

# OBSERVATION HANDBOOK

Policy Group: Quality and Curriculum Group 4

Effective: 01/05/2019

Approved:

Responsible officer: Stephanie Hudson

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# GUIDANCE

Values | Vision | Tone of Voice



## Vision

Transforming lives through learning

## Tone of voice

Our tone of voice takes its direct influence from our core values.

We are passionate about people and learners and are driven to get the best out of everyone by getting to understand them. We are caring and supportive, as well as being determined and strive for growth. We talk with purpose and enthusiasm in a way that connects and empowers people.

Innovation is at the heart of Learning Curve Group and we're always thinking about what's next!

## I. INTRODUCTION

Here at LCG we ensure that our core values take priority when conducting quality assurance activities. The purpose of the Observation Policy Procedure is to ensure that all staff delivering accredited programmes across the provision, undergo a rigorous quality assurance check in order to validate that the delivery of our curriculum is being implemented and ultimately impacting to meet our learner's needs.

Delivery staff will not be observed by a family member or a person with whom they have a close working relationship, In line with our conflict of Interest policy

Applies to:

This handbook applies to any colleagues working directly with learners.

Reason for handbook :

Observations and learning walks are carried out in line with the Common Inspection Framework to ensure that all teaching, learning and assessment meets the requirements of Ofsted, Awarding Organisations and professional standards.

## II. Handbook -policy statement

We are committed to working towards an evaluative developmental process that aims to:

- Improve the quality of the teaching, learning and assessment experience for our learners
- Assess and develop professional practice of longstanding and probationary colleagues which will subsequently improve the learner's experience
- Provide a profile of robust observations to feed into the self-assessment to support the judgements made against the Common Inspection Framework and inform our quality improvement planning
- Provide outcomes of individual observations that will feed into the delivery staffs Training Needs Analysis to ensure a high-quality learning experience for all

## III. DEFINITIONS

OTLA – Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

QAM – Quality Assurance Manager

IQA – Internal Quality Assurer

QDM – Quality Development Manager

#### IV. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

List any related policies

1.6 – Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

1.16 – Grievance Procedure

1.9 - Whistleblowing Policy

4.3 – Teaching, Learning and Assessment Handbook

## Appendix

### Procedure for Observations

Colleagues will be observed at least once per year dependent upon their previous observation outcome. In the main all observations will be carried out by Internal Quality Assurers / Lead Quality Assurers / Quality Assurance Manager/ Head of Quality and will receive the following judgement:

- Exceeds Expectations
- Meets Expectations
- Below Expectations

We endeavor that all observations are unannounced and take place in the following timeframes.

- Colleagues who receive Exceeds Expectations will be observed within 9-12 months
- Colleagues who receive Meets Expectations will be observed within 6-9 months
- Colleagues who receive Below Expectations will be observed within 3 months. Any colleague that receives this judgement will be put on an intensive support plan across the 3 months prior to re-observation

After an observation, actions plans will be reviewed with the QDM to highlight areas of good practice and development. The QDM will then implement a training plan for those colleagues who require improvement. The Training Needs Analysis is then managed by the delivery staff member's relevant line manager. The timeframe of TNAs will depend upon the categorisation of the observation. Delivery staff who do not improve following their re-observation will engage in the performance management process and may be removed from delivery while the performance management plan is being implemented.

Probationary colleagues will receive a supportive (ungraded) observation of teaching learning and assessment within 8-10 weeks of their start date. They will then receive a graded observation (unannounced) within 18-20 weeks of their start date. In order to achieve their probation, our colleagues should achieve at least a meets expectation judgement. In the event that our colleague does not meet the required expectations following an intensive support plan being completed with the QDMs and their relevant line manager, their probationary period may be extended or ended.

Joint observations will take place within teams and across teams. In addition, the Lead Quality Assurers and QAM will carry out unannounced on all IQAs to ensure a standardised practice of the observations is taking place in line with procedures. Any delivery staff member can request an observation at any time.

### Prior to Observation

At the beginning of each quarter all of our colleagues and their managers will be notified that an OTLA will take place within that quarter via email sent by the QAM. This notification

will provide them with the OTLA procedure and the judgment criteria. Colleagues will also be reminded of the diary/timetable schedule entry requirements in order to allow observers to plan an appropriate date and time for an observation.

The OTLA schedule will be prepared by the QAM and shared to the observation team at the end of every month. Where delivery staff require a re-observation as a result of a below expectation judgement, it is the observer's responsibility to ensure this takes place within the timeframe outlined in the policy.

