

## Construction Helpline

### 35 - Observation of Teaching, Learning & Assessment Procedure

#### Version 3

##### Policy Statement

Construction Helpline Ltd (CHL) seeks continuously to improve the service it offers to learners and employers. At the heart of that service is the teaching and learning process which goes on in classrooms and in the workplace. We recognise that by undertaking observations of this process we can determine the standard and quality of delivery teaching learning and assessment and help ensure high standards are maintained.

CHL is committed to ensuring that classroom observation is developmental and supportive and that those involved in the process will:

- carry out the role with professionalism, integrity, and courtesy.
- seek to reach agreement in advance on classroom observation to be carried out.
- evaluate objectively.
- report accurately and fairly; and
- respect the confidentiality of the information gained.

The performance of tutors and instructors will impact on learner progress. That means that the contributions of learner progress, the learning environment, the learning materials, the equipment available and the way that learners are kept active and involved during the training session are all considered in reaching judgements about the effectiveness of the learning experience and how CHL can do better. CHL aims to ensure that lesson observation contributes to the creation, and forms part, of a culture of reflection and continuing commitment to professional development.

Lesson observation activity makes a significant contribution to this aim through:

- Supporting teachers in becoming more reflective practitioners with high expectations for what learners can achieve.
- Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across areas of provision; identifying areas of good practice and aspects where improvement is needed.
- Informing development planning and other quality improvement processes.

##### Observer Training

The IQA Manager is responsible for ensuring that there are comprehensive, appropriate, and robust processes for lesson observation activity, recording of findings and monitoring of impact.

The Teaching and Learning and Assessment team (TLA) have been appointed to conduct lesson observations across the country where delivery is taking place. These include our Training Manager, IQA Manager and appropriately trained Trainers and Internal Verifiers.

The team is managed by the Training Manager who liaises with the TLA team to schedule the lesson observation activity carried out by the team. To carry out their work effectively and fairly, observers are all qualified teachers and

complete standardisation and training in observation. The Education Inspection Framework and its requirements are used as guidance.

All staff will be consulted on the pattern of observation to ensure that all teaching staff benefit from formal lesson observations to support them in reflective practice, identification of strengths and development planning.

All staff involved in the observation of lessons will be fully trained to ensure professional standards and consistency. As well as the initial training of all observers, there will be on-going training, linked to the identification and understanding of standards related to teaching and learning and the way in which observation evidence should be judged against those standards. Training will also focus on developing observers' skills in providing developmental feedback and supporting effective improvement planning.

### **Observation Criteria**

The quality of sessions is judged by identifying particular strengths and weaknesses and the balance between their respective weights in influencing the experience of learners. These differ somewhat according to the nature of the session, whether the emphasis is on instruction or assessment for example. Led by the IQA, the TLA team will work with trainers to identify criteria that judgements will be made against under the following headings.

#### Learning

- Learners engaged and involved in the session
- Learners progress against initial starting point
- Learners understanding and awareness of Equality and Diversity Issues
- Learners are improving their English, Mathematics and Functional Skills

#### Attainment

- Use of skilful questioning which promotes learning
- Learners being given formal feedback during the session
- Level of learner's answers showing development of learning

#### Teaching

- Variety of activity is planned, including individual, pair and group work
- Differentiation, planning to meet individual needs
- High expectations are set.

### **Conduct of Observations**

Observations take place in two phases.

Phase 1, which will consist of learning walks and will take place between September and December.

Phase 2 will focus on formalised peer observations of teaching staff between January and July

Feedback on the observations will form part of the performance management cycle feeding into IQA Reviews. However, it may be necessary for IQA's or the TLA to observe more sessions as part of the IQA strategy to ensure the quality of courses and delivery in line with AO requirements. An observation programme for each tutor or assessor may consist of a single observation or of a short series if they are needed to achieve a comprehensive and balanced view of a tutor's or assessor's performance.

All observee's will receive feedback and support to help make improvements.

The observation is likely to be most effective where both the staff member and the observer are clear about its objectives and understand the ways in which they can contribute to making the experience constructive.

The observer can contribute to the effectiveness of the observation by:

- Providing the necessary notice of the observation to the staff member.
- confirming that the staff member is familiar with the process and protocols for learning observations.
- arranging with the staff member a suitable time and place for prompt feedback.

The staff member being observed can contribute to the effectiveness of the observation by:

- providing a register of sessions attended for all members of the group.
- providing a scheme of work and lesson plan where appropriate.
- providing any pertinent background information relating to the students or the course.
- providing a copy of the current assignment or other assessment activity, with grading criteria.
- providing all hand-outs for the current session.
- providing up-to-date student tracking.

Following an observation, the observed member of staff will be asked to complete a reflective exercise. This will be done prior to feedback. Observers will feed back their judgements, and the evidence which led to them, to the tutor or assessor as soon as possible after the observation. The tutor or assessor should be made aware when that will be, during the observation.

Feedback should be given privately, in circumstances where professional issues can be considered in detail, calmly and in as relaxed an atmosphere as possible. Tutors and assessors will be given a copy of the observation form, including the grade awarded and their reflective exercise will be discussed. Any development programme needed, and fresh observations planned will be notified at the feedback in general terms, allowing for specific follow-up by a Training Manager within 10 working days.

Observations of a single session will normally last one hour (or as long as it takes to make a sound judgement), allowing for judgements to be based on the complete pattern of activity in a session.

The Session Observation Report will be countersigned by the tutor or assessor who has been observed, after an opportunity to reflect on the judgement made and to comment on it. Where the person observed feels unjustly treated – for example, if the connection between evidence and judgement is disputed – an appeal can be made within five working days to the Head of Quality. A response will be given in writing within five working days which may:

- Uphold the original judgement
- Modify the judgement
- Order a fresh observation, including by a different observer where necessary.

Observers should take care to identify good or outstanding practice and identify this on the observation report, which usefully might be shared among colleagues.

### **Learning Walks**

Learning walks will be used throughout the year to ascertain the normal day-to-day experience of the learner. Learning walks usually have a theme and evidence for this theme will be sought during learning walks. Sessions will

usually be 'observed' for about 10 minutes. No formal grade will be given to individual staff, nor will learning walks trigger formal Performance Management processes but they may contribute to existing cases. Learning walks will record whether areas being reviewed are 'above', 'at' or 'below' expectations and staff will be RAG rated based on outcomes of learning walks – this RAG rating will determine the urgency of formal observations.

### **Performance Management**

Staff who receive two consecutive session observations identifying the need for significant improvement or one observation identified as 'inadequate' will be subject to CHL Poor Performance Procedure. This procedure aims to support staff to improve their observation grade but may lead to dismissal if there is no improvement within the agreed timescales.