

Education Services  
Procedures and Guidelines

# GUIDELINES FOR SELF-EVALUATION THROUGH OBSERVATION FOR EFFECTIVE LEARNING AND TEACHING

2016

## CONTEXT

The vision of Dumfries and Galloway Education Service is to raise attainment for all through supporting a culture of empowerment, collaboration and creativity. Self-evaluation is integral to delivering this vision through developing practice and provision, for the purposes of improving outcomes for all learners.

### Triangulation of evidence

Triangulation is the process used to ensure evaluative statements about strengths and aspects for development are grounded in a robust evidence base. The triangulation of evidence-based information and data, people's views and direct observation of practice should involve all school staff, learners, partners and other stakeholders. This process leads to a shared assessment of risk and an understanding of your school's capacity for continuous improvement.

Fig. 4: Triangulation

Schools collect a wide range of **quantitative data** for example about attainment, attendance, bullying and prejudice-based discrimination and option choices. Effective self-evaluation includes rigorous interrogation of this data by staff who are data-literate and use the data to recognise emerging issues and when specific interventions are necessary.

Staff, pupils, parents/carers, partners and other stakeholders such as the local authority or governing body should all have regular opportunities to share their views about the school. Examples of how **people's views** can be gathered include through surveys, focus groups, ongoing professional dialogue, learning visits and minutes of team meetings.



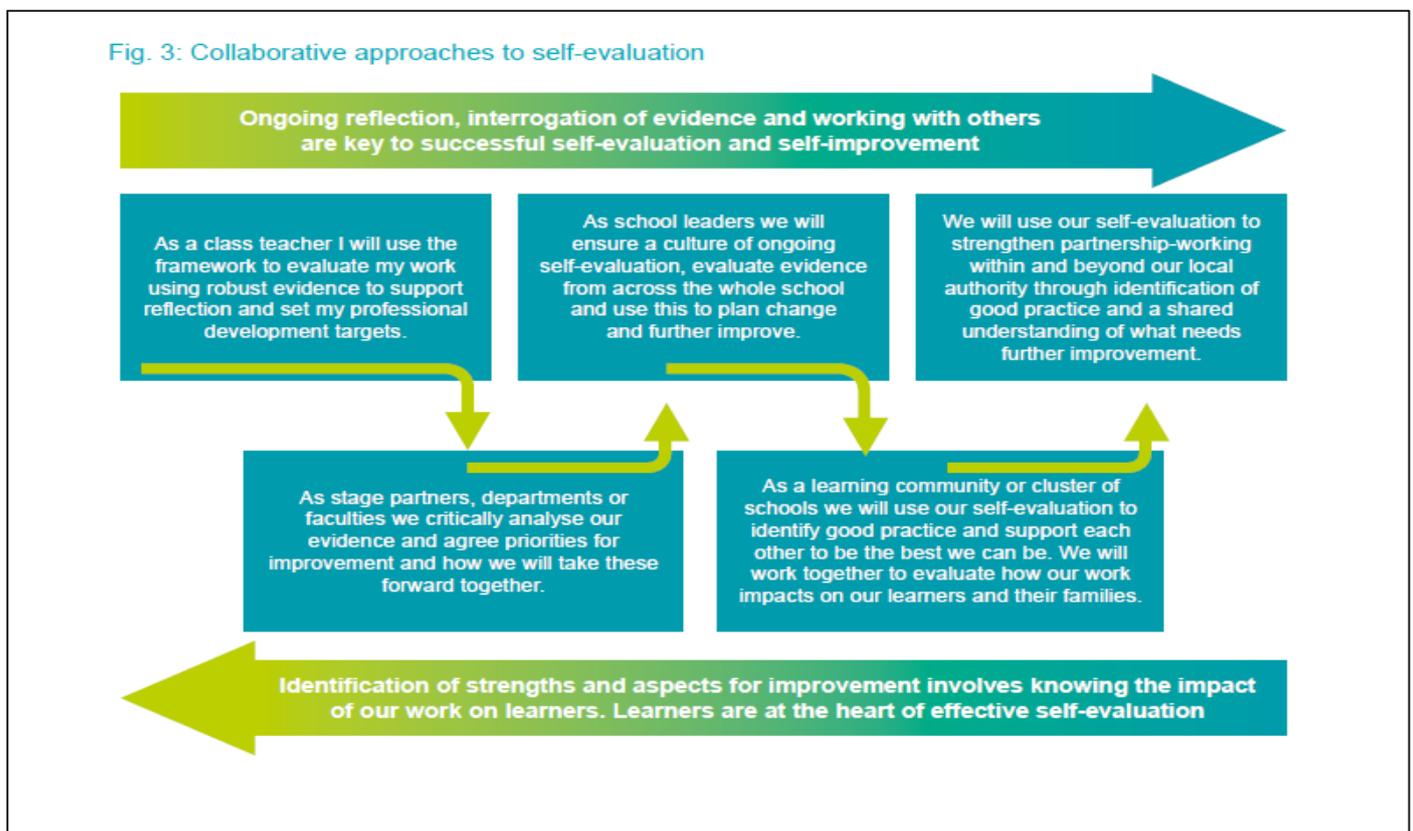
**Direct observations** of practice can take place in a range of learning contexts including during learning which takes place outdoors, in a workplace, at college and during excursions and residential experiences. Observations should be linked to agreed criteria and a shared understanding of their purpose. All stakeholders including staff, learners, parents and partners can engage in these structured observations and give feedback to support self-evaluation.

