

Public

Observations of Teaching Learning and Assessment (OTLA) Policy

Introduction

The observations carried out of IAG, and teaching, learning and assessment provide Twin Group with quality assurance of the teaching, learning and assessment as well as the provision of IAG across the organisation. Observations also provide the opportunity to identify areas for improvement that can be addressed through staff development. This observation policy applies to all teaching/assessment and customer facing staff members employed by Twin Group and by our subcontracted partners. Our expectation is that all teaching and learning and IAG staff members have the ability and the desire to routinely deliver a good and outstanding service.

It is expected that teaching and learning and IAG staff, regardless of what stage of their career they are at, will engage fully in the observation and development process. The process is designed to support all delivery staff to continually develop their practice so that they consistently deliver high-quality, innovative, and stimulating sessions.

This Policy links to the following Twin Group policy/strategy documents and external policies:

- Confidential Reporting and Whistleblowing Policy.
- Equality and Diversity Policy.
- DWP Provider Guidance (chapter 7 quality statements).
- Initial Assessment Policy.
- Safeguarding Policy.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Observation Process.
- Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework (updated 2022).
- Preventing Radicalisation & Extremism Policy.
- Feedback and Complaints Policy.
- IAG Policy.
- Quality Assurance Policy.
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Development Policy.
- The Matrix Standard.

This Policy:

- Sets the benchmark and professional standards for all staff subject to Teaching, Learning and Assessment and IAG observations throughout Twin Group and our subcontracted provision.
- Confirms the commitment of Twin Group to the monitoring and continuous improvement of Teaching, Learning and Assessment and IAG, to ensure all learners have a positive experience, beneficial to their academic and personal needs.
- The term “learner” relates to all individuals undertaking a Twin Group programme whether this is teaching, learning and assessment, IAG or any other type of support being provided across our range of contracts. The term “teacher” relates to all staff delivering teaching, learning and assessment and IAG interactions.

Vision and Strategy

Observations of teaching, learning and assessment and information, advice and guidance and employment review sessions are instrumental in driving improvements within Twin Group, ensuring we can accurately identify strengths and areas in which we need to improve. With an ambition and commitment to be a company at the forefront of the sectors in which we operate, our robust observation policy will ensure we are able to accurately self-assess and quickly recognise areas which require development. This commitment enables the focus of development strategies and resources to be accurate, effective, and proportionate, ensuring further development and sharing of best practice, impacting positively on all learners.

Key Aim:

To offer robust IAG to all learners, so they are able to make informed choices which will improve their employability and personal prospects, as well as delivering outstanding Teaching, Learning and Assessment to all learners who embark upon a support programme or course/qualification throughout the Twin Group whether directly delivered by Twin Group or delivered by any of our sub-contracted partners.

Key Objectives:

- To provide a robust Teaching, Learning and Assessment, Review and IAG continuous quality improvement system that targets improvement

strategies accurately and effectively.

- To provide information that enables accurate self-assessment and action planning for improvement.
- To provide high quality feedback and support for individuals to ensure they understand the findings of the observation activities and are supported to make personal improvements.
- To identify and share best practice and promote continuous improvement in delivery.
- To identify training and development needs in relation to Teaching, Learning and Assessment, Reviews and IAG provision.
- To inform the quarterly Quality Review process, which monitors, and risk assesses operational delivery.

Key Outcomes

Ofsted's four-point scale will be adopted to grade all graded observations.

Inspectorate	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
Ofsted (England)	1	2	3	4

- 90% of all observations graded 2 (**Good**) or 1 (**Outstanding**), in accordance with Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework, with less than 2% graded 4 (**Inadequate**).
- An embedded culture of self-review and self-improvement to ensure the self- assessment process can sustain improvements across the business.
- Focused Teaching, Learning and Assessment, Review and IAG staff development opportunities for individuals and teams to ensure continuous improvement and a highly effective service for all learners across all programmes whether engaged in a programme to support them back into employment or self-employment or whether enrolled on a course leading to academic and/or vocational qualifications.

