

# Reynolds

## Training Services

<b>POLICY NAME</b>	Observation of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment		<b>POLICY NUMBER</b>	Po-021-RTS	
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	November 2023	<b>NEXT REVISION</b>	November 2024	<b>VERSION NUMBER</b>	1.0

VERSION HISTORY				
VERSION	AUTHOR	REVISION DATE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE	APPROVED BY
1	John Reynolds	June 2023	Policy Implemented	John Reynolds
1	John Reynolds	November 2023	Annual Review – No Amends	John Reynolds

**Approved by:** John Reynolds  
**Position:** Managing Director  
**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023

**Approved by:** Andrew Reynolds  
**Position:** Centre Manager  
**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023



### Introduction

This document set out the Reynolds Training Services approach to the Observation of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (OTLA), as part of the mechanism for both quality assurance and teaching, learning and assessment enhancement.

The OTLA policy utilises a range of different methodologies and evidence sources to provide a holistic picture of individual Trainers and Associate Trainers current contribution to the goal of an excellent delegate experience.

The OTLA has an increased focus on observation as a tool to support and enhance Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) characterised by a 'Reflective Professional Dialogue' model of observation. The approach serves two core functions:

- ❖ A supportive approach that utilises performance observation, professional discussion, and personal reflection to enable Trainers to celebrate excellence, experience with new approaches, and drive continual improvement, whilst receiving feedback and support to find solutions for themselves in response to observation 'spotlight questions'.
- ❖ Provide evidence of the quality of TLA for internal and external stakeholders.

This approach and evolving policy intends to foster a culture of trust, respect, and empowerment for Trainers to continually innovate and evolve their approaches to TLA and to 'aspire to outstanding'.

The overarching evidence from OTLA activity will be used to:

- ❖ Assure internal (eg. Leadership at all levels) and external (eg. Ofsted, Awarding Bodies, etc.) of the quality of TLA and delegate experience and impact measures.
- ❖ Inform themes for individualised recognition, development, support, and continued professional development (CPD).

### Underpinning Ethos

All observations of practice are developmental. They form part of the overall appraisal of an individual's performance and, as such, will be a component of the evidence discussed during the formal appraisal process.

However, they do not represent the totality of an individual's performance and individual Technical Trainers are encouraged to seek additional observations during the year, and to participate in a range of developmental peer observations.

Where performance is aggregated to make judgements about the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment observation of practice is used, alongside delegate performance, and feedback from external organisations to make summative judgements. To that end Trainers are encouraged to develop a similar evidence base against which they can assess their personal progress.

All Trainers are entitled to and should expect to be involved in at least two observations of teaching, learning, and assessment annually to support their reflective practice and identify areas of strengths and to plan for development.

#### Types of Observation Outlined in this Policy Include:

- ❖ **Notified observations** – these are 45-60 minute graded observations. All Trainers are entitled to and should expect to be involved in two individual notified observations every 12 months, or less. Appendix A will be used to document outcomes. All will receive a Personal Development Plan as part of this process (Appendix D).



- ❖ **Learning Walks (short themed walks)** – These have a focus on generic themes and may not identify individual staff or student groups. (Appendix E).
- ❖ **Peer Observations** – These are encouraged as a development, often reciprocal peer to peer support strategy (Appendix F).

### Strategy for Planning and Carrying Out Individual Notified Observations

#### 1. Timing

All Trainers can expect to have at least two annual observations in a 12-month period. Where a new staff member joins the organisation, they will have an initial probationary observation within the first three months of commencing their role. This will be a supportive observation and will give supportive measures to help with further observations. This new staff member will still receive two further observations, per the policy.

Trainers may receive more than two annual observations where practice is deemed to not meet required expectations. This will be agreed as part of their personal development plan and will link into their appraisal.

#### 2. Notification

Staff will be provided with a minimum of three (3) working days' notice of the intention to observe. Staff may, during the notice period, request a meeting or initial an email/telephone discussion, with the nominated observer to discuss the specific developmental areas that they wish to be a focus for the observation.

Observations should only be postponed after the notification period where:

- It is the first day back from a period of sickness.
- The Trainer is not delivering their normal courses.
- There is a substantial interruption. eg. Fire evacuation or power failure.
- Any other reason at the discretion of the observer.

#### 3. Expectations for Lesson Planning Documentation

It is expected that evidence of planning will be available to the observer as part of the observation process. This evidence would typically comprise of:

- ❖ A lesson plan and scheme of work which indicates the general layout of the session and how the session will be delivered.

