

OSC Teaching and Learning Framework 2023-2024

Philosophy, Pedagogy, Professional Development and Quality Improvement

Orbital South Colleges' primary strategic aim is to deliver excellence in teaching and learning, creating unmissable lessons. The heart of our core mission is to provide high-quality learning to meet the needs of all student groups. Leaders and managers are committed to providing a dynamic and flexible curriculum offer that meets the diverse needs of students, employers, and other stakeholders within the wider community. Aligned to this is the need to establish the right environment so that students can feel safe and supported in their learning journey. As such we endeavour to provide inclusive, respectful, and aspirational learning spaces in which all our students can thrive and where positive behaviours and attitudes are actively promoted.

Sharing best practice and continuous improvement is at the core of the Teaching and Learning Framework. Quality assurance is used to review lessons identifying areas of good practice and areas that require support to maintain a high-quality teaching and learning provision across the college. Quality improvement is a continuous cycle used to study processes and to ensure standards are being met, making alterations as required through the delivery of CPD and individualised support.

1. Learning Philosophy

- We believe learning is the opportunity that makes a difference, giving our students real career options and a pathway to future success.
- Providing the best vocational and technical education means focusing not just on what students learn, but how they develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours that prepare them for the next progression steps into further study or employment.
- Underpinning the above intent is a sustained focus on teacher professional development that is personalised, purposeful and target driven.

We believe the professional development of our teaching workforce lies at the heart of learning excellence. As such teacher practice improvement can be closely aligned to the College Group's set of corporate values:

- **Innovation:** Teachers are encouraged to experiment with new ideas to establish and sustain creative and curious learning environments for their students.
- **Openness:** The evaluation of teaching and learning is open and transparent, with professional conversations taking place in highly supportive and developmental environments.
- **Quality:** Teaching excellence is defined and informed by evidence-based research irrespective of the subject, level and delivery context.
- **Clarity:** Coherence of messaging is a vital part of professional development with verbal and written feedback being unambiguous, evidence based, and action orientated.
- **Responsibility:** Teachers take ownership of their professional development and are expected to engage with personalised and collective CPD opportunities throughout the academic year.
- **Aspiration:** Teachers are role models, inspiring a sense of self-belief in their students, setting motivational targets linked to academic achievement, personal growth and wellbeing.

2. Pedagogy in Practice

- At OSC we believe learning is a continuous process of improvement beginning with clear identifiable starting points founded upon an effective partnership between teacher and student.

- We expect students to reflect on and evaluate their own learning, develop autonomy and strive for improvement in knowledge, skills and behaviours.
- Providing the best experience for our students means investing in the professional development of our teachers, supporting them to reflect on and evaluate their own pedagogical expertise.

As a starting point it is expected that all lessons have a clear start, middle and end.

- Starts of lesson must share learning objectives with students and outline what they will gain from the lesson, identifying how it builds on knowledge from previous weeks.
- Middle of lesson will contain the majority of content with assessment for learning taking place. As a guide this part of the lesson should contain activities for the students to engage with, each activity should allow time for reflection and checking.
- End of lesson should link back to learning objectives shared at the beginning of the lesson, provide a final opportunity for assessment of learning and the opportunity for students to identify areas of further clarification. Good practice provides the opportunity to link this lesson to the next lesson and how knowledge will be developed further.

3. Teacher Professional Development

- Methodology for assessing the quality of teaching and learning is reviewed on a yearly basis, and our current Framework reflects the Education Inspection Framework for FE providers (2019) as well as recognising the continuing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The former has seen a change to a more holistic qualitative view of curriculum provision, and the latter has meant a shift in the developmental needs of teacher skillsets.
- However, the key organisation objectives for teaching and learning retain the same focus and emphasis:
 - Teaching, learning to be of a consistently high quality across all areas of provision
 - Staff to be recognised for the quality and reputation of their work.
 - Retention and achievement rates to reflect the high calibre of student experience.
 - Students to be empowered to make excellent progress relative to their starting points.

In response to the above, we aim to ensure that teacher professional development provision is fit for purpose. This means that CPD opportunities for teachers should wherever possible be accessible, inclusive, differentiated, supportive, collaborative, action focused and accountable.

To support a culture of peer collaboration OSC have established a new team of Subject Learning Coaches (SLCs) to work with their teaching colleagues on a regular basis. Using recognised coaching-mentoring methods the SLCs prioritise support for probation teaching staff, as well as provide structured assistance to those who require bespoke support to improve their practice. As such they can offer support to teachers from right across the learning community.

The OSC Teacher Performance and Appraisal Process

- 2023/24 will see the third year of implementation, a teacher performance design model that integrates a structured process of professional reflection with formal college appraisal processes.

