



Policy

Oversight of Teaching

This policy outlines the various mechanisms used by the school to monitor the quality of teaching and related activities across the school. These include work scrutiny, lesson observations, learning walks and the tracking of results.

1. Rationale

The school must maintain oversight of the quality of academic teaching in all areas, to ensure the best possible outcomes for all students. Sensible oversight will help in the sharing of good practice, and in dealing with any issues before they escalate. SLT and HoDs have a particular responsibility in this regard.

2. Summary of expectations of HoDs

HoDs must maintain a working knowledge of the quality of teaching in their departments, both on a collective and individual level.

To do this, HoDs must:

- conduct at least two departmental work scrutinies per academic year
- observe lessons as part of appraisals for all staff and the probationary process for new teachers
- conduct learning walks over the year to cover a representative sample of the full age and ability range
- analyse assessment and results data
- advise SLT of any concerns, take the lead in investigating them and address any issues

In addition, HoDs should:

- observe further lessons outside of the appraisal process

3. Details of methods

i. Work scrutiny

The purpose of work scrutiny is to enable HoDs and the Senior Leadership Team to provide a snapshot indicating the implementation of school policies relating to the setting and assessment of written work, and the quality of assessment provided by teachers. In addition, it enables colleagues to reflect on their own practice and discuss approaches with others.

A work scrutiny is carried out by collecting all relevant books and files from a chosen group of students: these are then examined by an individual or a group.

Departments carry out two internal work scrutinies per year, the focus being decided by the Head of Department or, where appropriate, as indicated by the Director of Teaching and Learning. Heads of Department complete the standard Work Scrutiny Form, available on the school intranet, and send a

copy to the Director of Teaching and Learning. The Head of Department is responsible for ensuring that any arising action points are acted upon.

The Senior Leadership Team carry out one work scrutiny per year: this will usually be based on a representative sample across the age, ability and curriculum range of the school, but may take a different form or have a more specific focus. For whole school work scrutinies, a summary, together with any conclusions and action points, will be published to Heads of Department. Department-specific issues that do not appear on the summary will be communicated directly to the relevant Head of Department by the Director of Teaching and Learning or the Deputy Head (Academic). Cross-school action points will be addressed by the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team, with direction to Heads of Department as appropriate.

Student folders and work may also be examined as part of learning walks or formal lesson observations.

ii. Lesson observations

A formal lesson observation, in which a whole lesson, or at least one period of a double lesson, may be conducted by a member of SLT, the relevant Head of Department, or with their agreement by a nominated representative of one of these (for example, a Second in Department, a Leading Practitioner or the Senior Academic Mentor). Notice will always be given of formal lesson observations unless there are special circumstances that warranted an unannounced visit, for example, to ensure the timely investigation of a complaint. The observation may be general in nature, or focus on a particular aspect.

A feedback form will be completed for each formal lesson observation; this may be done electronically on OSIS as part of a professional review.

All teachers, other than SLT, experience two formal lesson observations as part of the biennial appraisal or pilot Professional Development and Review process (SLT colleagues have a separate appraisal process).

Teachers in their probationary period are observed as follows:

- at least one observation by the Head of Department in each of Terms 1, 2 and 3, including one between two and five weeks of the commencing the appointment
- an observation by the Headmaster or Deputy Head (Academic) in Term 3
- an observation by the Director of Teaching and Learning in Term 5

iii. Learning walks

In a 'learning walk', a number of classes, often in the same department, are visited on a drop-in basis for a short amount of time (typically 5-10 minutes).

A learning walk may be carried out without notice by a member of SLT or by the relevant Head of Department or Faculty, or with their agreement by a nominated representative. HoDs will be advised of any specific findings or observations, and colleagues may seek individual feedback if they wish.

iv. Analysis of results

The Deputy Head (Academic), together with the Academic Data Manager and members of ALT, analyses student performance in public examinations and at other key assessment points. Achieved grades are compared with CEM indicative grades, and tools on OSIS and elsewhere are used to identify areas of strong or weak performance on a cohort, subject or, where possible, individual class level.

HoDs are expected to analyse public examination results in their departments, identifying any issues, and submit a report for discussion in a meeting early in the academic year with the Deputy Head (Academic).

4. Addressing concerns

Should any concerns about individual teachers emerge through any of these channels, or elsewhere, HoDs should advise the Deputy Head (Academic) and the Director of Teaching and Learning, who will curate a central record. Usually, the Head of Department will investigate the issue and address the matter accordingly, recording and submitting their findings; however, the Deputy Head (Academic) or the Director of Teaching and Learning may decide to explore the matter directly. All such investigations should be completed within one working week.

In the event of a complaint, the Complaints Policy should be followed.

DAH
August 2017

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