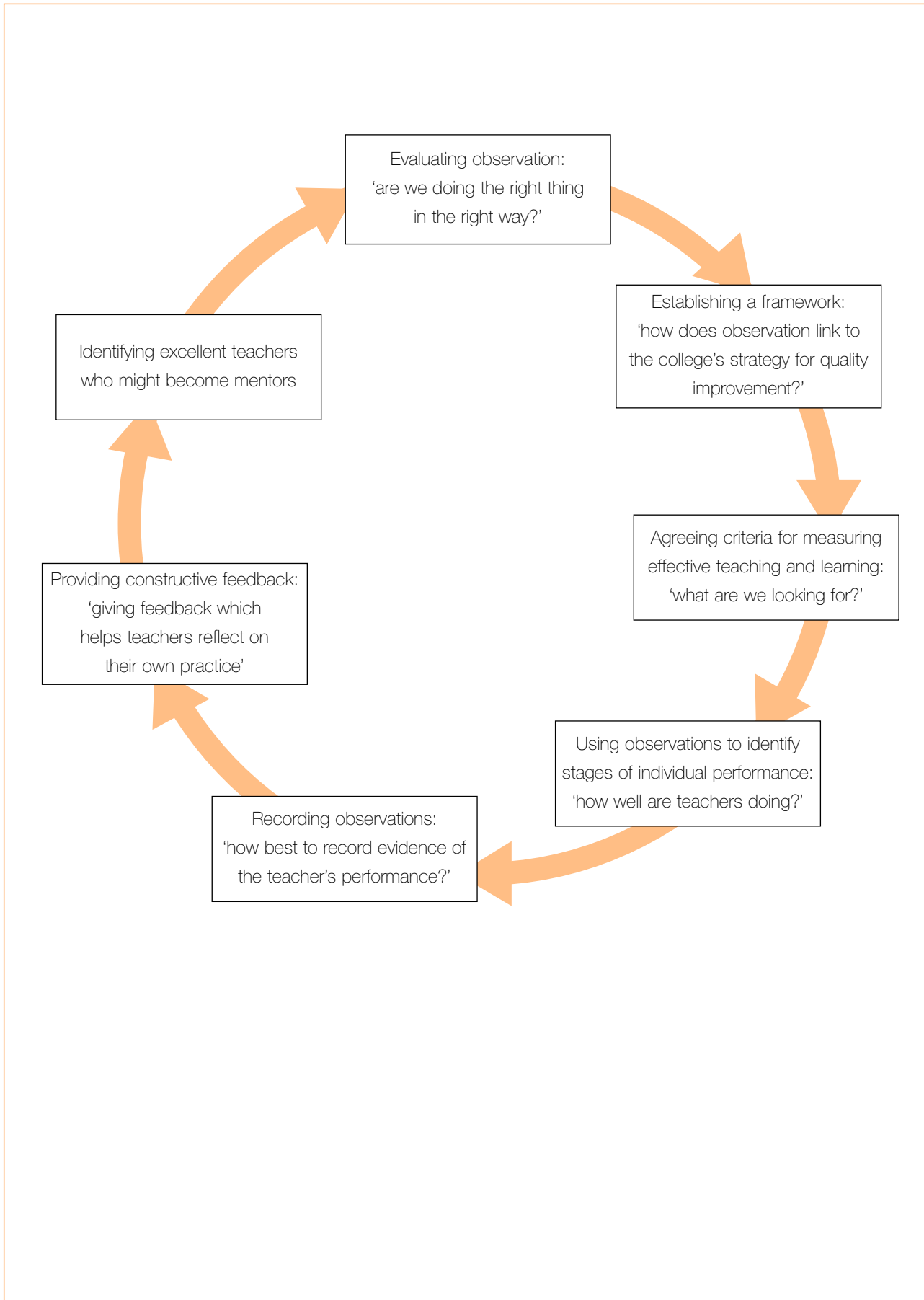


Section 2: Using Observation to Identify Stages of Individual Performance

Section 2 provides materials to support the main stages of the observation process. The process can be seen in the diagram:





A Framework for Observation

Introduction

Observation of teaching and learning is at the heart of a college's quality improvement strategy. The outcomes of observation may be used for a variety of purposes, including:

- a. identifying and sharing good practice, for example, through peer observations;
- b. providing opportunities for teachers to reflect on and improve their practice;
- c. comparing the standard of provision with internal or external benchmarks.

The outcomes of observation enable managers to identify the levels of performance of individual teachers. A growing number of colleges are using the FENTO standards to identify three stages of performance:

- a. the new practitioner;
- b. the established practitioner requiring new skills or needing to update existing skills;
- c. the excellent practitioner.

Colleges use the outcomes of observation to decide who might benefit from a mentor, and who has the right skills to become one.

A well-understood framework for observation needs to be in place if the college and individual teachers are to

benefit. Teachers need to be assured that observation will:

- a. use transparent, agreed criteria to identify stages of performance;
- b. act as a starting point for an improvement plan.

Four examples follow. In example A, an extract from a college's internal validation handbook shows observation as a key aspect of quality improvement. Example B is an extract from another college's lesson observation scheme handbook, showing the different types of observation for different purposes. The college has revised its observation scheme recently to include the best features of peer observation, observation by line manager for performance review, and observation by an experienced team for self-assessment. The new arrangements enable the college to identify the three stages of individual performance described earlier. Next, follows an extract from a handbook showing a flowchart of a college's observation process (Example C). Finally, there is an extract from the teaching observation pack provided for all teachers by the college's staff tutor (Example D). The extract ends with a section describing the link between observation, staff development and mentoring.

Question to consider:

- To what extent is the framework for observation understood by all teachers in your college?

Example A: an extract from a college's internal validation handbook showing observation as a key aspect of quality improvement

Internal validation

Introduction

The internal validation process is part of the college's quality improvement strategy. The process is managed by the internal validation and self-assessment working group which reports to the quality management group, a sub-committee of the academic board and chaired by the vice-principal.

Aims:

- to provide a framework for supporting curriculum delivery sectors in collecting for their self-assessment reports rigorous and independent evidence about classroom observation, support for students, resources and curriculum organisation and management
- to provide a mechanism for validating the grades awarded for classroom observations to ensure consistency of approach
- to monitor the outcomes of the internal validation process against internal and external benchmarks.

Frameworks

Each element of the validation process will be conducted using criteria and guidelines set out in:

- FEFC Inspection – Circulars 93/28 and 97/12
- OFSTED 16–19
- Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI), and increasingly, the draft Common Inspection Framework for post- April 2001.

Structure of the working group

The group will include:

- the vice-principal
- faculty heads
- director of standards and effectiveness
- director of curriculum
- director of student services
- a business support director
- a curriculum manager
- a business support member of staff.

(The handbook goes on to describe the different stages of internal validation and to provide guidance and pro formas for observers and those being observed for each stage).

Example A (continued)

Observation of teaching and learning

Classroom observations will be carried out by teachers nominated by the sector director and taken from a team of teachers appropriately trained in lesson observations.

The team of teachers is to include:

- sector directors
- faculty heads
- curriculum managers
- course team leaders
- director of curriculum
- director of standards and effectiveness
- staff who have achieved a grade one in previous observations.

The teacher being observed is expected to provide a scheme of work for the observer.

At least 50% of observations within any one sector are to be carried out by a variety of staff from outside that sector. Faculty heads and cross-college directors are considered to be outside of the sectors.

Where teachers from third party providers are involved in the delivery of the provision to be validated, a proportionate number of lesson observations should be undertaken.

Observers are required to record their observations on the designated pro forma.

Protocol and ethos

Teaching and learning are complex activities. Successful learning depends on a number of factors. These include: the structure and design of the course, the context, the subject matter, the personal style of the teacher, individual learning needs and styles of the students. The best way to judge the effectiveness of teaching is by the effectiveness of the learning.

Protocol for observation of teaching and learning

The purpose of observation is to contribute to judgements about the effectiveness of the students' overall learning experience in broad programme areas. The observation for validation is not the same as that for professional development reviews where the main focus is the development of a teacher's teaching skills.

Only trained observers will carry out observations.

Observers will complete the appropriate documentation.

They will provide feedback to teachers, preferably at the end of the session or, by arrangement, at another mutually convenient time within the same working day.

Example A (continued)

Feedback will summarise strengths and weaknesses which have been observed and for which there is evidence. A *provisional grade* will be given and shared with the teacher.

Each class observed will be given a grade; these will be collated with other grades to give a profile for that area of provision.

Observers will treat awarded grades and feedback with strict confidentiality. Teachers within sectors are encouraged to keep the grade and feedback between themselves and the observer.

No individual teacher is named during the validation process.

Best practice may be identified and teachers achieving grade one in lesson observations may be invited to undertake training to become part of the lesson observation team.

Poor grades will indicate to a sector director that issues need to be addressed as part of review and improvement.

Recording observation

A lesson observation sheet is used to record:

- data, for example, number of students on register, and numbers present, etc.
- preparatory notes, for example, relating the context of the lesson to a scheme of work
- observation notes
- strengths and weaknesses
- summary.

Length of observation

The observer will join the lesson at the start and remain long enough to check that learning is taking place, including:

- a. good relationships are established to promote learning;
- b. learning is set in the context of what has gone before and makes clear what it is intended to achieve;
- c. the interest of the student is engaged;
- d. a variety of appropriate teaching and learning styles are used, the students are encouraged to work on their own or in groups;
- e. learning is reinforced by the use of teaching and learning aids;
- f. sound knowledge of the subject is displayed by the teacher;
- g. information or instructions are provided at a pace and level which match the needs and abilities of the students;
- h. there are regular checks for learning.

(Source: FEFC Circular 93/28.)



Example A (continued)

Grading

A grade on a scale of 1–5 is given by the observer and can be shared with the teacher. The grade is based on the balance of strengths and weaknesses. However, strengths and weaknesses are not weighted by precise formulae. Minor weaknesses which do not significantly affect the students' learning may be discounted.

However, one major weakness may have a significant impact on students' learning.

Example B: Extract from a college's lesson observation handbook, showing different types of observation and their purposes

Lesson observation scheme 2000-2001

Introduction

The 2000-2001 lesson observation scheme introduces some fundamental changes to earlier schemes. Changes have been made following detailed evaluation by participants, a review by the quality committee, curriculum managers, the academic board and governors. This year's scheme reflects recommendations made by the academic board. It has been agreed that the focus for lesson observations should continue to be differentiated learning and how lessons meet the needs of individual learners.

Peer observation

Peer observation will normally take place within subject/course teams or groups of teams. Curriculum managers, in consultation with the director of curriculum and quality, will ensure that an appropriate number of observations per team takes place during the year. All teachers – salaried and hourly-paid – may be observed as part of the scheme. It is expected that salaried teachers will be observed twice per year. Peer observations will *not* normally be graded. However, teams who wish to grade may do so. The emphasis in these observations will be on sharing good practice and providing support and guidance. As a result of the observation, the observer will complete a form detailing any agreed actions.

