



## OBSERVATION OF TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT POLICY (The Quality of Education)

<b>DATE CREATED</b>	February 2018	<b>DATE OF NEXT REVIEW</b>	August 2025
<b>POLICY OWNER(S)</b>	Director of Learning		
<b>DESIGNATION</b>	College		

<b>Purpose of policy</b>	In order to be effective, it is essential that our procedures for observation are understood and owned by all, and that the outcomes lead to a clear understanding of what constitutes best practice. In order to achieve this, it is important that staff are clear about the systems in place ensuring a robust, effective process and collaborative approach to development planning and continuous quality improvement.
<b>Intended audience</b>	All College staff
<b>Links to other policies</b>	<a href="#">Further education and skills inspection handbook - GOV.UK 2023</a>

## St Elizabeth's College Policy Observations of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

St Elizabeth's College is committed to providing a high quality learning environment which ensures all our learners receive the best possible learning experience.

St Elizabeth's College regards observation of teaching, learning and assessment (OTLs) an integral element to quality improvement planning and is embedded in its quality cycle. It is a central part of the approach adopted by the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and is judged within the grading profile for Inspections, within the Quality of Education.

In order to be effective, it is essential that our procedures for observation are understood and owned by all, and that the outcomes lead to a clear understanding of what constitutes best practice. In order to achieve this, it is important that staff are clear about the systems in place ensuring a robust, effective process and collaborative approach to development planning and continuous quality improvement.

In keeping with national developments, St Elizabeth's College has adopted the term 'requires improvement'. Where areas of development are identified, support, training needs and performance management will provide a strategy to ensure learners needs, goals and aspirations and long term outcomes and success will continue to be of highest priority.

Formal grading of delivery will not be undertaken, however in the event that an observed session is deemed as 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' grades will be formalised. Where appropriate the overall profile of the college's standards of Teaching, Learning and Assessment data will inform Governance and other quality assurance processes for example Ofsted Inspection.

### Quality Framework

St Elizabeth's College aspires to be an outstanding learning provider. The college has progressed positively towards this aspiration. In addressing areas for development identified in the Ofsted Inspection, April 2022<sup>1</sup>, the college has supported improvement through:

- Leaders should ensure that they provide teaching staff with ongoing, high-quality and relevant training that helps them to improve their craft of teaching.
- Leaders should provide training to ensure that learning support staff promote learners' independence and do not intervene too quickly in learning activities.
- Leaders and managers should ensure that learners receive appropriate ongoing careers information, advice and guidance throughout their time at the college and that, where appropriate, it focuses on the ambitious destinations that many learners are capable of securing, such as paid and voluntary work.
- Leaders should ensure that they provide further training for staff on the implications of

radicalisation and extremism for learners and ensure that staff and learners are fully aware of the local risks.

Highly effective and robust quality improvement monitoring strategies are embedded within the quality cycle. Observation records for Teaching, Learning and Assessment have been updated to reflect the Further education and skills inspection handbook - GOV.UK 2023 our priorities and improvement plans.

**Observations of teaching, learning and assessment will assure the journey to outstanding is prioritised:**

- Develop, implement and train the college team to understand the journey to outstanding. This will be promoted through a culture of observation and development planning, peer observation, professional discussion and development.
- Develop a culture which is committed to continuous improvement.
- Facilitate the sharing of best practice across all areas of the organisation.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by providing an evaluative formal assessment against set criteria.
- Support continuous improvements in learner achievement.
- Identify strategies to address areas of improvement across curriculum and celebrate creativity and innovation, (Quality of Education).
- Ensure learner's individual complex needs are met, regularly reviewed, monitored and reported on.
- Contribute to the quality improvement framework and the process of self-assessment.
- Enable individuals to think critically about what they do, naturally reflect their practice and develop as professionals.
- Identify training needs.
- Inform performance management priorities.