#### 4. Process

For all staff the timing of observations will be planned by the Training Coordinator. The observation will, in most cases, commence at the beginning of the lesson and last for a minimum of 45 minutes, but usually no longer than 60 minutes. Observers may choose to observe for 30 minutes but return to the class to see the plenary and summation of learning and to gather delegate views. Observers should inform the Trainer that they may be returning to the lesson. Observers should, on all occasions, attempt to get feedback from delegates, either verbally or through the completion of the delegate feedback sheet (Appendix B), but must not interrupt the session to get this feedback.

Once the observation has been completed the observer will contact the observed to arrange a convenient time for feedback. This must be done within five (5) working days of the observation being completed. At this meeting the feedback from the session will be discussed and a personal development plan will be set (Appendix D). Trainers will also be asked to complete a self-reflection (Appendix C).



### **5. Post Observation Follow-up, Support, and Professional Development**

The Training Coordinator is expected to discuss the observation outcomes at their next meeting with the observed. At subsequent meetings, and during an appraisal or performance review meetings, the Training Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that staff have attended relevant professional development, reflected upon its impact, and identified further development opportunities.

All staff will have a professional development plan and improvement targets. These will form part of the professional development discussions and formal appraisal that line managers have with their staff. Where there are issues relating to serious risks or concerns to safety or progress/achievement (eg. health and safety concerns, inappropriate Trainer Behaviour) Reynolds Training Services may decide to instigate disciplinary or capability procedures.

Line managers will be responsible for ensuring that staff identify, attend, and reflect upon any sessions they attend. The impact of professional development on improving the delegates experience will be monitored through Performance Review Boards and self-assessment reporting activities.

### **6. Quality Assuring the Observation Process**

All staff that carry out individual, notified observations of teaching have:

- a. At least a Certificate in Education and Assessors Award.
- b. Completed at least one paired observation with an experienced member of the team.
- c. Have a proportion of their completed forms moderated.
- d. Participate in standardisation and moderation activities during the observation cycle.
- e. Undertake training and/or qualifications in coaching.

### **7. Concerns Regarding the Observation Process**

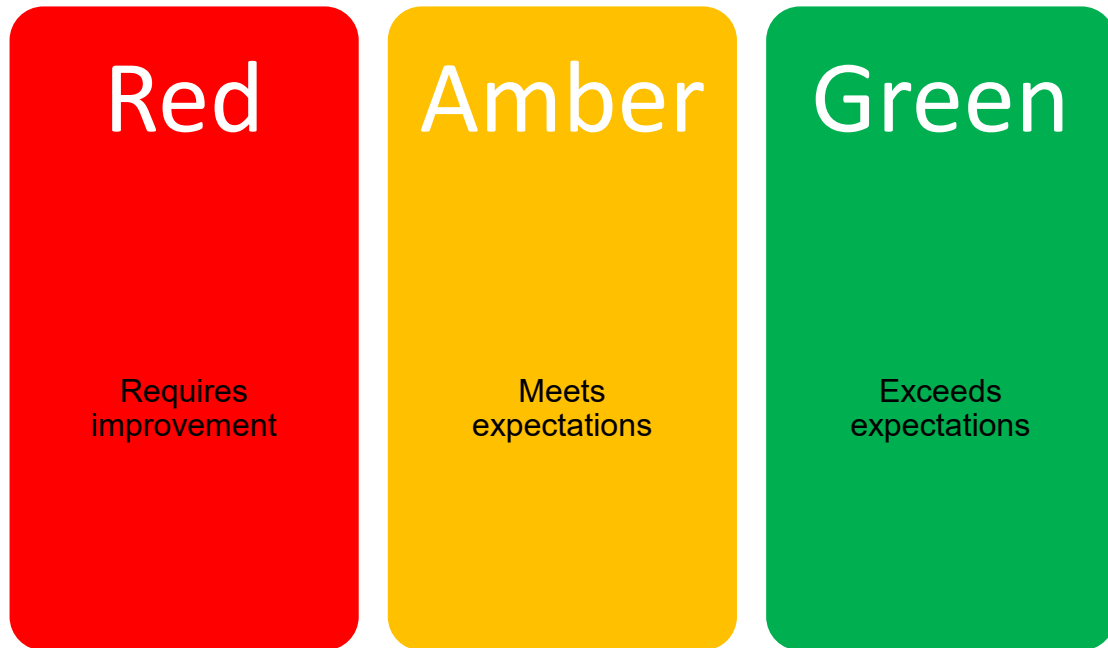
The Training Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the overall delivery of the OTLA policy, under the executive oversight of the Director of Reynolds Training Services. Where staff have concerns regarding any aspect of the OTLA process they should be raised initially with:

- a. The observer in relation to the observation commentary.
- b. The line manager in relation to the timing, or outcomes, of the observation and/or professional discussion.
- c. The Director of Reynolds Training Services, where in relation to matters in A or B which cannot be resolved, or other aspect of the process.



