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## Lesson Observation Policy



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### 1.0: Policy

At the Deaf Academy (“the Academy”) we aspire to offer the highest standards of teaching and learning for our students. Appointed observers observe each Teacher, Tutor and Learning Leaders at least three times a year and Communication Support Workers at least twice a year in order to:

- Recognise and share good practice
- Help to improve practice
- Maintain and improve the standards of Teaching and Learning across the Academy
- Contribute to the annual self-evaluation and self-assessment

Written and verbal feedback is provided to staff and incorporated into the annual Performance Development Review (PDR) and continuing professional development procedures.

This is in addition to informal observation visits, mentoring observations and peer observations.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the document "Teaching for Success Lesson Observation Protocol Academic year 2020-21". This document contains the Lesson Observation Form 2020-21 for Teachers.

### **Our pledge to students**

- We know every learner and do not have pre-conceived ideas of their potential.
- We value high quality teaching of knowledge and skills but understand it is the independent application of these which defines success.
- We understand that together we are all always developing and therefore we constantly strive to reflect, Support and evolve as a team.

## **2.0: Observation of teaching at the Academy (this includes both Teachers and Tutors)**

In preparation for an observation, teaching staff should refer to the Teaching Standards:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>

### **2.1: Who observes teaching?**

Qualified teachers will observe each other.

Observations may be carried out by more than one observer for the purposes of moderation and practice sharing.

### **2.2: Frequency of observation**

Each teacher is observed formally as per point 1.0. This ensures that observations are a process not a snapshot and increases the chances of being both valid and reliable in professional support and challenge. Additional observations may also take place for new or trainee teachers or for those who are going through a Capability process or have been subject to an observation that does not meet our standards.

### **2.3: The format of the observation**

Teachers are given one weeks' notice of the observation, and provided with the name of the observer(s), and information about how to prepare for the observation. Teachers may be invited to propose a focus for the observation. Lesson feedback and discussion time will also be allocated and always be within 24 hours of the lesson. (where possible). **Observer Focus:** The observation focus will be set by the Observer around the 'Key Principles' (see appendix 1). This maybe a theme linked to development across the Deaf Academy or linked to individual teachers' development.

**Teacher Context:** The teacher is invited pre-observation to contextualise this focus further based on any challenges/developments they have been working on for which they would like support. (see example)

Observations are long enough for observers to make a valid judgement about teaching and learning and should be at least 20 minutes. Where appropriate an observer may complete the observation during two or more stages in order to capture activity at different stages of the lesson. During the observation the

observer(s) will:

- Position themselves to see Teachers, students and Learning Leaders
- Are as unobtrusive as possible
- Review course records, students' plans, progress reviews and course work
- Evaluate students' work and seek their feedback
- Focus on students' learning and attainment
- Record observations on the lesson observation form

Records of observation are kept on the teaching observation form record and within the Teachers HR file.

#### **2.4: Observation Feedback**

Face to face verbal feedback is provided within 24 hours of the lesson observation. Feedback must be constructive, and meetings conducted in an atmosphere of trust. An improvement action plan may be agreed, where appropriate, which may include further training, mentoring or other support. Where examples of good practice are identified they may be used to share with colleagues. Written feedback will be provided within five working days. The observed has the right to append written comments to the feedback document.

The observation record and action plan are copied to the Teacher, the Curriculum Managers and the Assistant Principal (Education). It may also be shared with the Principal, Improvement Partners and Ofsted Inspectors. It is otherwise a confidential record and is not shared without the permission of the teacher.

In Education Research it is widely accepted that **overall lesson grading** is not reliable or valid. On that basis these observations are built around professional development. Judgements will be made by overserves, for example what areas of the lesson were good or need improvement however these will not feed into an overall grade. Where a teacher is not seen as working within the Key Principles or adhering to the Teacher Standards an intensive development and support programme will be put in place.

Where areas of improvement are deemed to be of significant concern, capability or disciplinary processes may be activated. Where there is a dispute related to the judgement of a lesson aspect the teacher can request a review can be made to the Principal within 10 working days.