In addition to observing the learning that is taking place, observations will also consider the following:

- Staff have a firm and clear understanding of the intended curriculum and what it means for their practice.
- The implementation of the curriculum ensures learners develop skill, knowledge and understanding to equip them for adulthood
- The effectiveness of teaching and assessment methods with regard to: stretch and challenge, inspiring learners and meeting their individual needs.
- Delivery focusses on learners achieving the best possible outcomes. The impact of learning accelerates progress and supports learners to realise their potential.
- Learners have access to high quality information, advice and careers guidance. Staff work closely with Services for Young People in aligning action planning and aspirations

with planning.

- That supporting adults are deployed effectively, are clear about what is required of them and enable learners to progress rapidly.
- Staff ensure that learning is tailored to enable all learners to make at least good progress.
- Assessment of learner progress is timely, appropriate, informative and fair.
- Review of progress provides learners with constructive opportunities to reflect on how well they are doing, what they need to do to improve and is mapped to their individual needs.
- Key skills for life are prioritised, maximising learner's progress in English, mathematics and ICT.
- Resources are of high quality, learner centred, age appropriate and promote independence.
- Pedagogy and andragogy training needs are identified and appropriate opportunities are implemented
- The curriculum embeds safeguarding at its heart, including radicalisation

Observers will also review the staff course file and learner's work. Below is a non-exhaustive list of the minimum standards required for the course file:

- Scheme of work – long term plan
- Individual Learning Plans
- Learner targets
- Reports of progress, including daily progress sheets and electronic evidence.
- Awarding organisation criteria.
- Relevant risk assessment, behaviour, therapy and care plans / guidance.
- Age appropriate resources, including imagery, text and online learning.
- IAG action plans

Staff will consistently apply a range of methods to drive improvement including, but not limited to:

- Learners make rapid and sustained progress
- Lecturers have high expectations
- Effective planning (enabling each learner to learn exceptionally well across the curriculum)
- Assessment of learning (Lecturers systematically and effectively check learners understanding throughout the lesson, intervene to make impact)
- The teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is highly effective and cohesively planned and implemented across the curriculum
- Lecturers and staff generate high levels of engagement and commitment to learning across the whole college
- Consistently constructive feedback from lecturer to ensure learners make rapid gains.

### **Light touch observations and learning walks:**

Light touch and learning walks will be undertaken within the guidelines of this policy, and will focus on:

- The individual and or group support provided by supporting staff, and: -
- Key strengths and critical next steps.

Feedback will be completed within 48 hours of the activity and will focus on the key strengths and critical next steps.

The expectation, frequency and formality will be determined by the College Management Team. All teaching, learning and assessment observations will be carried out in accordance with our Equal Opportunities Policy.

### **Structure**

College Management Team and if appropriate members of the Governing Body will undertake formal / and informal learning walk and light touch observations. On occasion the School Management Team may also engage in college observations for the purpose of internal inspection and the sharing of best practice.

Approved observers must meet the following criteria:

- Minimum 3 years' experience
- Hold a teaching qualification or identified as a good practitioner through the process of observation
- Undertaken observation training

New observers will observe with experienced observers and their training will cover:

- The Education Inspection Framework July 2023
- The criteria and priority themes / areas of observation
- Confidentiality
- Standardisation of judgements and grading, where appropriate / relevant
- Safeguarding and Health and Safety
- Equality and Diversity
- Feedback – professional discussion

### **Timeframes**

The timetable for observation will be drawn up by the College Management Team, and made available to all staff. We recognise that the schedule must be fit for purpose, realistic and achievable for all areas of work across the organisation. All learning activity will be included in the observation timetable. No more than one weeks' notice will be provided for observations.

*NB: The College Management Team has the right to enter/observe a session at any time throughout the academic year, for quality assurance purposes, without giving prior notice.*

## **Observer**

The observer will endeavor to be as unobtrusive as possible. We recognise that as little disruption as possible is the best methodology to support learners learning.