Curriculum manager observation

During the course of an academic year, the curriculum manager will observe each salaried teacher in his or her section. In addition, curriculum managers may wish to observe hourly-paid teachers. Observations will be graded to provide evidence for quality assurance using the current FEFC grading scale. The observation will be used as an opportunity to share good practice and provide support and guidance. The curriculum manager will complete a form detailing any agreed actions.

Internal review observation

A team of teachers experienced in observations will make comprehensive observations of each college team over a two or three-year time span. The observation team will consist of teacher trainers, curriculum managers, the Principal, those trained in external quality review and other expert teachers. The overall planning of these observations will be the responsibility of the director of curriculum and quality. These observations will be graded using, as a pilot, the proposed 7-point scale which is likely to be part of the new common inspection framework.

Aim of lesson observations

The aim of lesson observations is to improve teaching and learning.

Purpose of the scheme for lesson observations

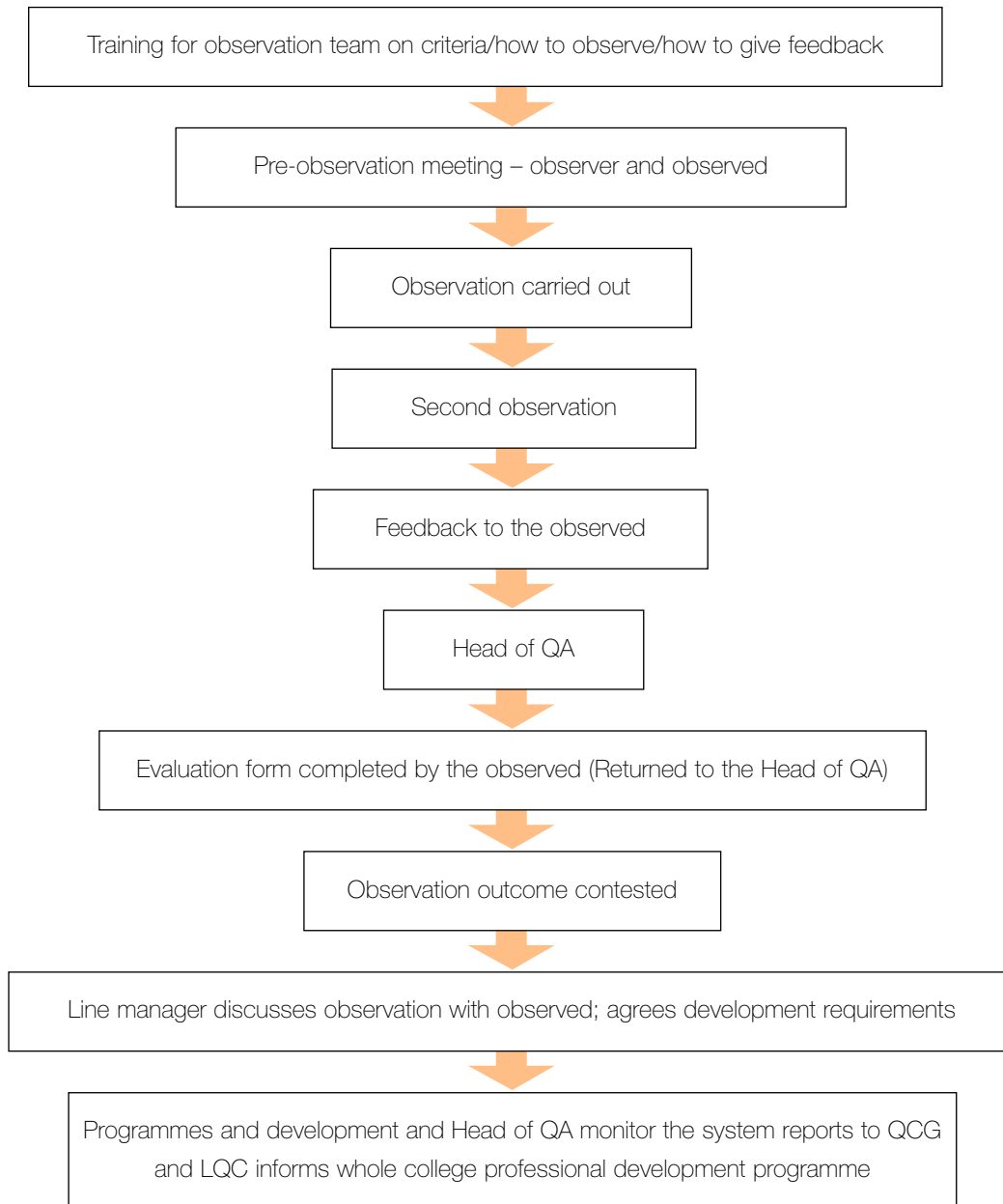
- to share good practice among colleagues
- to provide support, guidance and recognition for individuals and teams
- to encourage self-evaluation by lecturers
- to provide evidence for internal and external quality assurance.



Example C: Observation flowchart

One college has developed a flowchart showing the stages in its observation process.

Observation process



Question to consider:

- How might you adapt or improve the process described here?

Example D: Extract from guidance to staff from staff tutor

Teaching and learning observation

Frequently asked questions

1. Must I be observed?

Yes, unless you are:

- a probationary teacher
- undertaking a Certificate of Education course
- retiring or planning to leave by the end of the academic year.

2. Will I have any say in when the observation will take place?

- The specific class to be observed will be negotiated between you and the staff tutor based on the group, (for example, lecture vs. practicals) the timing of the observation and the availability of the students, for example, not on placement.

3. What types of classes will be observed?

- We plan to observe theoretical and practical sessions in any situation where learning is taking place.

4. How often will I be observed?

- Each teacher is observed every 18 months.

5. What will I get out of the observation process?

- recognition of your achievements
- identification of ways to improve your skills and performance
- identification of areas for training and challenging growth in teaching and learning
- help and support in developing innovative teaching and learning techniques.

6. What criteria will be used to assess my performance?

- Indicators of effectiveness in 10 areas have been identified
 - 1 Taking account of individual learner's needs, including equal opportunities issues
 - 2 Assessment plans
 - 3 Specific lesson planning (for the lesson observed)
 - 4 Effective teaching
 - 5 Materials and resources
 - 6 Scheme of work
 - 7 Checking for understanding to provide equal opportunities
 - 8 Orderly, stimulating classroom
 - 9 Behaviour management
 - 10 Learners participating in their learning

Example D: Extract from guidance to staff from staff tutor (continued)

7. What is included in the staff tutor role?
 - help for individual tutors to improve
 - providing feedback which helps teachers improve their teaching
 - opportunity for teachers to discuss their teaching.
8. Where can I go to find good practice in teaching and learning?
 - Several files of samples of good practice in schemes for work, lesson plans, activities, assessment plans, etc. are on file in the Open Learning Resource Centre.
9. What if I have a 'bad' session during the observation?
 - We all have days when unforeseen things happen in and out of college. In these circumstances, it would be unfair to proceed with the observation. These sessions will be rescheduled. The observation process allows for additional observations if it is felt that the initial observation was not a fair indication of a tutor's usual performance.
10. What if my lesson is found to have a number of weaknesses?
 - Everyone has areas in their teaching and learning which become rusty with time or which require updating. These will be discussed and may become recommendations for staff development. They do not generally indicate that the overall teaching is unsatisfactory. The college policy is that any teacher receiving a grade 3 or below will automatically be partnered with a mentor or provided with opportunities to share best practice.
11. How does this process inform general course-related quality issues?
 - Observation is concerned with the teaching and learning which occurs within a class setting. It is the section manager's responsibility to put together with other quality assurance data information about individual teachers in order to assess the quality of a course.
12. How are staff development needs derived from this process?
 - Individual staff development needs identified during the observation process will be forwarded to the section manager
 - General staff development issues will be shared with personnel using aggregated data collected during the observation process
 - Best practice sessions are open to all staff; and you are welcome to attend them to learn new skills, brush up on existing skills, and to share your ideas on best practice
 - Mentors are available to support staff in tackling areas of weaknesses.



Criteria for Measuring Effective Teaching and Learning

Observers and teachers need to share an understanding of what is effective teaching and learning. A growing number of colleges are using inclusive learning to inform their thinking. Example A shows an extract from the *Inclusive Learning Quality Initiative Materials* used by one college to promote discussion about effective teaching and learning as a starting point for devising criteria. In Example B, a college has used the FENTO standards for teaching and supporting learning to identify the criteria most relevant to its provision. Example C shows how an adult education centre uses the notion of 'agreed features' to draw up a set of criteria. Finally, the college in Example D has used the OFSTED Handbook as guidance for devising criteria.

Although the institutions use different approaches, they share an agreement that the five key questions to be asked are:

- a. are students learning?
- b. what are they learning?
- c. why are they learning it?
- d. are they learning it in the right way?
- e. how do we (and they) know they are learning it?

Questions to consider:

- To what extent do criteria used in your college take account of the questions given above?
- What opportunities are there in your college for teachers to work together on what the agreed criteria mean for their own practice?

Example A: Using Inclusive Learning Materials to Devise Criteria for Effective Teaching and Learning

The college used the following extract from *Inclusive Learning Quality Initiative Materials* to inform its thinking about effective teaching and learning. The excellent teacher will:

- a. understand how students' cultural, social circumstances, physical disability or learning difficulty might affect their learning and participation in college life;
- b. identify the support that a student requires and make sure it is available at the right time;
- c. understand how students learn best and use materials and teaching styles which match their learning requirements;
- d. recognise and record students' progress in learning and give students clear and helpful information on their progress;
- e. know students individually and have the skills to listen to, and take account of their views;
- f. understand the different ways in which students learn and use a wide range of appropriate teaching methods to match these;
- g. explain abstract concepts in the right way to develop students' understanding;
- h. ensure that students learn and progress by meticulously breaking down the process into small steps;
- i. communicate with students in straightforward and unambiguous language;
- j. turn the need for regular reinforcement of skills into enjoyable learning experiences;
- k. have high expectations of his or her students as successful learners;
- l. see those with difficulty in learning as a challenge to be tackled by creating stimulating and diverse learning approaches in which students can learn, rather than by describing students as problems;
- m. enable students to succeed when they may have failed earlier;
- n. teach students to speak for themselves so that they can take on greater responsibility for their own learning;
- o. provide learning activities which enhance the status of students as adults.

(*Inclusive Learning Quality Initiative Materials*, FEFC 1999.)

Example B: Using the FENTO Standards to Develop Criteria for Observation

Teaching and supporting learning standards

One college uses the FENTO standards to develop criteria for observations.

1. Goals and purpose

- **teaching schemes**, and assessment schedules, are at hand
- **aims and objectives** are made explicit, and are appropriate for students and syllabus
- **context**: the relevance and importance of the objectives are stressed persuasively; links are made to related learning
- **resources** are at hand.

2. Planning

- **active learning**: the lesson requires students to apply and develop the learning described in the objectives
- **an effective plan**: well paced, varied, active, interesting, challenging and logically structured
- **methods** are appropriate to students, objectives, and context
- **key skills and basic skills** are integrated and developed.