Lesson observations will feed into the appraisal process and support overall performance judgments.

#### **2.5: Action in the event of inadequate observations**

Where an observation finds that a Teacher is not working within the key principles or adhering to the Teacher Standards, a follow up observation is scheduled within 2 weeks. Three separate observations teaching that does not meet the key principles or adheres to the Teacher Standards may lead to action under the Capability or Disciplinary policy.

Wherever possible, observations are carried out by two observers in order to moderate findings and grades and ensure consistency across the Academy.

#### **2.6: Appeal**

Where a teacher does not agree with feedback, they may appeal to the Assistant Principal of Education who was not involved in the original observation. A second observation will be arranged if required. Findings from the second observation are final.

Individual observation feedback is used as part of Teacher annual PDR and Personal Development Plan (PDP) process. Aggregate observation feedback is used as part of the Academy's self-assessment process.

### **3.0: Learning Leaders**

In preparation for an observation Learning Leaders should refer to the Teaching Assistant Standards: <http://maximisingtas.co.uk/assets/content/ta-standards-final-june2016-1.pdf>

#### **3.1: Who observes?**

Teachers or Higher-Level Teaching Assistants with:

- Appropriate communication skills to assess Teaching and Learning
- Good interpersonal skills and the authority to provide constructive and developmental feedback

Observations may be carried out by more than one observer for the purposes of moderation and practice sharing.

#### **3.2: Frequency of observation**

Each Learning Leader is observed formally at least three times a year. Additional observations may also take place for new Learning Leaders or for those who are going through a Capability process or have been subject to an observation that does not meet our standards.

#### **3.3: Format of the observation**

Learning Leaders are given one week's notice of the observation, and provided with the name of the observer(s), what the Observers are looking to see and information about how to prepare for the observation. Where more than one Learning Leader is working in the same class at the same time, both may be observed at the same time.

Observations must last at least 20 minutes. During the observation the observer(s):

- Position them to see teachers, students and Learning Leaders
- Are as unobtrusive as possible
- Focus on students' learning and attainment and the part played by the Learning Leader to facilitate learning
- Evaluate students' work and seek their feedback
- Focus on students' learning and attainment
- Record observations on the Learning Leader observation form

Records of observation are kept on the Learning Leader observation record and on the Learning Leaders HR file.

#### **3.4: Feedback**

Face to face verbal feedback is provided as soon as possible and in all cases within 24 hours of the observation. Feedback must be constructive, and meetings conducted in an atmosphere of trust. An improvement action plan is agreed, where appropriate, which may include further training, mentoring or other support. Where examples of good practice are identified they may be used to share with colleagues. Written feedback will be provided within five working days. The observed has the right to append written comments to the feedback document.

The observation record and action plan is copied to the Learning Leader, the Curriculum Managers and the Assistant Principal (Education). It may also be shared with the Principal, School Improvement Partners and Ofsted Inspectors. It is otherwise a confidential record and is not shared without the permission of the Learning Leader.

### **3.5: Action in case of failure to meet expectations**

Where an observation indicates failure to meet expectations, a follow up observation is scheduled within two weeks. Three separate observations providing evidence of a failure to meet expectations may lead to action under the Capability or Disciplinary procedure.

### **3.6: Appeal**

Where a Learning Leader does not agree with feedback they may appeal to the Curriculum Managers. A second observation will be arranged if required. Findings from the second observation are final.

Individual observation feedback is used as part of Learning Leader annual PDR and PDP process. Aggregate observation feedback is used as part of the Academy's self-assessment process.

## **4.0: Communication Support Workers (CSW's)**

### **4.1: Who observes CSW's?**

The Senior Communication Support Worker and/or one of the Curriculum Managers. The observers must have;

- Appropriate communication skills to assess teaching and learning and are competent to at least BSL level 3
- Good interpersonal skills and the authority to provide constructive and developmental feedback

Observations may be carried out by more than one observer for the purposes of moderation and practice sharing.