## CLIMATE, RESPONSIBILITIES AND THE STANDARDS

The climate for observation of learning should be based on collaborative, reflective dialogue which takes a close look at practice and provision.

“Headteachers have overall responsibility for ensuring the school has a clearly communicated strategic plan for self-evaluation which is ongoing and evidence-based. However, all staff are responsible for ensuring active self-evaluation in partnership with all stakeholders is at the heart of school improvement. Self-evaluation should not be seen as an “add-on” or involve lots of additional time and bureaucracy. It should focus on the key work of your school – learning and teaching. Evidence gathered should arise from your ongoing work.” **(HGIOS 4, P12)**

Observation of learning is about the development of learning and teaching as a whole and is both an individual and collective responsibility. Professional dialogue (which should explore the practice, be constructive, formative and identify if applicable, the next agreed steps) surrounds the observation of learning process.



Ref: figure 3 Collaborative approaches to self-evaluation HGIOS4, P10

The overall purpose of observation of learning is to build a learning culture which

- evaluates the way in which teaching positively impacts upon learning
- ensures that all learners' needs are met
- shares good practice throughout a school
- enables staff to develop greater awareness of their own strengths and areas for professional development
- provides a stimulus for professional dialogue amongst staff

Self-evaluation, the observation of learning and the related professional actions are integral to/permeate the GTCS Standards (see examples below) and as such are essential elements of every teacher's ongoing professional learning/are essential to meeting the standards.

## EXAMPLES OF RELATED PROFESSIONAL ACTIONS FROM THE STANDARDS

### The Standard for Registration

3.4.2 Engage in reflective practice to develop and advance career-long professional learning and expertise

- reflect and engage in self-evaluation using the relevant professional standard
- evaluate, and adapt their classroom practice rigorously and systematically, taking account of feedback from others, to enhance teaching and learning
- work collaboratively to contribute to the professional learning and development of colleagues, including students, through offering support and constructive advice and through disseminating experience and expertise, seeking opportunities to lead learning

### The Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning

3 Professional Actions in Career-Long Professional Learning

- develop and apply expertise, knowledge and understanding of research and impact on education
- lead and participate in collaborative practitioner enquiry
- develop skills of rigorous and critical self-evaluation, reflection and enquiry including how to investigate and evidence impact on learners and professional practice
- commit to on-going career-long professional learning, including post graduate study as appropriate
- lead and contribute to the professional learning of all colleagues, including students and probationers

### The Standards for Leadership and Management

3.3.4 Middle leaders use collaborative processes to monitor and review pedagogic practice, working across the team.

- implement a range of peer learning approaches which enable the team to work collaboratively
- work regularly with individual teachers to review teaching and learning approaches in the classroom
- draw upon self-evaluation activities to promote on-going review of pedagogy

The full text of the Standards can be found using the link below.

<http://www.gtcs.org.uk/standards/standards.aspx>

## PROCEDURES

### Considerations

There is no single set of procedures for observation of learning which will suit all schools. The format will vary. Observations may involve teachers from different schools, stages, subjects or levels of responsibility. Schools should agree their own procedures which best serve their particular needs and circumstances. The very process of agreeing the procedures will help to develop the right climate for effective observation of learning and teaching and engender the necessary sense of ownership.

