**Tool 1: Questions for Observers to ask themselves during the observation**

Here are some useful questions to ask yourself while you are watching the session:

**Questions**

Does the tutor find out and build on what the learners already know?

Is the tutor revising and consolidating what learners have learned previously?

Are all the learner clear what they are supposed to be learning and what will happen at different points in the session? That is, do they have a sense of the shape of the session?

Are teaching strategies effective: discussion, explanation, questioning, demonstration, etc.? How good are these, particularly questioning?

What is the quality of the tutor’s subject knowledge?

What is the quality of the activities that the tutor asks the learners to do; how well do they take learning forward?

How effectively do resources contribute, including other adults working in the classroom?

How well does the tutor manage the time in the session and the pace of the learning?

Are there genuine opportunities for assessment, reflection and for dealing with misconceptions and misunderstandings?

What opportunities do the learners have to apply learning from elsewhere, especially literacy and numeracy?

Are all the learners learning and making progress? Are any learner or groups of learners finding the work too difficult or too easy?

What is behaviour like? Overall, how well is the classroom managed so that there is a culture of learning, independence and positive attitudes?

**Tool 2: Talking to the learners**

To get the most out of your observation, talk to the learner about what they are doing and try to see the session through their eyes. You should not really need to see the session plan to know what the tutor is trying to teach and if you cannot work it out from what you are seeing and hearing, it is likely that the learner will not know either. When you are thinking about your overall evaluation of the session, think back to what the learner said to you: the ones who were struggling as well as the ones who were getting on really well.

You should try and make opportunity to talk with the learners about the session and their course. You might have a set of questions to ask that has arisen during the observation, based on what you have seen. Or you might want to ask questions relating to a theme e.g. embedding of skills, Prevent/British Values…

**Questions to ask learners – not a prescriptive list or an exhaustive list:**

* Do you know what the course objectives are, and do you have any individual or personal goals?
* Do you feel you have made progress?
* Are you on track to achieve? How do you know?
* What can you do now that you could not do at the start of the course?
* What do you particularly like about the course?
* Have you gained any additional knowledge or skills?
* Do you feel you are able to ask and answer questions in the class?
* Have you gained any additional skills in English and maths? If so, what?
* Do you feel that this is an inclusive class?
* Have you covered British values, PREVENT whilst on this course? If so, how?
* Have you learnt about other cultural differences? If so, what?
* Do you like the venue – is it easily accessible, safe?
* Is there anything you would change about the course? If so, what?
* What are you going to do next?
* What progression options have been explained to you?

**Tool 3: questions to ask the tutor**

Questions to consider relating to Education Inspection Framework

Did the sequencing of the content work?

**Intent**

* How could you improve the learning objectives to ensure clarity of planned course?
* How could you have made the intent of the session clearer?
* How do you set out the session/course intent?

**Implementation**

* How have you used the initial assessment to meet learner needs?
* How could you challenge the more able learners?
* Would you change any sequencing of the course?
* How are you building on learner starting points?
* How could you have handled that on another occasion?
* Talk to be about…?
* Could you have…
* Written more on the whiteboard
* Used a different handout/resource
* Asked a learner to…demonstrate/explain/identify
* Have you thought about…?
* Changing the size/colour/font as this might….
* Using a different article
* Is that typical for this group/individual?
* Do you think some found it difficult? Why was this? What could you have done to support them?
* What are the next steps for learners?
* Why did you do it X way?
* What would you like to be able to go back and change?

