson observation sheet (see below). We can then meet up at a later time and go through it together.

On the day you need to have the following documents ready for me to look at:

- Teacher planner
- Curriculum Map/Scheme of work
- Lesson plan
- Records of Individual attainment (NC levels in English & maths and reading age in yrs & months), targets and ILP

If you are unsure about any of the above, or would like assistance with any of the documentation, please speak to me ASAP.

Yours sincerely

8. Session observation form

Tutor/Teacher:	Other staff:	Level:
No. Pupils:	Year group/Key Stage:	Project/Subject/Session:
Date:	Time(From/To):	
Session objective(s):		
Primary focus of observation:		
Previous Points for development:		

	Outstandi ng (1)	Good (2)	Adequate (3)	Inadequa te (4)
Teaching enables pupils to make rapid and sustained progress.				
Teachers have high expectations of all pupils.				
They plan and teach lessons that enable pupils to learn.				
Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout sessions, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with notable impact on the quality of learning.				
The teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics				
Level of engagement, attitude and commitment to learning				
Marking and constructive feedback from teachers ensure that pupils make rapid gains.				
Teaching strategies, support and intervention, match individual needs accurately				
Pupils acquire knowledge and develop their understanding				
Skilled and highly consistent behaviour management producing a positive climate for learning.				

Session Chronology

Comments: General

Comments: (Use of data, RSA competencies & ICT to support learning)

Points for development:

Judgement:

Observer(s):

Date:

9. Classroom Observation Prompt Sheets

Classroom/staffing/resources

- Pupils are seated/positioned appropriately.
- Safe moving or handling practice is evident.
- Learning resources are used effectively, stimulating learning and sensitively reflecting different groups, cultures and backgrounds.
- ICT is in use if appropriate.
- Displays reflect the learning objectives for the term – displays reflect the cultural diversity and contribution of the community – displays are used.
- Support staff are deployed effectively (this includes volunteers).
- Classroom is well organized.
- Welcome file is up to date and planning is available, clear and accurate.
- Sessions are organized in a way that minimizes inappropriate behavior.

Teaching

- Teacher has secure knowledge and understanding of the subject or area she or he is teaching.
- Staff set high expectations and interact with pupils in a way that challenges them, keeps the work focused and moves at a pace.
- Teacher shares learning objectives with pupils and staff.
- Teachers' planning aims to challenge all pupils.
- Staff employ a range of strategies, and communication is appropriate to individual needs.
- Staff show awareness of individual pupils' IEPs.
- There is evidence of assessment being carried out.
- Staff respond appropriately to pupils' communication.
- The structure of the lesson makes best use of the time available by ensuring that pupils are engaged for as much time as possible.
- Staff give positive and specific feedback to pupils, which reinforces certain behavior and where appropriate helps them understand how to improve and make progress.
- Staff respond to inappropriate behavior in line with the School Behavior Policy and individual behavior support plans.
- Opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility.
- Lessons are introduced and concluded effectively.
- Medical issues are responded to sensitively and discreetly.

Learning

- Pupils show awareness of a range of stimuli.
- Pupils attend to activities supported by familiar adults.
- Pupils respond to adult interaction in a way that enables adults to infer meaning.
- Pupils show a positive approach to their work – they are actively involved in exploring and handling equipment and materials.
- Pupils stay with an activity not flit between several.
- There is evidence of respect between pupils and adults, pupils are encouraged to articulate their own beliefs.
- Pupils treat their own and others property with respect.
- Pupils show initiative they are willing to take responsibility.
- Pupils are clear about what is expected of them.
- Pupils are involved in their own assessment.
- There is evidence of pupils learning.