3. Content and presentation

- **content** and instructions are explained clearly at the correct pace, level, breadth, depth, and in a logical order
- **presentation** is lively and interesting
- teacher's **subject knowledge** is sound
- **voice** is clear and easily heard.

4. Atmosphere and relationships

- **atmosphere** is positive, enthusiastic, purposeful, and warm
- **involvement**: efforts are made to value and include all learners
- **rapport**: efforts are made to achieve mutual respect
- **student – student relationships** are well developed
- **dignity**: learners are treated with respect and dignity.

5. The student experience

- **interest**: student interest is engaged and sustained
- **activity**: students develop and apply knowledge and skills
- **check and correct**: learning is checked and corrected
- **praise/reward** for effort, progress, completion of tasks, etc. is frequent; criticism is constructive and positive
- **weaker students** are supported and rewarded for effort and the completion of ordinary learning tasks
- **able students**: are challenged but supported if necessary
- **autonomy**: students have an opportunity to work in pairs or groups and to support each other
- **creativity**: students have an opportunity to take control, exercise initiative, and make individual responses.

6. Resources

- **adequacy**: resources are adequate, appropriate, effective and up-to-date
- **handouts**: OHTs and other materials are clear, well designed, fit for purpose, and well produced
- **variety of media** and methods are used
- **safety** of the equipment and its use are ensured
- **accommodation** is appropriate and effectively managed
- **room layout** is appropriate and effective.

7. Achievement of objectives

- **clarity**: learning is summarised, clarified and played in context
- **achievement**: students develop and apply knowledge and skills
- **check and correct**: learning is checked and corrected.

8. Professionalism

- **timekeeping**: teacher arrives and finishes on time and expects the students to do the same
- **dress and manner** are appropriate and professional.

Example C: Using the Idea of ‘Agreed Features’ as Criteria for Effective Teaching and Learning

Lesson observation: aid to grading using ‘agreed features’

Introduction

The adult education centre describes its method as follows.

Teaching and learning is a complex activity. Even an experienced teacher might achieve a satisfactory standard of Grade 3.

An observer would expect to see substantial evidence that an ‘agreed feature’ has been met in order to tick the ‘Yes’ box in the following pro forma.

- The key word in awarding a **grade 1** is ‘outstanding’. Virtually all the agreed features will be ticked ‘yes’ and the lesson will have been conducted with flair, energy and imagination. All the students will have experienced positive and extending learning.
- To obtain a **grade 2**, a lecturer will have done most of the right things effectively; that is all or most of the guidance criteria supporting most of the agreed features will have been met. Most of the agreed features will be ticked ‘yes’.
- To obtain a **grade 3**, a lecturer will have done most of the right things but not fully effectively; that is not all the supporting criteria will have been met for several agreed features. Several of the agreed features will be ticked ‘to some extent’. There could be a very few ticked ‘not’, but these would be balanced by some ticked ‘yes’.
- To gain a **grade 4**, a lecturer may not be ‘doing the right things’. The lecturer will be ineffective with regard to several agreed features. For some features the supporting criteria will not have been met at all or very weakly, and will be ticked ‘not’. Several features will be only partly supported, and ticked ‘to some extent’. In some cases, a large number of ‘to some extents’ could warrant a 4 if there are few ‘yesses’ to balance any ‘noes’.
- A **grade 5** would be appropriate if there are a significant number of ‘noes’ and almost no ‘yes’ ticks. The teaching is inept and desultory, and few, if any, of the students learned effectively during the lesson.

Example C (continued)

Aide-mémoire for grading using 'agreed features' model (aid to grading)

	Yes		Yes
1 Student punctuality is managed		11 Briefings, instructions, summaries clear	
• teacher on time	<input type="checkbox"/>	• appropriate language	<input type="checkbox"/>
• latecomers tackled	<input type="checkbox"/>	• appropriately delivered to meet students' needs	<input type="checkbox"/>
• register taken	<input type="checkbox"/>	• repetition and reinforcement	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Session set in context		12 Learning resources used effectively by teacher	
• lecturer refers to previous lesson	<input type="checkbox"/>	• technical competence	<input type="checkbox"/>
• linked to scheme of work/syllabus	<input type="checkbox"/>	• appropriate use linked to objectives	<input type="checkbox"/>
• learning outcomes clear	<input type="checkbox"/>	13 Resources used effectively for learning by students	
3 Learning objectives made clear		• contributes to the learning process	<input type="checkbox"/>
• precise objectives and content explained	<input type="checkbox"/>	14 Handouts clear and appropriate (including OHTs and assignments)	
• in manner appropriate to students	<input type="checkbox"/>	• legibility	<input type="checkbox"/>
• linked to lesson plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	• structure	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Rapport between staff and students		• appropriate level and use of language	<input type="checkbox"/>
• positive body language and verbal communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	15 Accommodation used effectively for learning	
• professional personal interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	• flexible use of room space	<input type="checkbox"/>
• comfortable learning atmosphere	<input type="checkbox"/>	• enables learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Appropriate attention to equal opportunities		16 Health and Safety observed	
• access to the teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	• comfortable environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
• participation	<input type="checkbox"/>	• safe environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
• no bias in materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	17 Assessments clearly explained	
6 Individual/group needs responded to		• clear brief in appropriate language	<input type="checkbox"/>
• all students extended	<input type="checkbox"/>	• set in context	<input type="checkbox"/>
• acknowledges and recognises needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	• opportunity for questions	<input type="checkbox"/>
• flexibility of response	<input type="checkbox"/>	18 Assessments effectively managed	
7 Teaching and learning methods varied and appropriate		• appropriate range to allow fair, valid and reliable results	<input type="checkbox"/>
• promotes inclusive learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	• process coherent and planned	<input type="checkbox"/>
• selection of appropriate methods	<input type="checkbox"/>	• rules should enable students to perform to their potential	<input type="checkbox"/>
• delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>	19 Resources suitable for learning, i.e. accommodation and equipment	
• success of methods	<input type="checkbox"/>	• quality	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Learning checked and referenced against objectives, (i.e. monitoring arrangements)		• reliability	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Q&A	<input type="checkbox"/>		
• overt reference to objectives	<input type="checkbox"/>		
• other methods used	<input type="checkbox"/>		
9 Learning extended			
• evidence of additional learning having taken place	<input type="checkbox"/>		
• learning applied and put in context	<input type="checkbox"/>		
10 Students' interests engaged/sustained			
• variety of learning styles	<input type="checkbox"/>		
• use of Q&A	<input type="checkbox"/>		
• student responses	<input type="checkbox"/>		

The college uses the agreed features in its lesson observation pro forma. Observers can record where agreed features have not been met at all, have been met to some extent, or have been fully met.



Example D: Using the OFSTED criteria for an observation checklist

Classroom observation based on OFSTED criteria

Introduction

Evaluation of the quality and impact of teaching is central to observation. Teaching is fundamental to the quality of education and training provided by the college and the main avenue through which the college contributes to students' attainment, progress and attitudes. The effectiveness of teaching and consequent rate, breadth, depth and consolidation of students' learning are intrinsically connected. It is the skill of rigorous and perceptive observation to find, illustrate and evaluate the links between the two. (Adapted from OFSTED, *Handbook for inspecting schools*).

The following explanation is for use by observers.



The Teaching and Learning Process – the Lecturer

1. Demonstrates good subject knowledge and understanding in the way the subject is presented and discussed.

This can be judged by observing:

- how effectively the teacher teaches the content of the programme of study, the syllabus and requirements for examination/assessment
- the teacher's skills in asking subject specific questions which help students to understand and which extend their thinking.

2. Plans the session effectively, setting clear student objectives that students understand.

This can be judged by observing:

- clear objectives for learning, and how these objectives will be achieved – once you know what the lesson aims to do, you can ask students relevant questions and make accurate judgements about the success or otherwise of the lesson
- how competently the teacher plans the learning in the subject or area, showing a good understanding of the way the subject develops.

3. Challenges and inspires students, expecting the most of them, in order to deepen their knowledge and understanding.

This can be judged by observing:

- how new learning is related to old, encouraging students to make the links between elements of the subject and to think imaginatively
- how pointers are provided to new connections and deeper understanding, eliciting determined and unexpected contributions from students.

4. Provides inclusive learning by using methods which enable all students to learn effectively.

This can be judged by observing:

- students, or groups of students involved and learning effectively
- how effectively delivery meets the needs of all students, taking account of age, gender, ethnicity, capability, disability or learning difficulty, whether they are gifted and talented, and the needs of those for whom English is an additional language

- the teacher's ability to extend thinking for all students, matching all needs and stretching the more able
- how effectively the teacher draws on his or her knowledge of how students learn.

5. Communicates effectively demonstrating listening and questioning skills, explaining ideas and information clearly.

This can be judged by observing:

- exposition or explanation which is lively, informative and well structured
- how effectively the teacher explains new ideas in a way that makes sense to students.

6. Manages students well, insisting on high standards of performance with all students on task.

This can be judged by observing:

- the teacher exercising authority clearly and fairly from the outset
- how the organisation of work and grouping of students is carried out
- how clear it is made to students what they are expected to learn, the standards expected, and how they can do even better
- good teaching routines which encourage students to manage their own time well and to complete tasks in the time available.

7. Thoroughly assesses students' learning orally and includes written assessments to help and encourage students to improve and overcome difficulties by using formal and informal methods.

This can be judged by observing:

- the teacher's use of questions to probe students' knowledge and understanding, challenge their thinking and engage all students
- encouragement of students to judge the success of their own work and to set targets for improvement
- how well the teacher listens and responds to students, encourages and where appropriate praises, recognises and handles misconceptions, builds on responses and steers students towards clearer understanding.



The Teaching and Learning Process – the Lecturer

8. Uses visual aids which are of good quality and used appropriately to enhance learning – OHTs, whiteboard, videos, Powerpoint, handouts, journals, etc.

This can be judged by observing:

- how well the teacher uses equipment, artefacts and resources to interest and challenge students
- the use and quality of resources to stimulate learning and sensitively reflect different groups, cultures and backgrounds.

Responses and achievements – the student:

9. Acquires new knowledge or skills, develops ideas and increases understanding

- in forming your judgement, talk to students and take every opportunity to relate learning to the work done previously
- learning may be consolidated or may cover new ground; your judgements should, where possible, be referenced to what has gone before
- the learning objectives identified by the teacher will help you ask students relevant questions and to judge whether teaching and learning are well matched to the programme of study and the ability of students
- examination of work and discussion with students will help you to decide if the work in hand builds on students' current knowledge, understanding or skills, in order that the students can make progress.

10. Is productive and works at good pace

- most students will make an effort in their work if teaching makes demands and provides encouragement to enable them to do so
- students should be keen and interested from the beginning of the lesson
- students should be able to explain what they have done and what they have learnt at the end of each lesson.

11. Shows interest in his or her work, is able to sustain appropriate level/span of concentration

- students are more likely to show interest and understanding and remain on task when activities and challenges are lively and interesting.

