

**Flourish FE**

**Observation of Teaching Learning and Assessment Policy ( including Learning Support)**

**1. Purpose:**

This document is bespoke to the Flourish FE provision and is part of the overarching FACE protocol.

The purpose of observations of support, teaching, learning and assessment is to establish and continually improve standards by evaluating all learning and support activity against the criteria of the Education Inspection Framework and Further Education Inspection Handbook.

**2. Scope:**

This policy refers to all teaching and learning supported by Flourish FE as part of Knowsley FACE. Funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. All tutors delivering programmes and Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) supporting learning, whether accredited or non-accredited and measured under RARPA are required to be observed through the Observations of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (OTLA) process.

**3. Type of observations**:

Four types of lesson observations are covered within this policy:

* Formal/Graded observation (graded)
* Developmental observation (ungraded)
* Learning Walks (ungraded)
* Peer observation (ungraded)

**Formal Graded observations**:

All tutors and LSAs (with exceptions of newly qualified / newly in post staff within first three months of their probationary period) involved in the delivery or support of teaching, learning and assessment will be formally observed twice each year by their High Needs Lead and/or their Head of Service.

In addition the following ungraded observations could be undertaken by all staff.

**Developmental observations**:

Developmental observations will take place for all new/ newly qualified staff within three months of their appointment. This will form the basis of part of an initial training plan to ensure teaching and learning and support is of at least a good standard by the end of the probationary period. (six months subject to further extension should this be required and where appropriate)

All tutors and LSAs involved in the delivery of support, teaching, learning and assessment may request a developmental observation at any time. These observations are ungraded and could take place at any point over the academic year. The observations will focus on developing and improving support, teaching, learning and assessment within curriculum areas and will also identify good practice to be shared across the tutor/ LSA and curriculum teams.

Developmental observations may also form part of an individual action plan following a formal observation where it has been observed the outcome was requires improvement or inadequate. The duration of developmental observations will vary according to individual circumstances, progress and development made.

**Learning Walks**: Learning walks will follow themes identified by the Section Lead for High Needs and the Senior Tutor responsible for Curriculum. These will take place throughout the year usually planned at appropriate points within the formal observation schedule. Learning walks are ungraded and the visit to each session will not exceed 20 minutes. No individual judgements will be given but brief verbal feedback will be offered, and if needed support and development suggested.

**Peer Observation**: Where requested tutors or LSAs may wish to peer observe to see best practice to improve their own skills and knowledge. The Section Lead for High Needs may also suggest this where appropriate to form part of a developmental support action plan for those needing to be formally re-observed. Tutors and LSAs requesting to participate in this activity are expected to reflect on their learning from observing other staff and to identify how their teaching skills will develop as a result. This is sufficient in the form of an email follow up to the Senior Tutor for Curriculum and the Section Lead.

**4. Outcomes of Formal Observations:**

As mentioned above observations may be ungraded or graded. Where observations are graded the grading standards from the Education Inspection Framework will be used:

1 – Outstanding

2 – Good

3 – Requires Improvement

4 – Inadequate

Graded observations of support, teaching and learning will monitor the impact and outcomes of the teaching, learning and assessment (and also for tutors the leadership, organisation and management of the classroom and other staff including support staff).

All observations are carried out in accordance with Ofsted’s Education Inspection Framework: and the Further Education and Skills Inspection Handbook.

Our expectation is that all tutors delivering and LSAs supporting on provision funded by the ESFA within Flourish FE and FACE will meet the requirement of being judged at least as Good or better.

Where tutors or LSAs are judged to be grade 3 - requires improvement, or grade 4 - inadequate, support interventions will be agreed and put in place by the Section Lead for High Needs in conjunction with, if necessary, the Head of Service.

The tutor or LSA will be given sufficient support and opportunity to improve and will receive a further observation approximately 4 weeks but no later than 6 weeks (where possible) from the date of the first observation. Where no progress is deemed to have been made the Section Lead for High Needs will need to follow the FACE organisation’s performance management procedure.

**5. Frequency of Formal Observations:**

It is expected that all tutors or LSAs will be observed twice in an academic year.

Flourish FE only has a small amount of tutors and LSAs so ALL will be observed twice in the academic year.

Where there is a need for a paired observation this is to be communicated to the tutor or LSA in question, and this may occur for the following reasons.