**Impact**

* How do you know learners are making progress?
* What do you think the group have learnt during the session?
* ‘What did you think of the learning in that session?’
* ‘How much progress would you say that the learners made in this part of the session?’
* In which part of the session did the learners make the most progress? How did you know this?’
* Were any learning objectives not achieved? Why

**Five simple steps to OTLAs**

**Step 1: Prepare and plan**

Make sure that you are clear why you are observing. Is it to be a developmental observation or formal graded observation. Ask for the session plan. This will help you with several elements:

* to clarify the objectives of the session and to comment on any assessments that have fed into it
* to explain the session’s structure, i.e. how it will unfold
* to show how it fits into a longer sequence of sessions and to explain what the learners have done previously
* to explain the different groupings and to identify learners who might need particular support
* to explain the roles of other adults (teaching assistants (TAs), trainees, volunteers).

Make sure you have all the resources you need with you – notebook, pen, guidance documents, checklists.

**Step 2: Observation (looks for learning)**

Observe and be sensitive. Leave your preconceptions at the door and watch with an open mind. Remember that you are there to see how well the learners are learning and how the teaching contributes to that.

Effective observation focuses on whether all the things that the tutor is doing are making a difference to learner’s learning. Don’t be afraid to circulate if there is a group activity happening or learners are working independently.

You don’t need to be writing a detailed narrative of what is happening. You should be noting the impact the tutor is having on the learner’s progress and achievement.

Remember that the learners should be working harder than the tutor. If they are not, reflect on what they are doing. Come to a judgement about how engaged you think they are and whether they are all making progress in their learning.

Make notes while you are watching. How you record what you see will depend on:

* what you are looking for and the extent to which there is a specific focus for the observation
* what you are going to use the information for later

Some observers make notes during the session and then write up a more formal account later.

Features of an outstanding session:

* stimulating and enthusiastic teaching
* high expectations of what learners can do
* development of learners’ good learning habits
* well-planned sessions
* a stimulating classroom environment
* frequent praise and recognition
* well trained and deployed TAs
* a close check on learning during sessions, with effective marking and assessment.

**Step 3: Discussion and reflection**

Spend time with the learners to capture the view of the session observed. Carry out a de-brief with the tutor. Use this to clarify any questions you had about the session. Use directed and open questions.

Provide oral and written feedback promptly, honestly, constructively and sensitively.

Feedback after observation is a fundamental part of the whole process. It is important that this is managed very carefully and sensitively, especially if the session had any weaknesses. It should:

* be clear and specific to that session
* be developmental and action-focused
* be sensitive and honest.

Clearly, it is much easier to give feedback on a good or outstanding session than it is to give feedback on one that needs to be improved.

However, just because it is easier to give positive feedback, this does not mean that it should not be done thoughtfully. Tutors who teach good and outstanding sessions also value suggestions as to how their teaching might improve. In fact, they are often the keenest to listen.

Feedback should be specific to the session, focused on what you saw and not comment on things outside of the observation.

In your feedback, be clear about what the tutor should do next to improve the learning – remember that improving the learning is the important aspect, not improving the teaching for the sake of it. Be specific about the actions that are needed – something that the tutor can genuinely focus on.

With peer observation, you might want to also draw on what you have learned and discuss ideas about teaching methods and strategies.

**Step 4: Evaluate – writing of the report**

Use the guidance booklet to help you structure your report.

Your report should not be a running narrative of what the tutor did in the session. It should be a clear assessment of the impact the teacher had on the learning.

Each paragraph should have a judgement. This can be either at the start of the paragraph or at the end. There should be clear evidence linked to the judgement.

*e.g. Clarity of purpose was good – the tutor displayed and went through the learning objectives at the start of the lesson ensuring all were clear on what they expected to achieve.*

*Or*

*The tutor started by going through the session objectives, so that the learners were fully aware of what the session was about. This demonstrated good clarity of purpose.*

Make sure your language is consistent, and if a graded observation reflect the overall grade for the session.

**Step 5: Submission of the report**

Once you have proofread your report you need to submit it within 3 days to Hampshire Achieves [skillsandparticipation@hants.gov.uk](mailto:skillsandparticipation@hants.gov.uk)

Make sure you have completed all sections, and removed any guidance notes (in blue)

You may also want to give more detailed feedback to the tutor