12. Understands what he or she is doing, how well he or she has done and how he or she can improve

- students should be able to see links with their earlier learning and have some idea of how they could be developed further
- students question, want to know more and take responsibility for finding out more of their own accord
- they understand what is good about their work and how it can be improved
- they support one another and know where and when to go for help.



Using Observations to Identify Stages of Individual Performance

Introduction

Effective colleges are clear about the different purposes of observation. These include:

- a. to identify individual stages of performance, including the excellent teacher;
- b. to identify professional development requirements;
- c. to develop and disseminate good practice;
- d. to provide peer support.

Colleges develop different observation methods to fit different purposes. Three examples are shown here.

One college is developing a system of peer development observation whereby small teams of teachers in a programme area choose a focus for observation. The outcomes are used to enrich teaching in the area, disseminate effective practice across the college and to identify other professional development needs. Teams choose the focus for their observations. Example A includes an explanation of the system, and three documents used to record the process: focus sheet, feedback sheet, and department summary showing action taken.

Another college setting up a peer observation and mentoring programme which uses a different approach is shown in Example B. The aim is for experienced and excellent teachers, known as mentor-teachers, to assist new or part-time teachers, and teachers experiencing difficulties. Quality managers oversee the programme, and the college's professional development manager uses observation reports to identify development needs.

The programme complements the college's formal observation system. Features of the programme include:

- a. the requirement that all staff participate;
- b. all observations are recorded and reported, but no grades are allocated;
- c. teachers keep a copy of the observation report which is also sent to the professional development manager.

It is hoped the programme will develop a network of practitioners engaged in observing and mentoring other practitioners. Teachers who are experiencing difficulties are a priority for observation. Example B shows the guidance provided for mentor-teachers acting as observers.

Finally, a college has developed an approach whereby staff are grouped in teams of three and each member observes the other two. Each teacher in the college is assigned to a team. The aim is for observers to learn from their observed colleagues and provide constructive feedback on what they have observed. The process is mutually supportive and instructive. Time spent observing counts as contact time, and teachers observe up to six lessons a year. Example C explains the purpose of the approach, and sets out the trio observation recording form.

Questions to consider:

- How effective are the methods used for different observation programmes in your college?
- How might you adapt and use the approaches shown here in order to improve the observation process?

Example A: Peer Development Observation

Explanation

Peer development observation is designed to provide greater opportunities for lecturers to review and develop their teaching and in order to improve learning. The programme aims to use observation as a means rather than an end in itself. The aims are to:

- a. allow lecturers to benefit from the observation of their peers;
- b. generate focused discussion and action by teachers around teaching and learning;
- c. provide opportunities for the review of methodology, classroom materials or student learning styles;
- d. provide a resource for other teachers through shared ideas and reflection;
- e. support the creativity of teachers through shared ideas and reflection;
- f. provide constructive feedback for teachers developing new and existing approaches;
- g. share good practice within and across subject areas;
- h. increase teachers' familiarity with classroom observation;
- i. allow teachers to further identify their personal staff development needs as part of continuous professional development.

The college has in place procedures for formal classroom observation. The peer development process is not a replacement for those procedures.

Method and documentation

Within departments, teachers will choose one or two colleagues to form a research team. The team will discuss and decide one or more focus areas to be evaluated through classroom observation.

The methodology of the observation, including whether learners are approached, the involvement of the observer, the group observed and so on, will be at the discretion of the team and will reflect the focus of their research.

Document 1, which follows, is used to record focused observations. It is designed as a working document to help participating lecturers; it is not to be used as a report on an observation. Document 1 can be used:

- as a record of the observation and basis for later discussion
- as a preparation sheet so that teachers can agree in advance ideas for effective practice and then use the document as a checklist during the observation
- two copies may be used; the first as a record of a preliminary discussion, the second as a record of the observation.

Each of the teachers should be observed in order for their team to share feedback.

Document 1 is confidential to the team and may not be shown to other parties without the consent of the observed teacher.

Making use of the outcomes of observation

After observation and feedback, the team meet to consider the outcomes. The team's observation research findings will be recorded on document 2, which is also shown. This document will be available for staff to consult and perhaps follow up in their own peer observations. A copy goes to the department head and to the quality improvement manager, to allow cross-college dissemination of good practice. Each teacher within the team receives two staff development teaching credits upon submission of document 2. The process will be repeated during the year. A maximum of six teaching credits (three peer observation cycles) per year will be available to resource the activity. It is essential to involve part-time teachers in the 'research teams'.

Example A (continued)

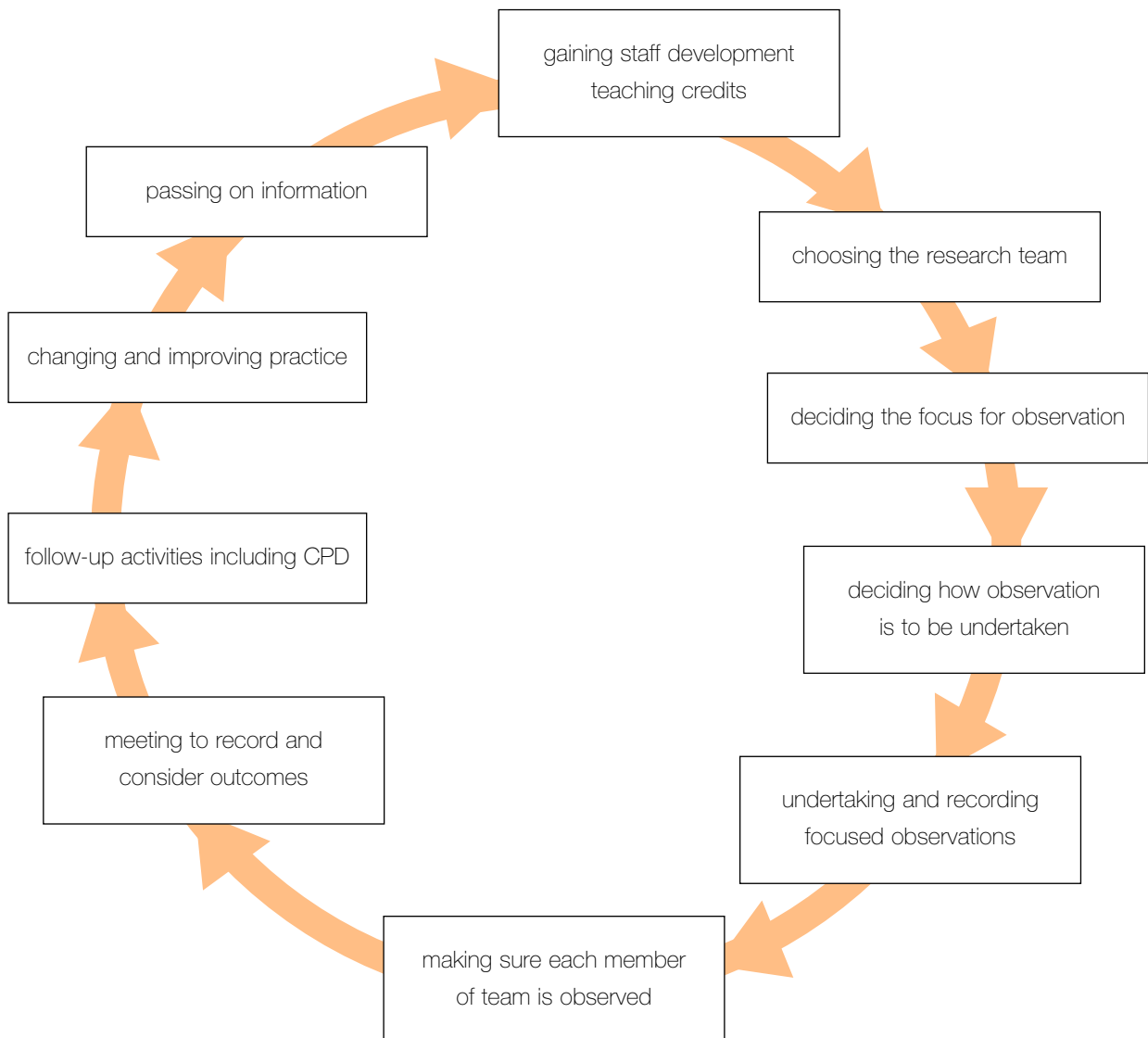
Focus for observation

The focus for observation might include:

- *keeping the whole class involved*
- *teaching a specific element of a syllabus*
- *use of visual aids*
- *group work*
- *classroom management*
- *dealing with individual students*
- *checking learning*
- *forms of interaction*
- *differentiated learning materials*
- *basic/key skills.*

Departments are able to review outcomes of the peer support observation by using the department summary document 3 which is also shown. Quality improvement managers can use the summary document to let other areas of the college know about innovative or good practice.

The cycle of peer development observation is shown below:





Document 1: Focus Sheet

Teacher: Tim Department: GCSE & A levels	Observer: <i>John</i>
Date: <i>20 February 2001</i>	Time and Place: 13:00 hrs Room 201
Subject/Level: <i>A level English</i>	Team focus areas of observation <i>Use of questioning to check understanding</i>
Examples of effective practice (relevant to focus areas): <i>1. Tim used a brisk Q&A session to check students' understanding of the imagery used in a section of Hamlet; most students responded well, demonstrating they had understood Tim's explanation made earlier in the session.</i>	Examples of less effective practice (relevant to focus areas): <i>1. One student – only young man in the group – made no oral contribution during the session. 2. One girl made only one oral contribution which was not picked up by Tim (teacher). She was not invited to expand on her four word suggestion</i>
Other observations <i>Only one boy in the group; Tim needs to think about how to involve him more. Suggest improvements</i>	Suggest improvements <i>Paired work might make it easier for students to develop oral contributions which they could then share with the group.</i>

NB: This document is for the use of teachers named below, and may not be shown to other parties without their consent.

.....(Teacher 1)
(Teacher 2)
(Teacher 3)

Date: *February 23, 2001*



Document 2: Feedback Sheet

Suggestions for effective practice

Team research focus areas:

1. *Tim to sit in on John's GCSE English lesson to check use of Q&A; Joan will observe John as well.*
2. *Team needs to think about how best to involve all learners in each session.*
3. *Team needs to develop checklist of good practice.*

Suggested approaches/recommendations

1. *Tim to sit in on John's GCSE English lesson to check use of Q&A; Joan will observe John as well.*
2. *Joan to ask if the team can also visit History A level sessions (recently graded 1 on internal inspection) to observe use of Q&A.*
3. *Team to pull together outcomes of their observations into a checklist of good practice for use of Q&A to reinforce learning.*

Other comments:

Everyone felt this was a practical and really useful exercise. Tim doesn't feel he has all the answers and is keen to see how the History teachers handle Q&A.