Maximising the benefits of observation of learning requires that the process be meaningful and methodical. Key components of the process have:

- a fully discussed and agreed approach to the process
- clarity about the purposes of the observation

- meaningful feedback delivered timeously to those observed
- a direct relationship with the school's priorities as identified in the improvement plan
- a reasonable frequency of classroom visits, by peers, line managers or others
- an evaluation of the process and programme

It is important for teachers to both undertake learning visits and to have others visit their classes. By doing both they learn from, and with, those around them. All involved need to know the intentions of the lesson or learning activity to be observed, to enable them to discuss the extent to which the experiences led to the intended outcomes for learners.

#### Procedures to Support Observation of Learning

- Observations of learning do not always need to be for a whole lesson. They should, however, have a clear purpose and an outcome. The nature and length of the observation will depend upon the purpose of the visit. Procedures and supporting paperwork therefore need to be flexible.
- Appropriate supporting paperwork should be agreed as part of the process of creating the right climate and developing a sense of ownership over the whole process (see above).
- Whichever observation format is agreed it should support professional dialogue. There will not be any overall numerical grading or ticking of graded boxes of the observation.
- When designing an observation of learning recording sheet, it is essential to have a manageable focus.
- The number of observations of learning for each teacher will normally be two within the academic year. Any further observations will be voluntary and by mutual agreement.

#### USEFUL LINKS

##### **The Standards for Registration**

<http://www.gtcs.org.uk/standards/standards.aspx>

##### **How Good is Our School? 4**

[http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HGIOS4\\_tcm4-870533.pdf](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/HGIOS4_tcm4-870533.pdf)

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## Observation of Learning Record Sheet, Example 1

<b>Teacher being observed:</b>	Subject:	Year:
<b>Observer:</b>	Date:	Period:
<b>Part of lesson observed (circle all that apply):</b>	Start / Middle / End / All	

<b>Agreed focus of observation:</b>	
<b>Quality Indicator/s (if appropriate):</b>	
Evidence to be collected (teacher):	Comments (observer):
Evidence to be collected (teacher):	Comments (observer):
Evidence to be collected (teacher):	Comments (observer):

<b>ACTION AGREED FOLLOWING THE OBSERVATION</b>	
The teacher being observed will:	The observer will:
<p><i>Teacher being observed to identify the focus of the observation and associated HGiOS areas/ indicators, standards, or other agreed objectives.</i></p> <p><i>Teacher and observer to engage in dialogue and agree evidence to be collected during observation.</i></p> <p><i>Observer completes comments against each piece of agreed evidence during the agreed observation. These are used as the basis of dialogue feedback after the observation.</i></p> <p><i>Teacher agrees follow on action on the basis of the feedback, while observer agrees further supportive input if required.</i></p>	

**Lesson narrative:**

**Beginning**

**Middle**

**End**

## OBSERVATION OF LEARNING RECORD SHEET, EXAMPLE 2

(for use when there is a whole school focus on a particular indicator)

(HGIOS 4 - Quality Indicator xx)

Aspect of practice	√ / x / ? Evidence	Comments
The purpose of the lesson is shared with learner(s), and revisited, through plenary and /or feedback.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Decide which indicator you are working on</i></li> <li>• <i>Break it down into aspects of practice and note in first column</i></li> <li>• <i>observer places a tick in the middle column every time he/she observe evidence of this aspect of the indicator taking place</i></li> </ul>
Explanations and instructions are clear		
Learners have the opportunity to take responsibility for aspects of their learning		
Questioning is used effectively		
Active learning is used to support the lesson		
Learners are enjoying the experiences offered		
Tasks are differentiated for learners offering appropriate pace and level of challenge		
The teacher responds quickly to ensure the needs of individuals are supported		
ICT is used effectively		

Class:

Teacher:

Date:

Observed by:

## PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION ON OBSERVATION OF LEARNING

*Use this side of the sheet to record the outcomes of the professional dialogue about the observed lesson.*

Positives	Points for consideration

Teacher reflection
Comments and next steps

## OBSERVATION OF LEARNING RECORD SHEET, EXAMPLE 3

Teacher:

Date:

Year group:

Agreed Focus:

Strengths:

Points to Consider:

Reflection:

Signed:

Signed:

(Teacher)

(Observer)