* For training purposes where the lead observer is training new members of the observation team.
* Where an aspect of good practice is evident and there is a need for another observer to witness and share to other teams.
* Where a re-observation has taken place and no development has been evident and the original observer request a second observer to ensure the process is fair and unbiased for the tutor / LSA being observed.

**6. Feedback from Formal Observations**

The observers should aim to give some initial verbal feedback as soon as is possible at a convenient time for the observee after the observation. No later than the following working day.

Written feedback should be sent to the tutor or LSA no later than two weeks from the date of the observation. For those graded ‘requires improvement’ or ‘inadequate’, the aim for this should be within a week of the observation.

Where two observers have seen a session their feedback must be collated on one report form and the actions agreed together and presented in the feedback paperwork.

All written records of feedback once signed and any response from the tutor or LSA noted are to be filed and stored so that any necessary moderation can take place as requested.

The outcomes of observations will be used to inform performance management of Flourish FE staff, and to help with identification of staff needs and training requirements. Feedback from OTLAs will be a central part of the planning process for tutors’ and LSAs’ CPD.

Actions identified as a result of observation feedback should be monitored and reviewed by the High Needs Section Lead.

**7. Additional information ungraded observations**

In addition to the formal observation process, a developmental observation or learning walk report may be used to record an informal visit to a class.

**8. Selection of Observers:**

Flourish FE’s observation team will include the Section Lead for High Needs and two Senior Tutors.

**9. Training of observers:**

The training of observers is a critical factor in the success of the observation programme by ensuring that those observing classes are both competent observers and are following the agreed approach to the process.

Training for observers to become part of the Flourish FE team will include:

* An introduction to both the Education Inspection Framework and FE Inspection Handbook in the context of SEN in a specialist provision.
* Training on the use of Flourish FE observation paperwork, gathering evidence, classroom protocol, giving feedback to tutors, grading;
* Practical activities involving classroom observation.
* Paired observation in a partner specialist provision.
* Paired observation within Flourish FE until the Section Lead is satisfied with a trainee observer’s competence.
* All observation team members (where applicable) should observe a minimum of two classes per year, all observers will be expected to attend at least one moderation / standardisation activity each year.

**10. Arrangements prior to an observation**

In most cases tutors and LSAs will be given 1 weeks’ notice that an “observation week” or “learning walk week” will be taking place. Tutors or LSAs will not know on which day during that week they will be observed

During that notification of observation whether it is be formal observation or ungraded learning walk the Section Lead will specify what is expected in terms of paperwork to be presented, and what if a learning walk is taking place the theme will be.

Requested developmental observations will take place on a time and date agreed with both tutor or LSAs requesting it and observer.

Organised peer observations as part of an action place arranged by the observer, will be agreed with both the tutor or LSA in question and the peer (the peer may be within Flourish FE or at an external provider)

Tutors or LSAs requiring a formal reassessment after a require improvement or inadequate grade will be informed of the week they will be re-observed after the feedback is given and followed up in an email from the Section Lead for High Needs.

**11. Classroom protocol:**

Observers must be effectively trained before they are allowed to observe classes unaccompanied. All internal Flourish FE observers and the Head of Service for FACE are fully trained.

Any external observers who are not accompanied by the Section Lead or Senior Tutor at Flourish FE must be made aware of the nature of the learners being taught in Flourish FE. Where it is deemed a disadvantage to the learners to visit a session this will be advised by the Section Lead and an alternative session will be observed.

If an observation has begun and the presence of unknown faces is again deemed as disruptive or upsetting to the learners in any way the observers will leave the session.

**12. Review**.

Actions arising from observations of teaching and learning will be monitored by the Section Lead and follow up observations etc will be planned and notified by the Section Lead.

**13. Appeals and Complaints:**

Appeals following an observation report. There are only three criteria by which an appeal against a grade can be made:

a. The observer has not complied with the OTLA policy

b. The tutor/LSA can evidence factual inaccuracies contained within the written report

c. The tutor/LSA disputes the grade awarded.

If a tutor or LSA disagrees with feedback through either b) or c) they will have opportunity to raise this either verbally or in a written response to the formal written report but no later than 7 days from receiving the written feedback from the observer. It may not change the outcome of the grade given, but will highlight the opportunity to address this matter in the re-observation process. The tutor/ LSA may request a different observer.

If the tutor / LSA wishes to make a complaint regarding a) the conduct of an observer undertaking an observation this may be formally raised following the FACE protocol.

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Reviewed by: Vicky Bolster