.....(Teacher 1)

.....(Teacher 2)

.....(Teacher 3)

Date: *March 1, 2001*

Department summary showing action taken



Document 3: Peer Development Observation

Peer development observations

Department summary of research 2001

Department:

Lecturer Team (Max 3)	Observation research focus	Date Commenced	Suggested approaches (Document 2) completed (Copy to QI manager)	Dept head follow up where necessary
<i>Tim Joan John</i>	<i>Use of Q&A to check and reinforce learning, and to involve all learners in a session</i>	<i>February 20, 2001</i>	<i>✓</i>	<i>Sue will meet the team to discuss the checklist</i>
		<i>March 25, 2001</i>	<i>Team has asked Sue to observe each of them and to focus on Q&A</i>	
		<i>April 2001</i>		<i>Sue has circulated the Q&A checklist to all other dept heads</i>
		<i>May 2001</i>	<i>Team has offered to make input on Q&A as part of CPD programme</i>	
			<i>The team presented their research as part of the CPD programme. Their checklist is now used widely in the college</i>	

Example B: Peer Observation and Mentoring Using Teacher-Mentors

Purposes of the programme

- to promote, disseminate and share good practice
- to encourage professional dialogue and the development of new ideas
- to develop an individual teacher's skills
- to help new and part-time teachers and those having difficulties by allocating a teacher-mentor.

Outcomes

The outcomes of peer observation should be that the teacher:

- a. receives feedback on what he or she is doing well and areas where he or she might develop;
- b. is observed by mentor-teachers who have considerable experience, proven excellence and expertise in areas where the observee may need development;
- c. is also able to observe such mentor-teachers;
- d. may be able to contribute to the above processes;
- e. is offered additional, personal and professional development opportunities which lead to accreditation.

The observation and feedback process

There are five stages in the process:

- a. length of the observation;
- b. pre-observation arrangements;
- c. observation of the lesson;
- d. giving constructive feedback;
- e. making follow-up arrangements.

Each stage is described below.

a. Length of the observation

The timing of observation should be negotiated. The teacher-mentor should watch the lesson which he or she and the teacher agree would be most useful. The teacher should not, however, try to stage-manage the process, as this would defeat the object of peer observation. There are considerable advantages in the observer watching the whole of the lesson. **The crucial requirement is that observers are confident they have been able to make a sound**

assessment of learning that has taken place and how teaching has contributed to it.

b. Pre-observation arrangements

The observation process is likely to be most effective where the teacher-mentor and the teacher are clear about its objectives and understand how they can contribute to making the experience constructive. Ways might include:

- a pre-observation meeting so that the teacher can explain the lesson and the observer can request additional information
- a note of explanation from the teacher for the observer
- an informal lesson plan/outline for the observer.

c. Observation of the lesson

Observation should focus on the effectiveness of the learning taking place and how well the teaching promotes learning for each individual learner in the class. The FENTO standards place the individual learner at the heart of the teaching and learning process.

The observer should not participate in the class but should talk to students about their learning and look at files and shared marked work, and artefacts made by students.

The observer should concentrate on what the students are doing, rather than on a 'teaching performance'. Even a well-prepared lesson may produce very little active learning.

The observer should ask the following questions:

- are the aims and objectives (outcomes) of the lesson being met for the learner?
- is the teacher building on prior learning by finding out what students already know and can do?
- is there evidence that students are progressing in their learning?
- are individual learning styles being taken into account or are students being treated as an homogeneous group?
- is the teacher setting the pace of the session, for example, by setting specific timings for exercises?

Example B: Peer Observation and Mentoring Using Teacher-Mentors (continued)

- are there a variety of learning methods? Are students confused by too many handouts?
- is there evidence of differentiation, for example in activities or learning materials?
- is the teacher giving each student a chance to contribute?
- is the teacher providing opportunities for students to learn from each other?
- are students able to explore issues at their own pace?
- do the students understand what they have to do?
- is ICT equipment available? Is it being used?

A short report, using the college report form, should be written during the session or immediately afterwards.

d. Giving constructive feedback

Private feedback should be given as soon after the observation as possible.

Feedback should enable teachers to build on what they are doing well. The most effective feedback is where the observer:

- ensures the teacher understands what went well and why, and conveys what was less effective
- focuses on the key issues
- makes use of questions and prompts to encourage reflection, discussion and analysis
- enables the teacher to feel that the experience will contribute to his or her personal and professional development by suggesting ways to tackle any weaknesses.

There are challenges for an observer who watches a session where there is limited learning. The feedback becomes especially difficult when the teacher does not recognise the difficulty. Guidelines for giving difficult feedback include:

- ask the teacher how he or she felt the session went and/or ask clarifying questions before giving any feedback
- concentrate on the students' learning and how this could be increased

- illustrate your points with examples from the lesson supported by students attendance or retention statistics; use what students said or did
- listen to what the teacher has to say, but stick to your guns
- ask the teacher to reflect on anything that you think was not effective and ask how he or she might have done it better
- be supportive and constructive; identify possible solutions by suggesting, for instance, that the teacher is informally observed by someone else from his or her curriculum area/subject
- encourage the teacher to try new approaches or methods.

e. Making follow-up arrangements

Follow-up action should be discussed and agreed with the teacher. It might include:

- disseminating good practice by a strong teacher being observed by other teachers, or observing a colleague
- identifying the aspects that might benefit from further teacher-mentor support
- identifying areas that might benefit from further training and reporting these to the professional development manager
- clarifying issues for management, for example, resources, course design, or course management.

Example C: Trio Observation

Trio observation guidance

The purpose of trio observation is for the observer to learn from the teacher. Trio observation is not used to judge the session. It has no link with appraisal, with grading teaching quality, or reporting to management or quality systems. It is as confidential a process as you wish to make it, and its main purpose is to improve learning and teaching. The aims are:

1. For the observer to reflect or learn about good practice

The observer will learn a great deal by watching another teacher and his or her students at work. It is an opportunity to see how others tackle the difficulties and approach the challenges you face. There is excellent practice in the college. Peer observation helps us learn from it.

Even if the lesson you see is not totally brilliant, you can still learn a great deal from observing someone else's approach and thinking about what worked and what didn't. You may then find you make the same mistakes – or even worse ones!

2. To assist the teacher being observed

The observer can help the teacher by sharing a view of what went well, or what could have improved students' learning.

A teacher might ask the observer to look particularly at one aspect that causes concern, for example, the questioning technique used or the level of participation of some students.

3. Putting learning and teaching higher up the agenda

Learning is our key purpose, so learning and teaching are the most important activities in the college. Yet it is sometimes difficult to find time to think and talk about it.

Some points to remember when using the trio observation record with the teacher:

Observe the learner not the teacher

Learning is the key purpose of teaching – so watch the learning not the teaching. What are the students doing or thinking? How are they reacting? Are they learning? How do you know? Try to see things from the student's point of view. In a good session, effective learning may take place when the teacher is marking the register!

Remember, even an effective teacher will give the occasional ineffective lesson.

Giving constructive feedback

The debrief after the session should focus on self-assessment; what went well; development points, observer learning points; and summary. It should focus on students and learning, not the teacher and the teaching. Feedback should include:

- a. **Self-assessment:** How does the teacher think it went? The teacher's self-assessment of his or her own development points is important.
- b. **What went well?:** What worked? What produced effective learning? When were the students most productively engaged? What did they enjoy? What helped them? Concentrate on the students and on learning. Be truthful, but generous.

Example C (continued)

c. Development points: The observer should describe one or two action points which could help the observee to improve learning. Try to make substantial points. Remember, no lesson is perfect! Ask for clarification if necessary: 'The task seemed quite difficult to me; what do you think?'

Not: 'You should have set them an activity to apply the knowledge you taught.'

But: 'I think an activity would have helped students' learning.'

Not: 'There was no rapport between you and your students.'

But: 'I think you could increase rapport by using students' names more often.'

Not: 'You should use handouts instead of dictation.'

But: 'If handouts were used more often, then you could save time for student activity...'

Not: 'You didn't summarise.'

But: 'I think they would have appreciated a summary to reinforce what they had learned.'

Try mixing positive points and opportunities for development:

'The key points were summarised well at the end of the session, I feel these could have been mentioned more often.'

d. Observer's learning points: As an observer, what have you learned? Have you seen any approaches or techniques that you could use or adapt in your own teaching? Has it made you think of any improvement you would like to make to your own teaching?

e. Summary: Try to end your feedback on a positive note, perhaps by summarising the effective learning you saw, what you enjoyed, what you learned, and what you think the teacher did well. It is a privilege to visit another teacher's class, so you might like to thank them.

A copy of the trio observation recording pro forma follows next. It is important to note that records of trio observation are confidential to the teacher, observer and departmental manager.



Example C (continued)

Trio observation recording pro forma				
Lecturer:	Observer:			
Course:	No of students on register:	M	F	Total
Class:	No in class:	M	F	Total
Length of session:	Room No:			
Observation time:	Date			
Type of session:	Classroom	Workshop	Laboratory	ILT
Other	(specify)			
Strengths:				
Areas for development for observed teacher				
Learning points for observer				
Signature of observer:			
Signature of teacher:			
<i>This pro forma is confidential to the teacher, observer and departmental manager if applicable</i>				

Recording Observations

Colleges use a variety of aides-mémoire, checklists and pro formas to record observation. It is important that records of observation assist managers to identify individual stages of teacher performance and teachers' professional development needs.

Three approaches to recording observation follow. In Example A, care is taken to record illustrative evidence against each quality statement. Professional development needs are recorded as part of the feedback discussion. The material also includes the form used to record students' evaluations of a session.

The same college has designed an observation sheet for tutorial provision (Example B). The same format is used to record illustrative evidence. Section D of the form records the teacher's professional development requirements agreed in discussion with his or her line manager.

Example C is used in an adult education centre. A brief explanation of the process used by the centre is provided. It is worth noting that the centre recently reviewed its criteria for observation by using the FENTO standards.

Questions to consider:

- Has your college reviewed its observation criteria using the FENTO standards?
- Does the recording format used in your college enable managers to identify stages of performance and individual professional development needs?



Example A: Classroom Observation Summary Sheet

Section A

Details of the session

Curriculum area:

Subject:

Course and level:

Date of the session: Time of the session:

Location of the session:

Number of students observed: Duration of observation:

Number of staff observed: Observer:

No. of students on register: No. of students absent: No. of students late:

Overview of the session observed:

.....
.....
.....
.....

Please circle from the following activities those being used during this session:

- Practical activities
- ILT
- Learner centres
- Key Skills
- Real Work environment
- Group work
- Student Presentations

Section B

Exemplars observed to support allocated grade

.....
.....
.....

