

Teaching Observations in HELS Faculty



- 1. What are the key principles of the faculty of HELS approach to teaching observations?**
 - The HELS approach is shaped and informed by current research and practice in the field of observation
 - Observations will be used formatively with a developmental focus, used supportively not punitively
 - Observations will be used as a platform for professional dialogue about practice
 - Teacher learning and collegial development will underpin our approach
 - Data collected from these observations is likely to inform our understanding of teaching and learning practices across the Faculty

- 2. Will these observations be used to assess the teaching performance of staff?**
 - These observations won't be used as a discrete method of assessing the teaching performance of individual members of staff across the Faculty
 - Observations will be used as a data collection tool not as a method of assessment

- 3. Will the HELS approach still use assessment criteria to evaluate the teaching performance of staff during these observations?**
 - As part of the HELS approach, observers won't be making isolated, episodic judgements about the 'effectiveness' or 'quality' of individuals' teaching based on a universal list of criteria
 - Observers will be adopting a 'blank page' approach to recording their notes

- 4. Who will be observing my teaching and what preparation have they had for this role?**
 - There will be a Faculty team of observers with members from every School
 - All observers have undergone a training programme to prepare them for their role
 - Observers will observe colleagues in their respective Schools for this year, doing so in a collegial role and not in a line management capacity

- 5. What role will these observers play during the observation process itself?**
 - Observers are there to observe rather than make evaluative judgements
 - Observers are not there to provide answers or solutions to all your questions, but to support you to reflect on your practice
 - Observers will adopt the role of coaches and critical friends
 - Observers will compile a descriptive log/field notes of what they see during the observation along with associated questions and/or reflective comments to discuss during the professional dialogue stage

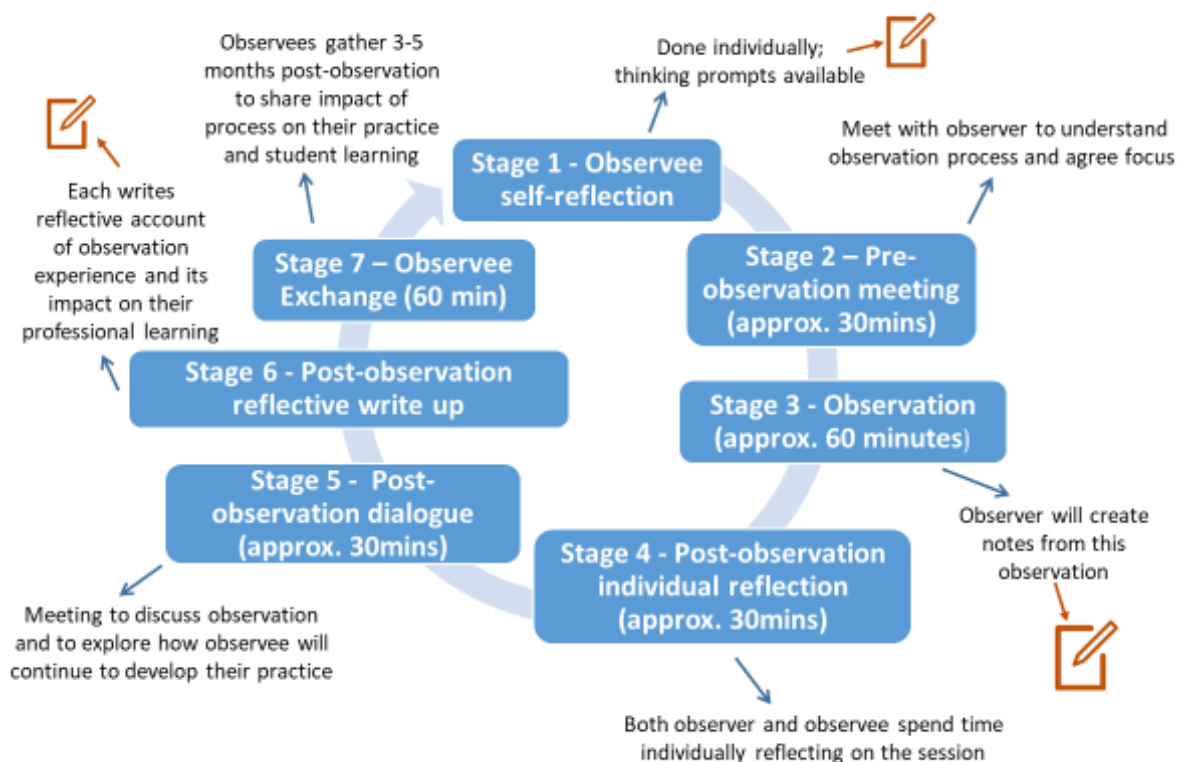
6. What role will observees play during the observation process?

- In consultation with their observer, observees identify dates/times to carry out the observation cycle (see Q7 below for an outline of the stages of the observation cycle)
- If there are specific aspects of their practice that observees wish their observer to focus on, then they can discuss these during the pre-observation meeting (Stage 2)

7. How will the observation process actually work in practice?

- Below is overview of the observation cycle. Please consult the Observer Guide and Observee Guide for a more detailed explanation of each Stage.

Stages of the HELS observation cycle



8. What happens once the observation has been completed?

- Observer and observee get together for a face-to-face meeting (Stage 5), following which the observer sends the observee a copy of their observation notes
- After Stage 6, the observee sends a copy of their reflective write-up and follow-up actions to their observer who forwards them to Sherron Parkes to file securely.
- With participant consent, these 'observation files' may be used for data analysis at a later date to inform our understanding of teaching and learning practices across the Faculty.
- The Observee Exchange in Stage 7 is an important opportunity for observees to look back on the observation, review the goals they set for themselves and explore the impact the process has had on their teaching and their students' learning.

9. Who will be observed and how will this be decided?

- All staff with a significant teaching responsibility will be observed
- Allocations will be managed at a local level (i.e. in departments/schools) but both observer and observee should be consulted during the allocation process