Observations throughout the Twin Group Provision

All staff interacting with learners across all programmes; the delivery of teaching, learning and assessment, the provision of information, advice and guidance, staff conducting reviews with learners to support them into

employment and/or self-employment - will have a minimum of one graded observation on an annual basis. This includes the delivery staff working on our subcontracted provision supporting Twin Group learners.

New members of staff will be observed within their first 3 months of delivery and these probationary observations will be ungraded, A graded re-observation will be carried out prior to completing their probationary period.

As a result of an observation, whether graded or ungraded, all staff will be provided with an agreed development plan clearly detailing the areas for improvement and the activities to be undertaken to support each individual to continuously improve their practice.

Clear links between observations and the performance management process are in place and all teachers have a KPI to achieve the minimum of a grade 2 (Good) observation. Where teachers repeatedly cancel planned observations, this will be raised with the relevant manager to address appropriately.

Teachers who require improvement or are graded inadequate, following observation and subsequent re-observation, will be supported to improve through a development plan to ensure specific areas for improvement are tackled and learners do not routinely experience sessions less than good.

Clear and timely targets and objectives will be agreed and tailored coaching and mentoring sessions will be put into place to support the ongoing development and confidence of teaching staff.

Observers and the member of staff being observed will uphold the highest professional standards in the application of the process, ensuring it leads to continuous improvement. The member of staff being observed should briefly introduce the observer and inform learners of the purpose of the observation either before or when the observer arrives. During the observation the observer will talk to learners and review their portfolios, action plans, files as well as speaking with the member of staff being observed about the programme and session being delivered including the planning and intent.

Observers' responsibilities:

- Observers must complete the Twin Group observation training programme.
- Observers must wear a Twin Group identity badge when carrying out OTLAs.
- Wear PPE and follow safety instructions as required.

- Make a professional judgement based on the available evidence.
- Ensure that the process focuses on the learner and the learning/progression taking place.
- Seek feedback from learners without allowing them to digress off topic.
- Examine written evidence provided including (where relevant) registers (for attendance and punctuality), schemes of work, lesson plans, resources, action plans, ILP's, group/individual profiles, learner files and portfolios.
- Follow the observations process to provide objective, verbal and written feedback with an appropriate level of detail within the timeframes outlined.
- Ensure that an effective development plan is agreed with the member of staff being observed and their line manager and this will focus on support and quality improvement.
- Share best practice through observations and standardisation activities.
- Inform relevant managers of any issues arising from observations or the planning of observations - promptly and in writing.
- Participate in the annual moderation and standardisation process.

Observees' responsibilities:

For **teaching, learning and assessment** observations, the observee is expected to provide a range of documentation to the observer **relevant** to the session:

- A register for the session being observed.
- A scheme of work relating to the session/course being observed/training plan agreed with the learner and employer (for apprenticeships).
- A lesson plan and individual learner or a group profile (including evidence of how the session has been planned to meet the individual needs of learners).
- Copies of any hand-outs, worksheets, assignment briefs and resources related to the session.
- Records of achievement/progress tracking and Individual Learning Plans (ILPs).
- Learner marked and assessed work.

For **IAG** observations, the observee is expected to provide to the observer:

- Evidence of planning the session.
- Copies of any handouts or information sheets provided to the learner.
- Access to the learner's file including action plan.

All observers will undergo the observation training programme provided by Twin Group. Training will include completing a workshop focused on the type of sessions they will be observing, e.g., IAG or teaching, learning and assessment sessions. Following this, observers will be provided with initial individual support through undertaking paired observations with an experienced and fully trained observer and they will subsequently receive ongoing support and coaching as required; this may be identified through moderation activities.

Twin Group's trained observers will carry out observations routinely following the OTLA process which includes observations being carried out with no notice provided to the member of staff being observed; all observations will result in a detailed development plan agreed with each individual and their line manager.

Supplementary themed observations will also take place, and these will be determined by the quality calendar and focussing on specific aspects of the customer journey. Areas of specific focus could consist of any compelling

teaching strategy/intervention critical to a learner's success. For example, the learner induction, the initial assessment process, embedding and promoting English and maths, safeguarding, personal development and reviewing learner targets and feedback, etc. Themed observations will be carried out by members of the Quality team and as with all other observations will result in an agreed development plan with the opportunity to share best practice and ensure that appropriate, tailored support is provided for the observee.

