



English Language Lesson Observation Policy

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Contents

1.	Introduction.....	3
2.	Purpose and Scope	3
3.	Aims and Objectives	3
4.	Formal and Informal Observations	4
4.1.	Micro-observations.....	4
4.2.	Lesson Observations (Formal)	4
4.3.	Peer Observations.....	6
4.4.	Learning Walks.....	6
	Appendix 1: Observation of Teaching and Learning Form	8
	Appendix 2: Peer Observation.....	13

1. Introduction

Trent Education Centre (TEC) believes that teaching and learning is a collaborative practice where academic management, tutors, students, and other support staff work together in reciprocal relationships. A key part of this collaboration is the TEC approach to the development of effective teaching and learning through observation and feedback set out in this policy.

TEC believes that effective teaching and learning is generated by social interaction with tutors and peers and the application of knowledge to real-world activities. Students are expected to gain in-depth subject knowledge alongside the development of communication, problem-solving and critical thinking skills that will improve their English language and academic and career prospects.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy ensures that the TEC English Language approach to learning and teaching is implemented by English Tutors in the classroom by monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. It ensures that staff understand the observation process and what is expected of those who observe and those who are observed.

3. Aims and Objectives

The aim of observation is to improve the standard of teaching practice if needed and to provide ongoing support and development for tutors for the enhancement of teaching and learning. This is achieved through the following objectives:

- Conducting different types of observations at appropriate times throughout the academic year including formal and informal observations conducted by relevant senior staff and peers.
- Ensuring that teaching and learning are monitored effectively so that if improvements are needed, they are identified early and addressed promptly.
- Ensuring that teaching and learning is continuously enhanced.
- Ensuring that CPD workshops on teaching and learning are informed by evidence from observations.
- Providing a standardised template for use in lesson planning for observations and giving feedback to tutors after observations.
- Providing tutors with clear, standardised criteria for assessing formal observations so they know what the observer will be looking for.
- Providing tutors with clear and justified recommendations and a development plan on areas where they can improve or enhance their teaching practice.

4. Formal and Informal Observations

TEC conducts four types of lesson observation for all or its teaching staff in Further Education and Higher Education courses as follows:

- Micro-Observations
- Formal Observations
- Peer Observations
- Learning Walks.

4.1. Micro-observations

All new Tutors are given a micro-observation by the Director of Studies before they are hired to teach. This consists of a 20-minute observation followed by a discussion with students to get their feedback. There is no documentation or formal written feedback for these types of observations as they form part of the interview and selection process for new teaching staff.

4.2. Lesson Observations (Formal)

Once appointed, new Tutors are observed within the first three weeks of teaching. If there are no significant concerns identified, Tutors are formally observed once per annum thereafter. If there are concerns identified and the Tutor needs improvement, the Tutor is observed a second time after two weeks. If Tutors cannot meet expected teaching standards after multiple observations, their contracts may be terminated. Formal lesson observations for English Language courses are conducted by the Director of Studies.

The formal lesson observation begins with a meeting between the observer and the Tutor (observee) at least one week before the observation. In this meeting, the TEC Lesson Observation Policy is discussed and the timing of the lesson observation agreed. The Tutor will have an opportunity to inform the observer about anything that should be taken into consideration. Before the lesson observation, the Tutor sends a lesson plan to the observer covering a 45-minute lesson using the TEC Lesson Plan Template. During the formal observation, the observer completes a lesson observation feedback form commenting on some or all of the following when observing your lesson depending upon the aims of the lesson:

- **Lesson Planning:** How effectively does your lesson plan ensure that you achieve the lesson aims and that students achieve the learning outcomes
- **Classroom management:** How effectively do you manage lesson pace, interactions, transitions from one activity to another, behaviour and use of resources
- **Differentiation:** How effectively do you ensure that all students are challenged and supported according to their abilities and interests
- **Independent learners:** How effectively do you ensure the learners develop strategies, confidence and habits that will help them to become independent learners
- **Contextualising language:** How effectively do you contextualise the language you are teaching so that it is meaningful, engaging and useful for learners
- **Learner-centredness:** How effectively do you control the Tutor Talking Time and ensure that learners are fully engaged, interacting and have agency over their learning
- **Integration of Language Elements:** How effectively do you integrate the different elements of language into the lesson
- **Skills Demonstration:** How effectively do students demonstrate language and other embedded skills
- **Assessment of Learning:** How effectively do you check understanding through eliciting, concept checking and peer to peer feedback
- **Materials and Resources:** How effectively do you select and exploit materials to meet learning outcomes

After the observation you will receive written feedback on each of the items above and an overall comment on the lesson as follows:

- **Outstanding**
- **Very good**
- **Good**
- **Another observation required**

'Another observation required' indicates that key elements of effective teaching were not sufficiently evidenced during the lesson, and a follow-up observation is needed to confirm that appropriate improvements have been made.

The observer provides a development plan with recommendations on where the Tutor could enhance teaching or make improvements. If improvements are needed, the observer will monitor them during the next follow up lesson observation two weeks later. Recommendations in the development plans for Tutors are used to inform future CPD sessions offered to Tutors.

4.3. Peer Observations

At least once per annum, all Tutors at TEC complete a 30-minute peer observation of another Tutor and are peer-observed by another Tutor. During peer observations, Tutors complete a Peer Observation Form in which they identify areas of good practice and offer suggestions on how the lesson they observed might be enhanced for future practice.

4.4. Learning Walks

At least once per annum the Director or Studies may take a learning walk. This involves entering a lesson unannounced and observing for about 15-30 minutes. During the learning walk, the observer will not complete any documentation but will observe and provide some verbal feedback to the Tutor when the lesson ends. If the observer has any concerns, they may arrange a formal lesson observation with the Tutor after the learning walk has ended.

Lesson Plan

Course Title				Start Date		End Date	
Topic		Tutor		Week Number		Lesson Date	
Group Profile				Lesson Aim The Tutor will:			
				Learning Outcomes The Learners will be able to:			
Stage	Interaction	Mins	Activity Procedure	Aim	Differentiation	Resources	



Appendix 1: Observation of Teaching and Learning Form

Tutor		Date	
Observer		Time	
Title of Course		Module or Unit	
Cohort		Lesson Title	
In-person or online		Number attending/enrolled	

General Comments

Feedback

Criterion	Standard	Met (Y/N)	Good Practice	Areas for Improvement
Lesson Planning	The lesson plan supports the aims and learning outcomes, with clear staging, realistic timings, and appropriate detail.			
Classroom Management	Pace, interactions, transitions, behaviour, and use of resources are managed effectively.			
Differentiation	All learners are appropriately challenged and supported according to their needs, levels, and interests.			
Independent Learners	Learners are supported to develop strategies, confidence, and habits that promote autonomy.			
Contextualising Language	Language is presented in meaningful, engaging contexts that support understanding of form, meaning, and use.			

Learner-Centredness	Tutor Talking Time is controlled; learners are actively engaged, interacting, and exercising agency.			
Integration of Language Elements	Language systems and skills are integrated effectively to support the lesson aims.			
Skills Demonstration	Learners demonstrate progress in language and embedded skills through meaningful performance.			
Assessment for Learning	Understanding is checked through eliciting, concept checking, feedback, and peer interaction.			
Materials and Resources	Materials are appropriate, well-selected, and exploited effectively to meet learning outcomes.			

Observation Outcome
Excellent
Very Good
Good
Needs improving

Development Plan

Action Poin		Deadline	Updates
	Name	Date	
Observer			
Tutor			