Grade 1 2 3 4 5

Circle as appropriate

Feedback given to:

Date feedback given:

Date evaluation form given:



Example A (continued)

Section C	
Planning and organisation	Examples of evidence observed within this session
Lesson aims and objectives are relevant to learners' previous experience and levels of skill and knowledge	
Planning includes a variety of learning resources	
Maintenance of course and learners' records of progress and attainment	
Section D	
Delivery of teaching	Examples of evidence observed within this session
Students understand lesson objectives and intended learning outcomes	
Teaching approaches match different ways students learn	
Learners' interest and motivation maintained	
Students' responses used to maximise learning	
Frequent checks on learning against the intended learning outcomes	
Support provided appropriately to encourage learning	



Example A (continued)

Delivery of teaching	Examples of evidence observed within this session
Constructive feedback provided	
Good use of language, appropriate vocabulary with technical terms explained	
Physical environment well managed and suitable for all students' learning needs and learning styles	
Equal opportunities issues taken into account in materials and activities	
Awareness shown of health and safety	

Section E

Observed teacher requests for staff development

Line manager to complete the following:

Observation discussion took place (date)..... (Line manager)

..... (signature).....

(Please tick action as appropriate)

- Staff development request
- Sharing of good practice

Please state expected outcomes and timescales



Example A: Classroom observation summary sheet (continued)

Student evaluation of session

Please tick the appropriate box to answer each question

In relation to this session, please tell me your thoughts on the following:

- a. What do you feel was particularly well planned about the session?
- b. What do you feel about the pace and appropriateness of the session?
- c. What did the session do to meet your individual learning needs?
- d. What do you feel you have gained or learned from the session?
- e. Overall how would you rate the session?

Other student comments.



Example B: Tutorial Observation Summary Sheet

Section A

Details of the Tutorial

Curriculum area:

Subject:

Course and level:

Date of the tutorial: Time of the tutorial:

Location of the tutorial:

Number of students observed: Duration of observation:

Number of staff observed: Observer:

No. of students on register: No. of students absent: No. of students late:

Overview of the tutorial session observed:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Please circle from the following activities those being used during this session:

Student Services information

Student handbook

Review and record of guidance

Key Skills pack

Study Skills pack

Section B

Exemplars observed to support allocated grade

Large empty box for recording exemplars observed to support allocated grade.

Grade 1 2 3 4 5

Circle as appropriate

Feedback given to:

Date feedback given:

Date evaluation form given:

Example B (continued)

Section C	
Study support	Examples of evidence observed within the tutorial session
Programme of study negotiated and agreed for each student	
Set and agree targets and draw up an individual action plan for each student	
Review progress at regular intervals	
Review and revise targets and agreed learning goals	
Ensure students reflect on their own progress and achievements	
Maintain individual student records and individual learning plans	
Pastoral support	Examples of evidence observed within this tutorial session
Ensure delivery of an active tutorial programme relevant to students' needs including social and moral issues	
Develop a group identity among students and actively encourage a sense of belonging for all students	
Recognise and understand the difficulties individual students might have with learning	
Learning plans take account of students' preferred learning styles	
Draw on students' knowledge and skills as a basis for learning	
Encourage and develop students as independent learners	
Always put the student first; accept students as they are and be prepared to listen	
Support equality of opportunity	
Refer on to other individuals, agencies and members of staff to provide support when required	



Example B (continued)

Section D

Observed teacher's staff development requirements

Line manager to complete the following:

Observation discussion took place (date)..... (Line manager)
..... (signature).....

(Please tick action as appropriate)

- Staff development request
- Sharing of good practice

Please state expected outcomes and timescales



Example C: Observation in an Adult Education Centre

Introduction

The following sheets are used for lesson observations by line managers. They are designed to assist the professional development of lecturers and to ensure they receive appropriate support from the department. A secondary function is to contribute to the head of programme area's overview of teaching and learning in the department. The vice-principal for curriculum and quality also sees a copy, in order to advise the head of programme area on support to lecturers.

The tutor receives the record of observation and summary advice sheet and a second copy is kept by the college on file.

How the materials are used

The college has a long established practice of lesson observations known as 'class visits'. The class visit policy ensures all tutors are observed in their first term following appointment, with a follow up visit if any aspect of teaching and learning is deemed less than satisfactory. New courses and any course causing concern are also visited. Additionally, tutors request a class visit from their line manager. Often line managers will conduct a class visit before the annual or biannual appraisal. The line manager discusses the lesson observed with the tutor either before or after compiling the report, which is countersigned by the tutor.

Lessons are not graded since the report is designed for staff development rather than as 'judgement'. The 16 criteria on the record of observation provide a checklist to ensure that all aspects are covered by the visit.

Those 'not evidenced' are expected to be followed up with the tutor after the visit. Collectively, the criteria provide the tutor with a profile of his or her strengths and areas to work on. The criteria were subsequently checked against the FENTO standards, and were considered to cover them sufficiently.

The record is designed to serve as a prompt or evidence for the evaluation made. The summary advice sheet is a considered reflection on key points to emerge from the visit. Good practice is recognised and where a tutor is an exemplar for any particular aspect of teaching and learning, this is noted. In this way, the department acquires 'champions', who can contribute in various ways to staff development. 'Areas for development' on the sheet can be either for the department or the individual tutor. Finally, observers are asked to comment on progress made since the last visit.

There is an annual requirement for the minimum number of class visits per subject area. A summary sheet is drawn up of numbers assessed excellent, good, satisfactory or less satisfactory in each of the categories. This is to inform the annual curriculum area self-assessment report.

Example C (continued)

Record of observation by visitor

Please consider this record as a point on a journey. Comments written here by the visitor are impressions made on a brief observation of a class in progress. You are encouraged to add your own comments. This is to provide balance and rectify any mistaken impression gained by the visitor. The comments of the visitor and the tutor should be seen as an ongoing dialogue. The aim is to assist information sharing and the development of teaching and learning and to improve support to tutors. The categories in the table below should be understood as follows:

Excellent: a model for others to follow; **Good:** strong in this area; **Satisfactory:** an acceptable standard we would like to see improved; **Less than satisfactory:** cause for concern; needs immediate action.

Tutor's name:

Date:

Class visited:

Length of visit:

No. of students enrolled:

No. of students in attendance at visit:

1. Type of lesson: lecture, demonstration, practical, assignment, mixed:

2. Statement of objective(s) for this class meeting:

3. Supporting evidence seen: class register, tutor's course file, students' work, schemes of work, course description, course handouts, lesson plan

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Less than satisfactory	Not applicable/ Not evidenced
1 Subject competence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Lesson planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Use of classroom facilities & equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Attention to study/learning skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Attention to individual learning needs including equal opportunities issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Range of teaching methods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Pitching of level and pace of class	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 Communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Listening skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Fostering of productive working relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 Developing an enjoyable learning experience for students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 Motivation and maintenance of students' learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 Opportunities for student participation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14 Incorporation of students' knowledge/experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 Assessment of students' learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 Meeting of class objectives stated above	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Example C (continued)

Summary Advice sheet

Class visited: Date:

Type of class: lecture, practical, mixed, etc.

Description of activities observed:

Tutor's input:

Students' responses:

Advice arising from evaluation of class visit

Good practice to be shared:

Areas for development for the tutor and/or department:

Date of last visit:

Progress made since last visit on areas for development.

Visitor's signature and date

Tutor's signature and date

Providing Constructive Feedback

Colleges with effective observation programmes that succeed in improving teaching and learning pay as much attention to the feedback process and subsequent action as they do to the observation itself. Many provide detailed advice for observers on how best to give feedback. The college in the following example provides a handbook which includes detailed guidance on how best to provide constructive feedback and includes a list of questions for use by observers.

Questions to consider:

- How effective are the feedback guidelines provided for observers in your college?
- Is the feedback process used systematically to agree with the teacher an action plan for improvement?
- How do you ensure the teacher's action plan is monitored and implemented as part of the college's quality improvement strategy?



Example: Extract from College Handbook Providing Guidance on How to Give Constructive Feedback

Providing constructive feedback

Feedback should be:

Specific: pointing out several examples of the team member's good performance as well as giving detailed examples of areas for improvement.

Immediate: praising or constructively criticising the team member now, not at a future date.

Based on issues: criticism should be directed at aspects of performance, not at the individual as a person.

Helpful: concentrating on behaviour that can be changed and offering alternative suggestions.

Forward looking: feedback should not dwell on the negative aspects of past performance but should look to the future and aim to develop joint solutions to problems.

Built on strengths: don't forget to include unexpected praise and regular support for good performance.

Remember:

Feedback usually says something about the person giving the feedback as well as the person receiving it.

Skilled feedback offers people information about themselves in a way that leaves them with a choice about whether to act upon it or not. It does not involve demanding or prescribing change.

The questions that follow will help you provide constructive feedback.



Example (continued)

Structuring questions for feedback and/or a discussion

Description *(Do not make judgements or draw conclusions; simply describe):*

What actually happened?

What did you do?

What did you say?

Can you give me more details?

Tell me more about

What happened next?

Positive evaluation *(What were the things that went well and why?):*

What aspects went well?

Where did you feel you succeeded?

What did they achieve?

What did you or they like about

Negative evaluation *(What were the things that went less well and why?):*

What did not go so well?

What were you unhappy with?

Where did you feel less confident?

What problems did you encounter?

Were there any aspects you had not anticipated?

What would you have done differently?

Conclusions and evaluation *(What sense can you make of the situation?)*

What have you learnt from the experience?

How might you tackle a similar situation again?

Could you have improved what you did?

Where has this experience been valuable?

How has this progressed your overall development plan?

Action *(What are you going to do differently in the future? What have you learnt?)*

What are the next steps?

Which steps are you going to take?

What support do you need?

Who can you enlist to support you?

What is the time scale?

When do we need to meet again?



Evaluating Observation

Most colleges evaluate their observation programmes as part of their continuous self-assessment. If observation is to be effective, teachers need to be involved in both the design and evaluation of the process. Two examples of approaches to evaluation follow next. In Example A, teachers are asked whether they have made any changes to their practice as a result of observation and feedback. In Example B, care is taken to find out teachers' attitudes to the process.

Questions to consider:

- How effective are the arrangements for evaluating observation in your college?
- To what extent do teachers in your college feel involved in the design and evaluation of the observation process? How might they be more involved?



Example A: Evaluation of Observation

Teaching observation questionnaire

Please take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire. Your input is helpful as we evaluate the system of observing teaching, learning and staff development at the college.

1. Have you been observed previously by the staff tutor?

2. Did you find the information pack to be:

Clear and informative?

Of some use in preparing for the observation?

Of little use in preparing for the observation?

3. Did you attend the group observation information meeting?

4. If yes please comment on the information provided.

Clarified main points, clear and informative?

Of some use in preparing for the observation?

Lacked clarity and was of little use in preparing for the observation?

5. How useful was the post-observation reflection meeting in:

a. Evaluating the learning experience of the students?

.....
.....

b. Providing examples and advice on ways to develop the teaching and/or learning within the subject observed.

.....
.....



Example A (continued)

6. In what way(s) has this process informed/changed your practice as it relates to teaching and assessing student learning?

.....
.....

7. Have you attended either of the following workshops?

Improving student learning

Planning schemes of work and assessments

Have the outcomes of 6 and 7 led you to make changes in any of the following?

Schemes of work

Materials and resources

Assessments

Lesson planning

Methods of delivery

Checking learning

Classroom management

8. What have you found to be the benefits of the observation process?

.....
.....