Members of staff achieving a grade lower than **Good (2), i.e., grade 3 or 4 (Requires Improvement or Inadequate)** as a result of a graded observation will be re-observed by the same observer where possible to ensure consistency, within 4-6 weeks of the first observation. Note that any session in which Safeguarding is considered ineffective will be automatically graded as **Inadequate (grade 4)**.

The agreed improvement activities recorded on an individual's personal development plan as a result of an observation must be completed to ensure the member of staff has been provided with appropriate support between observations and/or re-observations. Re-observations must take place within 4-6 weeks of the first graded observation. Support will be tailored to meet the needs of the individual concerned and to specifically address the areas for improvement identified. The agreed tailored activities may be through a variety of sources, e.g., internally or externally delivered training, coaching and mentoring (individually or as part of a group), the provision of E-Learning and independent study and research - as appropriate.

The individual concerned must take responsibility for ensuring agreed targets to improve are met, this should be monitored by the line manager with support from the observer as agreed at the time of agreeing the development plan.

Any member of staff where their observation has resulted in a grade 4 **Inadequate** must not be allowed to teach, support/carry out reviews with learners or to deliver IAG independently until the full programme of support and training for that individual has been completed. They may co-deliver only if accompanied by another member of staff appropriately qualified or trained to deliver that provision.

Observations are part of the Twin Group quality assurance strategy, and an observer will make judgements based on the Education Inspection Framework and the Matrix Standard. A member of staff who is concerned that the

observation policy or procedure has been breached should, following discussion with their line manager, contact Twin Group's Head of Quality & Safeguarding in writing to raise their concerns. The members of staff should also copy in their line manager, making clear the reason for concern including how procedures were allegedly breached.

This contact must be made within five working days of the member of staff receiving feedback on the observation. It must include a copy of the written feedback report as well as details of the reason for the appeal. The Head of Quality & Safeguarding will investigate the concerns raised and will decide if another observation is appropriate; this investigation may include discussions with the member of staff and the observer.

The Head of Quality & Safeguarding is responsible for driving the observation policy. The policy ensures all staff requiring observations are observed in line with this policy and independence from operational management is achieved.

The decision has been taken to retain a graded approach for full observations, as it remains the most effective way to benchmark and assess the quality of the experience of learners in a quantitative, transparent way.

Timeframes for observations/re-observations:

Observation Grade	Re-observation Frequency	Observer	Moderating Observer
1 (Outstanding)	Minimum of Annual	Trained observer, Contract or Senior Manager	If selected for moderation – carried out by Twin Group’s observation lead or outsourced. specialist.
2 (Good)	Minimum of Annual	Trained observer nominated by Quality, Contract or Senior Manager	If selected for moderation – carried out by Twin Group’s observation lead or outsourced. specialist.
3 (Requires Improvement)	Within 4-6 weeks of first observation. It is anticipated that an improvement in grade will be seen at the re-observation.	Trained observer nominated by Quality, Contract or Senior Manager	If selected for moderation – carried out by Twin Group’s observation lead or outsourced. specialist.
4 (Inadequate)	Within 4-6 weeks of first observation. It is anticipated that an improvement in grade will be seen at the re-observation.	Trained observer nominated by Quality, Contract or Senior Manager	If selected for moderation – carried out by Twin Group’s observation lead or outsourced. specialist.
Ungraded (Probationary)	An ungraded observation will be carried out within the first 3 months of employment as a teacher with Twin Group. A subsequent graded observation will be carried out within the teacher’s probationary period and prior to sign off.	Trained observer nominated by Quality, Contract or Senior Manager	If selected for moderation – carried out by Twin Group’s observation lead or outsourced. specialist.
Themed Observations (Red or Amber)	Within 4 – 6 weeks of the first themed observation. It is anticipated that an improvement in rag rating will be seen at the re-observation	Trained observer from or nominated by the Quality team	If selected for moderation – carried out by Twin Group’s observation lead or outsourced. specialist.