### **4.2: Frequency of observation**

Each CSW is observed formally at least twice a year. Additional observations also take place for new CSWs, for CSWs whose observation indicates failure to meet expectations, those CSW's who are going through a formal Capability process or at the discretion of the Senior Communication Support Worker.

### **4.3: Format of the observation**

CSWs are given one week's notice of observations. New CSWs are invited to propose a focus for the observation. CSWs are provided with the name of the observer(s), and guidance about how to prepare for the observation. Where more than one CSW is working in the same class, they may be observed at the same time.

Observations must last at least 30 minutes. During the observation the observer(s):

- Position them to see CSWs, students and teachers
- Are as unobtrusive as possible
- Focus on students' learning and attainment and the part played by the CSW to facilitate learning
- Evaluate students' work and seek their feedback
- Focus on students' learning and attainment
- Record observations on the CSW observation record

Records of observation are kept on the CSW's observation record and on the CSW's HR file.

### **4.4: Observation feedback**

Face to face verbal feedback is provided as soon as possible. Feedback must be constructive, and meetings

conducted in an atmosphere of trust. An improvement action plan is agreed, where appropriate, which may include further training, mentoring or other support. An improvement plan may also be agreed as part of the formal capability process. Where examples of good practice are identified they may be used to share with colleagues. Written feedback will be provided within five working days.

The observation record and action plan are copied to the CSW. It may also be shared with the Education Leadership team and the Principal.

#### **4.5: Action in case of failure to meet expectations**

Where an observation indicates failure to meet expectations, a follow up observation is scheduled within 2 weeks. Three separate observations providing evidence of a failure to meet expectations may lead to action under the Capability or Disciplinary procedure.

Wherever possible, observations are carried out by two observers in order to moderate findings and grades and ensure consistency across the Academy.

#### **4.6: Appeal**

Where a CSW does not agree with feedback they may appeal to a Curriculum Manager who was not involved in the original observation. A second observation will be arranged. Findings from the second observation are final.

Individual observation feedback is used as part of CSW annual PDR and PDP process. Aggregate observation feedback is used as part of the Academy's self-assessment process.



## **Lesson Observation Form 2020-21**

Teacher and Date:	
Subject and Class:	
Observer Focus:	

<p>Teacher Context:</p>	
<p>Observer Notes on Agreed Focus:</p>	
<p>Observer Notes Key Principles:</p>	
<p><b>Collaborative Approach</b> Observer notes on use of in class support (LLs, HLTAs, Therapies, other)</p>	

## Appendix 1: 'Key Principles'

For the unique Curriculum development journey and challenges these 'Key Principles' outline the focus for observations in 2020 21



**Relationships:** Good relationships are essential as the basis for teacher-learner growth. Students whom trust their teachers are more likely to take risks, enjoy lessons, achieve and aspire



**Knowing and growing every Learner:** Teachers and Students are working to SMART targets. These in conjunction with curriculum knowledge and skills development are assessed daily to ensure the growth of every learner.



**Big Picture:** Teachers are well planned and demonstrate a deep understanding of the 'big picture' both in terms of the student need and the Curriculum planning.



**Accumulating knowledge:** Teachers use subject expertise to develop coherent plans to accommodate students' retention (cognitive load) and develop knowledge and skills over time.



**Language & Communication:** Students preferred language/communication style is the starting point for accessible teaching and learning.



**Modelling:** Modelling is a key component in the development of skills. Teachers always model best practice before expecting students to attempt this independently. They ask deep and meaningful questions to check understanding and extend learning.



**Independent Application:** Students are encouraged to develop both their skills and confidence through independent application.



**Unlocking potential:** Teachers and students have high expectation of self and others. Teachers are aware of unconscious bias and are collectively aware of having 'endless expectations' of students and their potential output.



**Reflective Practice:** Both students, teachers and support are involved in reflecting on teaching, learning and support which informs further lessons and interventions. Marking and feedback are timely and constructive.