Observers may speak with learners.

In order to allow them to concentrate on making effective judgements, observers will not take an active part in any teaching, learning and assessment. Observers will only intervene if a matter of health and safety and/or safeguarding arises. In order to have sufficient information on which to reflect and make judgements, observers will make notes on an observation record during the session.

Observations should last a minimum of 30 minutes. It is possible the observer will not be able to see the whole session. It is expected that observers will be present at the beginning of the session. In some cases, an observer may come in and watch the beginning of a session and return later to see the conclusion. This would still count as one observation.

During the session the observer will observe the learning taking place, learner progress and the development of key skills for life and the impact of resources including staffing. The observer will ensure the strategies of intent, implementation and impact of the quality of education, including opportunities for volunteering and work to support staff's preparation for future inspection demonstrating at least good standards of quality of education across provision.

## **Feedback**

Brief feedback will wherever possible be provided immediately after the lesson and should always be completed within 48 hours, initially verbally and then as a report.

Formal feedback – The observer will feedback strengths and areas for development. The feedback meeting will allow for professional discussion and for clarifying any areas for concern. In instances where it is determined the session is not of the standard expected a grade may be given. Grades will not be fed back to the member of staff although they will be graded afterwards in order to provide data about the quality of education.

Following feedback, the development plan and relevant developmental actions will be formalised on the observation record and forwarded to the member of staff to sign and date and return copy. It is recommended that staff retain a copy for their own records. Where appropriate, follow up meetings will be agreed and will focus on progress against actions. In some instances, an additional observation will be undertaken, agreed in advance with the member of staff. Observation record outcomes will inform staff appraisal and performance management.

Where relevant it may be determined that the development plan is managed through the peer observation strategy within the context of this policy.

## Outcomes

In addition, the outcomes of observation will be taken into account as part of our process of staff review. It will also be used to help us make judgements about the quality of education across sections and the organisation as a whole, as part of the process of self-assessment.

St Elizabeth's College recognises that whilst the outcomes of observation inform continuous improvement, the process may also identify other issues, such as resource related details, and the content of the curriculum which nonetheless have an impact on the quality of the learner's experience. These will also be reported and where appropriate addressed.

## Priority

The following characteristics illustrate judgements about the 'Quality of Education': (*source Education Inspection Framework July 2023*).

## Outstanding

- *The provider meets all criteria for a good quality of education securing and consistently*
  - *The quality of education is exceptional in addition, the following will apply.*
- The provider's curriculum intent is strong. Throughout the provider and its subcontractors, teachers have a firm and common understanding of the intended curriculum and what it means for their practice.
  - The provider's implementation of the curriculum is consistently strong. Across all parts of the provider, including in subcontracted provision and for learners with SEND and those with high needs, teaching and training are of a high quality. Training activities contribute well to delivering the curriculum intent.
  - The work that learners do over time embodies consistently demanding curriculum goals. It matches the aims of the curriculum in being coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment.
  - The impact of the taught curriculum is strong. Learners acquire and develop high-quality skills and produce work of a consistently high standard.
  - Learners consistently achieve highly, particularly the most disadvantaged. Learners with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes.



## **Moderation**

Moderation and standardisation activity will be undertaken in accordance with the Quality Cycle.

### **Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy:**

A range of methods will be utilised to ensure the policy remains fit for purpose, (as detailed below). This will be undertaken by: College Leadership, Governors and Lecturers as part of training and development.

- Bi-Annual Review of Policy
- Learner voice – actions as a result of learner feedback
- Minutes of team meetings
- Moderation and standardisation activity which includes evaluation of the recording documentation
- Ofsted Inspection Outcomes
- Observation undertaken, grade profiles where appropriate and theme analysis
- Progress of development plan and action planning
- Peer observation
- Training and Development Annual Plan
- Retention, achievement, progress and success of learners (data)
- Self-assessment