Prior to the observation, where relevant, an appropriate observer will complete a desktop observation on the allocated delivery staff around the following:

- IQA reports – quality of assessment practice, feedback, responsiveness to actions
- Planning (including ILP teaching learning and assessment) developmental feedback, review of progress, SMART targets, impact of teaching and learning (where relevant e-portfolio review)
- Progress of learners – Percentage of learners on track, 20% off the job (where relevant)
- Learner feedback and validation
- Resources being used (where relevant e.g. teaching and learning resources, EPA readiness resources)

A judgement will be given in line with the Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Performance Indicators and Grade Criteria document, this will include, where relevant desktop observation judgement.

### **During Observations**

Observers will respect the professionalism of delivery staff and resulting feedback will be handled in a way in which maintains confidentiality between the observer, delivery staff member and their manager.

All colleagues should have the following documentation for the observer to view at the time of the observation:

- Register / attendance information (where relevant)
- Assessment / session plan
- Scheme of Work
- Assessment records
- Access to progress tracking and target setting
- Assessment decisions
- Group Profile (where relevant)
- Compliance paperwork
- Resources for the session

Observations will last at least 40 minutes and no more than one hour and the observation can take place at any time during the session. The observer may take the opportunity to

Speak with learners after the session in order to gather their feedback. Furthermore, the observer may ask to speak with the manager of the learner (where relevant).

### **Following the Observations**

Feedback to our colleagues should be given verbally at the end of the session (if possible) or within two working days following the observation. Feedback that is given will be comprehensive and constructive and mirror the feedback going to be given in the written report.

The written formal judgment will be given once the observation report is complete within 7 working days and will take into consideration both the desktop observation and the teaching and learning observation. The exception to this is if the report falls into the moderation sample, see below for moderation procedure. The report will be sent by the observer to the delivery staff member and their manager no later than 15 days post observation. The delivery staff member will acknowledge acceptance of the report by providing signature in the form of an email response and will provide their own reflection on the session and the outcome of their observation using the Observation Self Evaluation Form and this is to be sent to the Quality Support Team, it is the expectation that the delivery staff member will return this feedback within 3 working days.

The Quality Support Team will gather all observations reports within the given timeframe and update the OTLA spreadsheet. This information is reviewed and evaluated by the Lead Quality Assurers and Quality Assurance Manager on a monthly and quarterly basis. All observation judgements will be reported into the Head of Quality on a monthly basis. This analysis will inform celebration of success where good practice has impacted and continue to inform our quality improvement planning where improvement and risks are identified.

### **Moderation**

When an observer completes an OTLA, the following moderation process is to be followed:

- The OTLA report outcomes are logged onto the OTLA spreadsheet including the moderation tab with the provisional judgement given.
- All IQAs will be RAG rated for their OTLA practices which will inform the sample of reports needed to go through moderation.

The RAG rating is as follows:

- RED – 100% reports moderated by at least 3 IQAs including the Lead Quality Assurers / Quality Assurance Manager.
- AMBER – 50% of reports will be moderated by at least 3 IQAs including the Lead Quality Assurers / Quality Assurance Manager.
- GREEN – 20% of reports will be moderated by at least 3 IQAs including the Lead Quality Assurers / Quality Assurance Manager.

- In the event a report needs moderating, this will be circulated by email from the Quality Support Team to allocated IQAs. The IQAs will moderate and send their feedback to all IQAs within 48 hours.
- The moderation spreadsheet will be updated with the final agreed judgement and the OTLA report will be sent out to the delivery staff member and their line manager from the IQA who conducted the observation.
- Where a delivery staff member is judged as below expectation the allocated observer / QAM will contact the relevant line manager within 48 hours to being to formulate the intensive support.

## **Appeals**

In all cases of appeals this should be in writing to the Quality Assurance Manager or Head of Quality within 7 working days of receiving the written feedback from the observation. The grounds for appeal may be:

- (i) Conduct of the observer or
- (ii) Dispute over the judgment allocated.

For appeals over a dispute of the judgement allocated a re-observation can be arranged however the Head of Quality may decide the original judgement stands following the review of all documentation and interviews with all individuals involved. In the case of conduct during an observation, it may be deemed to remove the observation from the profile and carry out another observation. In this case the observer will receive mentoring and additional training.

## **Procedure for Learning Walks**

We will endeavor that where relevant all colleagues will be subject to an unannounced learning walk throughout the year which is themed in line with common areas for development, invigilation checks, progression checks, wider skills embedding etc. Lead Quality Assurers will assign learning walks and themes to the IQAs on a quarterly basis following an action meeting with the Quality Assurance Manager and Head of Quality.

In addition to IQAs carrying out learning walks, operational managers are also carrying out learning walks on all delivery staff. It is the responsibility of that manager to submit the completed document to the quality support team within 5 working days.

Following a learning walk, verbal feedback should be given as soon as practicably possible with the delivery staff member. A learning walk form should then be completed to detail the findings and the judgements made throughout the learning walk. This report will be sent to the delivery staff member and their manager within 5 working days and where necessary the action plan will feed into the delivery staff members Training Needs Analysis.