Themed Observations (Green)	Minimum of Annual	Trained observer from or nominated by the Quality team	If selected for moderation – carried out by Twin Group’s observation lead or outsourced specialist.
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Observations will judge the impact the session has on learners. Although not exhaustive, the effectiveness of some of the following interventions will be considered:

- Learning and information materials and their use by learners.
- Learners are provided with a range of teaching and learning strategies to support their individual needs and help them to develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum.
- The curriculum extends beyond the academic, technical, or vocational.
- Learners are being provided with information, advice and guidance in readiness for their next stage of education, training, or employment.
- The curriculum and provider’s wider work support learners to develop their character, including resilience, confidence, and independence, and help them to know how to keep physically & mentally healthy.
- The use of technology to deliver and assess learning, IAG and support.
- What learners know, understand, can do and the progress they are making as a result of their learning, the IAG they receive or as a result of the reviews undertaken with their teaching assessor, business coach, adviser or other member of staff supporting them.
- Learners receive clear and constructive feedback and understand what they need to do to improve and make progress.
- Teachers and leaders use assessment well, to help learners embed and use knowledge fluently, to check understanding, and inform teaching.
- The extent to which a learner’s personal development, behaviour and welfare is promoted.
- Whether English, maths and other skills, necessary to function as an economically active member of British society, are promoted through teaching and learning and through the support they are receiving to help them back into employment or self-employment.
- Whether equality of opportunity and recognition of diversity and British Values

are promoted through teaching and learning, IAG and the support they receive.

- Prepares learners for life in modern Britain by equipping them to be responsible, active citizens, developing their understanding of fundamental British Values, developing their understanding and appreciation of diversity, and celebrating what we have in common.
- The engagement with employers/parents/carers, as appropriate in planning each learner's development.
- Any session in which Safeguarding is considered ineffective or failure to follow the Prevent duty will be automatically graded as inadequate.

OTLA activities will provide the focus for the development of delivery staff to support an excellent and highly effective experience for all learners.

Moderation of Observations

Moderation activities will be carried out across the company to ensure consistency with regards to grading, feedback and provision of staff development.

The moderation activities will include:

- Paired observations including independent validation of grading.
- Observation report moderation.
- Quarterly observer standardisation meetings.
- Validation of observations through internal/external quality monitoring activity such as unannounced observations undertaken by Twin Group's OTLA lead or externally sourced specialists.

These moderation activities will ensure that we maintain consistent standards within all areas of teaching, learning and assessment, employment/self-employment support and IAG across the Twin Group, they will also create opportunities to continuously improve the observation documentation and process. Observation grades may be subject to change as a result of moderation activities within a timeframe of two weeks, after the observation report has been received by the OTLA lead.

Reporting

Monthly Quality reports as well as an annual report will be generated reporting the number of observations carried out in each business division, each area of learning, the type of session observed, and a breakdown of grades awarded, with commentary on key strengths and areas for development as well as improvement activities.

The reports will be presented to the Senior Management team and used to make strategic decisions throughout the business. Areas identified for improvement will provide information to support Continual Professional Development (CPD) requirements for delivery staff and other fundamental improvement strategies. High quality training and development opportunities will be sought and offered to staff to ensure leaders are able to secure and sustain improvements for learners across all areas of the business.

Monitoring and Review

The observation process and moderation activities, including regular standardisation meetings for observers, are designed to improve the quality of the customer experience at Twin Group.

Twin Group engage all practitioners in evaluating the impact of their own delivery on the learners they support or teach. Twin Group supports them in taking action to continuously improve their practice and to provide an outstanding customer experience.

The evidence gathered from observation activities will be used to support judgements made in Self-Assessment Reports and the findings will also be a valuable source of evidence to assess each individual's performance as part of the appraisal process.

In addition to the internal observation and moderation proofs, external observation programmes and audit processes will also provide opportunities to identify areas for improvement.

The policy applies to all Twin Group Companies