Example A (continued)

9. Has your line manager discussed with you your observation report?

10. Are you currently working with a mentor?

11. What recommendations would you make for improving the system for observing teaching and learning?

.....
.....

12. Have you used examples of best practice, (for example, resources, observation of colleagues, advice) from across the college to inform your own teaching practices? If yes, please give details.

.....
.....

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please return it to the Human Resources Department.



Example B: Observation Evaluation

Observation evaluation

In order to improve the next round of observations, it would be useful to have as much feedback as possible about the way you felt about this round. I would encourage as many people as possible to respond, so we can get a wider range of opinion. Please feel free to make any comments you wish, and to make them anonymously if you prefer. Some questions are given below to help focus replies on key areas, but please comment on any other aspects of the process.

Please return the sheet to me within two weeks of receipt. Thanks for taking the time to respond.

(Head of Quality Improvement Unit)

Name (optional)

Date of completion of this evaluation

Lecturer / Tech. Instructor / Tech. Assist. / Learning Support Asst. / Tutor / Other

Please circle as appropriate

Involvement in the observation process: observed / observer / discussion with observed / follow-up

Please circle as appropriate

1. Were you adequately informed or consulted about the observation process before implementation?
2. Did you feel that you understood the reasons for the exercise?
3. How did you feel about your role? Was it explained adequately to you? What other preparation would have been helpful?
4. What were your thoughts about the composition of the teams that observed you, or observed in your area?
5. How did you feel about the way the observations were handled? What could be done better in future?
6. Did you find the observation form useful as a guide to what would be evaluated in the session?



Example B (continued)

7. What was your experience of the feedback process?

8. Did you feel that support was available if you needed it, and did you know how to access it?

9. If you had any misgivings about the process, did you talk to anyone about them? What responses did you get?

10. Have you been given the opportunity to discuss the observation with your line manager? Did you find it useful?

Which of the following statements would you say are true, as applied to the classroom observation process:

- a. It was useful for the college.
- b. It was useful for me, and helped me to do my job better.
- c. It was a complete waste of everybody's time.
- d. It was unpleasant, but necessary.
- e. I enjoyed it.
- f. It caused me a lot of extra work for little or no benefit.
- g. I would be interested in attending a discussion forum to reflect on the process.

Please circle one or more as appropriate

Please feel free to add any further comment

Please return to Head of Quality Improvement Unit.

Identifying and Developing Mentors

Excellent teachers usually make effective mentors because they understand how people can best learn and improve. Colleges use observation to identify teachers who might become mentors. Once a potential mentor is identified, there is often a further selection and training process.

Colleges within the Mentoring towards Excellence project gave considerable thought to the attributes of an excellent teacher. They considered the excellent teacher to have qualities over and above those described in the FENTO standards. They also linked the attributes of an excellent teacher to the skills and qualities required by an effective mentor. Examples A and B are two lists devised by staff thinking about the attributes of an excellent teacher. Example C is a college's list of core competencies for mentors.

You may wish to see to what extent you agree with the lists, and to consider what additional knowledge and skills the excellent teacher may need to acquire in order to become an effective mentor.

A growing number of colleges use a developmental approach to identifying mentors. Before they commit themselves, potential mentors take part in activities carefully designed to help them understand more about the role and about the skills required. Example D is an outline of tasks and supporting materials used in a selection workshop for experienced part-time teachers who wish to become mentors. The teachers are also offered an opportunity to take part in a further course to develop their skills in listening and responding. Example D includes:

- a. session plan
- b. tasks 1–4
- c. supporting materials:
 - ethical code of practice for mentoring
 - draft occupational standards for mentoring
 - outline of course on listening and responding skills.

Mentors must be effective if they are to help bring about improvements in teaching and learning. New mentors must work quickly to establish credibility and elicit confidence. Colleges with successful mentoring schemes recognise that mentors have their own professional development needs.

Examples E and F illustrate approaches to supplying new mentors. Example E is material used on a one-day course to help new mentors reflect on the personal qualities and skills needed for the job. The example includes:

1. + 2. individual exercises: thinking about help you have received to achieve personal goals.
3. discussion paper: the mentoring process.
4. group exercise: competencies of an effective mentor.
5. questionnaire: which mentor skills do you have already?
6. paired exercise: understanding the mentoring life cycle.

Example F is material used in another college's two-hour workshop for new mentors. Participants are encouraged to use real-life scenarios to share and develop successful mentoring strategies. The example includes:

- outline of workshop aims and learning outcomes
- four scenarios.

The scenarios stimulate discussion on the needs of teachers experiencing difficulties, teachers returning after absence, and part-time teachers.

Questions to consider:

- How might you use the material to agree the attributes of an excellent teacher in your college? What might you add to the lists given here?
- How do the core competencies for a mentor identified by your college compare with those given here?
- How effective is the identification process for mentors in your college?
How might it be improved?
- How might you make use of the materials to improve support for new mentors in your college?



Example A: Attributes of the Excellent Teacher

Attributes of the excellent teacher

List devised by teachers:

- helps to build confidence
- high level of interpersonal skills
- enjoys teaching
- able to foster independence
- astute
- enthusiastic
- flexible, can plan for unexpected
- somebody who gets students through exams
- knows individual students well
- skilled at using various teaching methods
- good subject knowledge
- patient
- doesn't moan about paperwork
- approachable
- good organisational skills
- good communicator
- someone who's doing it for the right reasons
- negotiator
- empathetic
- empowers students
- able to put things at the right level.



Example B: Attributes of the Excellent Teacher

The excellent teacher

Personal qualities and values

Enthusiastic for the subject and for the students

- passion for learning
- sense of fun
- sense of humour

Inspirational

- awakening a sense of curiosity and wonder in the subject
- playful
- relating learning to the higher values: (truth, justice, human rights, etc.) and to the creation of a better society and a better life

Valuing students

- an empathetic advocate
- student-centred

Professional

- reflective and creative practitioner
- drive for improvement
- consistent
- flexible
- presence and influence, respect of peers and students
- team player
- proactive, creative and experimental

Trustworthy

- students regard teacher as trustworthy



Example C: Core Competences for Mentors – Devised by a Group of Teachers

Core competences for mentors

- good at own job – is an excellent teacher
- rigorous, challenging
- doesn't blame
- gives honest answers
- easy to approach at any time
- knows what he or she is talking about
- knows organisation's routines
- actively questions the person being mentored
- enabling, caring, open and facilitative
- gives constructive and positive feedback
- provides subtle guidance but ensures person being mentored makes the decisions
- interested in the person being mentored on a personal/professional level – genuine concern
- willingness to debate, argue and discuss
- puts the mentee first
- well organised, patient and understanding
- enthusiastically persuasive
- down to earth and realistic
- shows an understanding of the mentee's perspective
- excellent communication skills



Example D: Selection Workshop for Prospective Mentors

The workshop is aimed at more experienced part-time teachers who wish to be involved in mentoring. It will encourage tutors to examine their understanding of what being a mentor entails and the skills needed. The workshop will be used to discuss and set guidelines for both mentor and mentee.

Note:

Materials for the workshop come primarily from *Mentoring – Draft Occupational Standards* (revised version), published by the University of North London.

Session plan for workshop

Aim:	tutors will develop their understanding of mentoring
Objectives:	Tutors will agree: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• selection criteria for mentors• set of guidelines for mentors and mentees• timetable for training sessions
Resources:	the ethical code of practice for mentoring draft occupational standards syllabus of introductory counselling course (copies of the documents follow this outline)
Timed plan:	first workshop to be two hours long introduction and distribution of resources – 20 minutes Task 1 – 40 minutes Task 2 – 40 minutes Task 3 – 10 minutes Task 4 – 10 minutes

Aims and objectives of the session will be explained during the introduction. Tasks will be introduced and teachers will agree what needs to be in place by the end of the session.

Task 1

Tutors will discuss in pairs what criteria should be used when selecting a mentor. Should potential mentors have to meet these criteria exactly or can a recommendation from a course team leader or head of department be sufficient to include them in training? Would training in mentoring skills be enough to prepare a new mentor or should he or she also take a course to develop listening and responding skills? When the pairs have discussed these questions they will join another pair and compare their answers. The whole group then comes together to agree a list of criteria which will be agreed for mentor selection. Other points will also be discussed and a mutual decision reached.

Example D (continued)

Task 2

Tutors will read through the code of practice and discuss in fours the pros and cons of being a mentor, for example:

- a. what could the benefits of the mentoring system be to: a) the mentee, b) the mentor, c) to them both?
- b. what are the practical problems that could arise in the relationship?
- c. what range of problems might the mentee expect the mentor to help them with?
- d. what guidelines need to be in place to ensure the effectiveness of the relationship between mentor and mentee?
- e. what rights do the mentor and mentee have in the relationship, and what kind of complaints procedure might be necessary?

Task 3

Workshop facilitator to draw tutors' attention to the draft occupational standards which need to be read before the first training session. The standards will form the basis for discussion and practical work in the following meetings of the group.

Task 4

College evaluation forms to be distributed for completion and discussion. All comments to be noted for possible changes in future session.

Note:

It is important to note that the selection is a mutual process. Staff can decide the role is not for them at present. Managers can decide a person is not yet ready for the role.

Example D (continued)

Materials for selection workshop

An ethical code of practice for mentoring

- a. The mentor's role is to respond to the mentee's developmental needs and agenda; it is not to impose his or her own agenda.
- b. Mentors must work within the current agreement with the mentee about confidentiality.
- c. The mentor will not intrude into areas the mentee wishes to keep private until invited to do so. However, he or she should help the mentee recognise how other issues may relate to these areas.
- d. Mentor and mentee should aim to be open and truthful with each other, and themselves, about the relationship.
- e. The mentoring relationship must not be exploitative in any way, nor must it be open to misinterpretation by others.
- f. Mentors need to be aware of the limits of their competence and operate within these limits.
- g. The mentor has a responsibility to develop his or her own competence in mentoring.
- h. The mentee must accept increasing responsibility for managing the relationship; the mentor should empower them to do so and must generally promote the mentee's autonomy.
- i. Mentor and mentee should respect each other's time and other responsibilities, ensuring they do not impose beyond what is reasonable.
- j. Mentor and mentee share responsibility for the smooth winding down of the relationship when it has achieved its purpose; they must avoid creating dependency.
- k. Either party may dissolve the relationship. However, both mentor and mentee have a responsibility for discussing the matter together, as part of mutual learning.
- l. The mentee should be aware of his or her rights and any complaints procedures.
- m. Mentors must be aware of any current law and work within the law.
- n. Mentor and mentee must be aware that all records are subject to statutory regulations under the Data Protection Act, 1984.