- Using the Education and Training Foundations' Professional Standards (2021) teachers are asked to self-assess their progress against each of the twenty standards throughout the academic year.
- Each teacher will be supported by the Quality Team to evaluate both their pedagogical knowledge and skills, and their commitment to upskilling subject specific knowledge.
- At the end of the academic year an evidenced based online Professional Development Plan is produced that will identify where each teacher sits on the OSC Teacher Professional Development Pathway. There are four levels on the Pathway: Probation, Engaged, Enhanced and Expert.
- Departmental and whole college performance indicators will be set to monitor how the teaching workforce is performing against the Standards.

4. Quality Improvement

A range of methods are used at OSC to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning practice. Evaluative methods in 2023/24 will be:

Curriculum Reviews: Carried out by the Quality Team from Oct - May

Curriculum Reviews reflect one of the key evaluative methods used by Ofsted Inspectors since the launch of the EIF.

Selected curriculum subject areas, different provision levels and/or pedagogical themes are identified as the rationale for a review. In each case, a team of reviewers assess the quality of provision through professional discussions with curriculum leaders and teaching teams, conversations with students, structured lesson visits, all supported by desktop audit activity. As a result, a formal report is produced for the selected provision identifying key strengths, areas for development and linked recommendations.

If a curriculum subject area is considered as underperforming an Intensive Support Window will be activated where increased support will be implemented by the Quality Team, this will entail objective setting meetings, regular reviews and collaborative meetings enabling the subject area to move forward.

Themed/Un-themed Learning Walks: Carried out by Directors of Learning and Programme Managers/Quality Team.

Throughout the year learning walks are used to provide curriculum leaders with an opportunity to visit lessons and provide practical guidance to their teaching teams. In 2023/24 a formalised cycle of learning walks will take place to ensure that feedback is continuous and inclusive, with any points for development taken forward as part of the college's CPD offer. The Learning Walk Cycle will be split into several phases allowing for professional reflection and practice improvement to take place in a timely way. The key driver for practice enhancement will be Supported Experiments which will be formally launched after the October Half Term, followed by a series of structured delivery and review phases thereafter.

Themed Learning Walks offer an opportunity for line managers to assess the quality of provision in their own curriculum areas. Many of the selected themes are of a cross-college focus e.g., attendance, health and safety, digital learning. Feedback is provided to individuals and relevant course teams to ensure that college policies, processes and expectations are consistently applied. Learning walks follow a structured improvement cycle that supports individual and subject course team development. Feedback can be given using the Lesson Postcards and MS Form. It is strongly recommended that a professional discussion is also held between the observer and teacher. Learning walks begin during the induction period (September) focusing on key college classroom expectations moving into further learning walks to support key college themes.

Formal Ungraded Observations: Carried out by the OSC Observation Team from Oct - May

In addition to the above, a team of experienced lesson observers at both colleges will formally evaluate the quality of practice. This will be a sustained process from October through to May with a target to observe all established and part-time teaching staff. Although no overall summative grade is given, the lesson observer will make a judgement against nine performance criteria as part of the feedback and professional discussion. Each lesson report from this sample is centrally logged so that an overall college profile of strengths and weakness can be created against these criteria. Outcomes from this process are reported to senior leaders to inform the college SAR. After each formal ungraded observation, a professional discussion should be completed between the observer and the teacher within one week, the teacher must be given time to reflect on their lesson prior to the meeting.

Postcard Lesson visits:

This method of evaluation gives the teacher immediate formative feedback with suggestions for further improvement. The teacher can choose an aspect of practice they wish the observer to consider in the lesson. The Postcard method has been particularly successful as a means of on-going support for probation staff. The feedback is completely owned by the teacher who may use any suggested improvement points to set highly personalised development targets.

Peer Reviews:

Peer Reviews (two-four teacher collaboration model) have been used for several years to encourage sharing of practice. In recent years, peer-to-peer lesson visits and resulting professional dialogue have been focused on specific pedagogical themes i.e. formative assessment, behaviour management etc, and all established FE and HE teachers are expected to participate. Outcomes from the process provide excellent evidence for self-assessment at individual or course team level.

Online Lesson Visits:

Online Lesson visits are transparent, supportive and developmental in design, encouraging teachers to experiment with digital learning methods. Lesson observers provide structured written feedback that acknowledges the challenges of online learning but also reinforces the value of abiding by sound teaching and learning theory. Teachers using a blended delivery, or a fully remote online model will be prioritised for visits throughout the year as part of the learning walk cycle.

Probation Observation Reviews

In accordance with current HR policy, lesson observations form a key element of the performance appraisal process for all probation teachers. As such each probationer will receive two observations from a member of the Quality Team (including Subject Learning Coaches) and/or a curriculum line manager. The first of these is undertaken 4-6 weeks after the teacher's starting date depending on previous experience/qualifications; the second 12-16 weeks into the probation period. Professional discussions are based on the same nine performance indicators as per the cross-college observations for established teaching staff, with an overall judgment made on expected progress against individual starting points. If any probationer is judged to be performing below expectations, then additional support and intervention will take place leading to a re-observation within a four-week period.