Example D (continued)

Materials for selection workshop

Draft occupational standards for mentoring

Unit 1 – facilitate learning and development

- Element 1.1 - identify learning and development needs
- Element 1.2 - action planning with mentee
- Element 1.3 - inform, support and enable mentee
- Element 1.4 - identifying and dealing with problems

Unit 2 - preparing to be a mentor

- Element 2.1 - identify contextual characteristics and parameters of your mentoring
- Element 2.2 - contribute to creating an appropriate environment for the learning process

Unit 3 - personal interaction between mentor and mentee

- Element 3.1 - starting the mentoring relationship
- Element 3.2 - develop and maintain the mentoring relationship
- Element 3.3 - operate within the ethical code of practice
- Element 3.4 - ending the mentoring

Unit 4 - monitor and evaluate the process

- Element 4.1 - review progress with mentee
- Element 4.2 - improve the mentoring process

Unit 5 - self-development of mentor

- Element 5.1 - develop a strategy for self-development
- Element 5.2 - evaluate your own performance and adapt where necessary



Example D (continued)

Materials for selection workshop

Course title: Listening and responding skills

Entry requirements: To participate in this course students need a willingness to explore their attitudes and assumptions about themselves and others.

Aims of the course: This course aims to offer some instruction in:

- a. the core conditions of person-centred counselling (empathy, acceptance, authenticity);
- b. listening and responding skills. How to attend fully to another person and reflect on how the world appears to them;

Course content:

- c. setting the context – who are we and why are we here now?
- d. person-centred assumptions;
- e. listening and responding skills;
- f. empathy;
- g. unconditional positive regard, acceptance and assertiveness;
- h. congruence;
- i. practical session;
- j. practical session;
- k. looking at the next step. Review, ending and close.

Teaching methods:

- practical demonstration
- formal instruction
- practical experience
- discussion
- role-play
- pair/group work.



Example D (continued)

Material used on a day course for new mentors

1. Individual exercise: thinking about help you have received to achieve personal goals

Think about some of the working relationships you have been involved with. These may have been at work or in your leisure time, for example, learning to drive a car.

Identify **three** ways in which good interpersonal relationships have contributed to what you were trying to achieve.

I was trying to achieve:

The help I was given to achieve this goal:

I was trying to achieve:

The help I was given to achieve this goal:

I was trying to achieve:

The help I was given to achieve this goal:



Example D (continued)

2. Individual exercise

Make brief notes on three occasions when poor working relationships have hindered your achieving your goal/s.

1.
.....
.....
2.
.....
.....
3.
.....
.....

Take part in a discussion based on the two exercises. As a group, identify three positive interpersonal factors that helped the achievement of objectives and three factors that acted as hindrances.

3. Discussion paper: the mentoring process

What is mentoring?

The word 'mentor' originally comes from Greek mythology. When Odysseus, King of Ithaca went to fight in the Trojan War he entrusted his son, Telemachus to the care of his old and trusted friend, Mentor. It was 10 years before father and son were reunited. Mentoring is a way of developing individuals to reach their potential. Mentors are people valued and known for being prepared to support and develop others; for many people mentoring takes place informally. Mentoring is a protected relationship in which learning takes place and skills develop.

The role of the mentor

The relationship between the mentor and mentee should focus on the mentee's development.

Mentoring may:

- a. speed up the learning of a new job and help reduce the stress of transition;
- b. help the new member of staff fit into the organisation and adopt the values of the college;
- c. provide information about the organisation, its politics and its informal networks;
- d. draw on the mentee's experience;
- e. offer different perspectives;
- f. consider new teaching techniques and the use of available resources;
- g. share good practice;
- h. explore how the new member of staff's behaviour and attitudes affect his or her performance at work;
- i. empower the mentee to take control of his or her own development.

Example D (continued)

4. Group exercise: competencies of an effective mentor

Spend some time working in a group to discuss the following questions:

What competencies might an effective mentor possess?

What do you believe to be the main advantages of being a mentor?

Core competencies of mentors

Your answers might include:

- doesn't blame – stays neutral
- will give honest answers
- not intimidating – easy to approach at any time
- knows what he or she is talking about
- good at own job
- knows organisation's routines
- actively questions the mentee
- enabling, caring, open and facilitative
- gives constructive and positive feedback
- provides subtle guidance but ensures mentee makes the decisions
- interested in the person being mentored on a personal/professional level – genuine concern
- willingness to debate, argue and discuss
- should have a real interest and puts the mentee's interests ahead of other things
- organised, patient and understanding
- enthusiastically persuasive
- down to earth and realistic
- able to put the mentee at ease by showing an understanding of his or her perspective
- excellent communication skills.

An effective mentor:

- knows the name of the new teacher and something about him or her as a person before meeting them
- contacts the teacher on the first day
- introduces him or her to other members of staff
- clearly defines the role of the mentor
- ensures that the new member of staff knows when he or she can be contacted and when it would be difficult to be available
- helps the mentee to prioritise
- helps the mentee set realistic targets
- recognises the mentee's previous experience and shows understanding whilst he or she comes to terms with their new environment
- gives the mentee the opportunity to observe the mentor and/or experienced staff at work
- meets the mentee regularly
- explains necessary administrative procedures.

Two advantages in being a mentor:

1. The mentor can learn from the process. It becomes part of the mentor's own continuous professional development.
2. It should add to the mentor's job satisfaction.



Example D (continued)

5. Questionnaire to identify which mentor skills you have already and which you need to develop

Instructor, coach or mentor?

The following questionnaire will help you to identify your strengths and areas for development in mentoring skills.

For each statement circle the number that best represents your usual style in helping people learn. **Be honest.** Consider how your students/colleagues would score you.

1. Before telling people about a task I want them to do, I work out, step by step, what's involved in it.

Seldom 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Often**

2. I continually seek out opportunities for people to develop themselves.

Seldom 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Often**

3. I listen to people's ideas and help them fit these into their action plans

Seldom 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Often**

4. When I have something that I want people to do, I give them clear instructions.
This means I only give instructions once.

Seldom 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Often**

5. When helping people learn, I help them plan how to meet the challenges within the task.

Seldom 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Often**

6. I ask people questions that help them think through why they want/need to do things.

Seldom 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Often**

7. I check that people have understood their instructions clearly.

Seldom 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Often**

8. I am prepared to let people try new things, even though they may make mistakes.

Seldom 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Often**

Example D (continued)

9. I am interested in what people do outside college and how this fits in with or conflicts with their college work.

Seldom 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Often**

10. I check up on things I've asked people to do, assess performance and give regular constructive feedback.

Seldom 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Often**

11. I encourage people to review their performance and plan how to improve.

Seldom 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Often**

12. I sit down with people and help them think through where they are going in their studies/programme/career.

Seldom 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Often**

Scoring:

To calculate your scores, total up the numbers of each of the questions in the three columns as follows:

Instructor	Coach	Mentor
Q1	Q2	Q3
Q4	Q5	Q6
Q7	Q8	Q9
Q10	Q11	Q12
Total	Total	Total

The higher your score in any one column, the more you tend to use that style in helping others learn.

Example D (continued)

Interpreting your score:

A score of 15 or more for any one of these shows quite a strong preference, while a score of 5 would show a marked avoidance. If you have pursued a 'central tendency' in the questionnaire your scores will average around 12 to 16.

Use the following table to act upon your score.

Acting on your score:

The following table should help you to locate yourself more accurately and perhaps give you some ideas for things you might do differently or try out when helping people learn.

Dimension	Instructor	Coach	Mentor
Focus of help	Task/skill	Results/quality of performance	Development of person throughout 'life'
Time span	A day or two	A month to a year	Career/lifetime
Approach to encouraging learning	'Show and tell' giving supervised practice	Explore problem together and set up opportunities to try out new skills and improve practice	Play devil's advocate; listen and question to develop strategies and awareness
Associated activities	Analysing task; clear instruction; supervise practice; give immediate feedback on results	Jointly identify the problem, create development opportunity and review	Link learning task with other parts of life; clarify broad and long term aims and purpose in life context
Ownership	Helper	Shared	Learner
Attitude to ambiguity	Eliminate	Use it as a challenge – as a problem to be solved	Accept as being part of the exciting world
Benefits to organisation	Standard, accurate performance	Goal directed performance, orientated to improving and being creative	Conscious, questioning approach to purpose and missions

Note:

This questionnaire was adapted from:

Meggison D.F. and Pedlar M.J. (1991) *Self Development: A facilitator's Guide*, U.K. McGraw.



Example D (continued)

6. Paired exercise: Understanding the mentoring life cycle

The chart shows eight stages in the mentoring life cycle. Work in pairs to list the key skills needed at each stage by the mentor.

Mentoring life cycle

Stage	Mentoring life cycle	Relationship
1	Gaining commitment to the mentoring process	Looking for a partner
2	Getting involved – the mentor, mentee and organiser. Individuals are selected or are volunteered	
3	Getting together the key people so that they can meet and establish the mentoring relationship	Meeting
4	Getting to know each other so that the pair can begin to develop their knowledge of each other and start to develop their relationship	Growth
5	Working together to address and challenge issues and to set objectives and make development plans	Engagement
6	Learning together so that the mentee puts his or her development plan into action with the support of the mentor	Maturation
7	The development plan and the mentoring relationship is reviewed, evaluated and modified	Ageing
8	When the mentoring relationship has achieved its objectives, it is time to separate	Parting/Separating

Example D (continued)

Material used in a two-hour course for new mentors	
Workshop title:	Mentoring: putting words into action
Target Audience:	New mentors
Aim:	To provide new mentors with the opportunity to develop greater awareness of likely issues and skills they will need to tackle them
Learning outcomes	At the end of the workshop participants will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> understand clearly what mentoring is; use the agreed mentoring scheme framework and documentation; identify issues for which colleagues may need help; agree future action.
FENTO Standards	a1: b1, b2: c1, c2, c3: d2: h1, h2

Mentoring: putting words into action

Activity: Scenario workshop

Introduction

Working in groups of three or four, consider each of the four scenarios.

Please consider:

- what key issues need to be addressed in each scenario?
- what skills does the mentor require in order to achieve a successful outcome?
- suggestions for possible action.

Please record your group's ideas on a flipchart and be ready to share them with the rest of the group.

Group Activity 40 mins

Discussion 60 mins

The scenarios follow.

Example D (continued)

Scenario 1

Part-time teacher in post for one month, appointed to Year 1 of a Diploma course which began in September of the current academic year. It is now February of the same year (6 months into the course).

The original tutor became sick in the October and is on long-term sick leave. Since then, the group has had two different tutors.

Consequences – high wastage; of the original 24, now only 13 students remain. High absenteeism and student behavioural problems.

Request for help – how will you help this teacher?

Scenario 3

A fully qualified teacher who left further education five years ago has returned in a part-time capacity. However, the teacher has suddenly lost confidence in the classroom. He is also feeling 'at sea' in relation to the many recent changes in colleges.

The person requests help ASAP.

Scenario 2

You have been told there are difficulties and concerns about a member of your team. Students are not unhappy with the quality of teaching. However, they have said to you they have concerns about the teacher's personal hygiene.

How could you deal with this problem?

Scenario 4

A part-time teacher recently promoted to programme leader has requested help on how best to approach her new role and responsibilities. The teacher works away from the main campus at one of the community centres, making communication difficult.

How will you tackle this one?