### 8. Grading of Trainer

All Trainers will be given a grade, dependent on performance, the grades will state:



### Strategy for Carrying Out Learning Walks

Learning Walks will be completed by qualified members of the observation team, members of the Reynolds Training Services leadership team, or where appropriate, external individuals. They are designed to enable leaders to:

- ❖ Keep in direct touch with the teaching and learning process.
- ❖ Quickly identify good practice or concerns in relation to the Reynolds Training Services expectations.
- ❖ Explore themes.
- ❖ Encourage the sharing of learning materials and resources and promote consistency.
- ❖ To provide a basis for reflection and to stimulate professional discussion.

#### How Learning Walks Work:

A learning walk is a series of short observations of aspects of the delegates journey, looking at a particular theme or themes. Where learning walks involve visits to lessons, observers will normally spend between five and 20 minutes in any one lesson.

Feedback from learning walks will be recorded on a feedback form (Appendix E), and findings will be summarised and shared within Management Meetings and as part of Self-Assessment activities.

Where appropriate, thematic reports highlighting areas of excellence, or common areas requiring more focus, will be published and used as the basis for planning professional development and follow-up activities.

As with all observations, observers, so far as is practicable, should not disrupt the lesson delivery or distract from the Trainers interaction with Delegates. However, where appropriate to the theme of the learning walk, observers may ask students questions or look at their work.



Additionally, should an observer witness something which might, in his/her professional judgement, constitute a safeguarding or health and safety risk they will intervene as appropriate to the circumstances and situation.

Trainers are not expected to produce materials in addition to those usually used for session delivery.

### Strategy for Development Observation Process

#### Development Observations:

These can be requested at any time by any member of the training staff. The staff must liaise with the Training Coordinator to organize an observation.

The observation will be used as a supportive measure only and will not form part of any formal process.

#### Probationary Observations:

This will be carried out as a supportive measure only to show that Reynolds Training Services use the OTLA policy as a supportive measure. This will only be used for new staff members and will be carried out within the first three months of employment.

This will be used to help build any training needs and to show support in the probationary period of a role.

After the first six months of service, all Trainers will be subject to the standard observation process which will be graded.

#### Peer Observations:

A collaborative, developmental activity in which professionals offer mutual support by observing each other teach, explaining and discussing what was observed, sharing ideas about teaching, gathering student feedback on teaching effectiveness, reflecting on understandings, feelings, actions, feedback, and trying out ideas.

The intention of the above type of developmental observation process is to promote professional dialogue between peers. The specific outcomes of such observations are individualized to the practitioner, not subject to aggregative exercises for analysis.

#### How They Work:

**Peer Observations** – Practitioners are encouraged to partake in at least one Peer Observation of some kind during each annual year based on key concepts that the individual teacher is trying to develop or experiment with or linked to a ‘supportive experiment’. Peer observation might be suggested as an action, linked to an area of improvement from another observation process. All practitioners new to Reynolds Training Services would be expected to participate in peer observations as part of their mentoring activities within the probationary period. Appendix F may be used if practitioners choose to do so for their own purposes.

#### Guidelines for Observers’ Practice (“The Rules”)

As with all observations, observers, so far as practicable, should not disrupt the lesson delivery or distract from the Trainers’ interaction with students.

The observer should respect the context and environment, and wear appropriate PPE as advised by the Trainer and should stay, for only as long as reasonable and required.

Aspects of the informal peer observation must remain confidential to the two reciprocating individuals and any documentation used to record notes must remain confidential and the property of the observed practitioner. Trainers may provide learning materials to a Peer Observer, upon mutual agreement.



### **The Outcomes of Observation Processes and their Link to CPD:**

The Training Coordinator will use evidence from lesson observation activity to inform and drive themes which identify support required.

Reynolds Training Services will work to provide designated staff training days. The timing and selected themes for CPD will ensure that staff have access to meaningful, individualised, and relevant support towards all practitioners aspiring to excellence.

The annual calendar of CPD / training days will be identified by Reynolds Training Services and take into account the most appropriate timings within the year to ensure that CPD and associated activities are timely, delivered with pace, responsive to needs and important impact on the in-year experience for Reynolds Training Services delegates.

The Training Coordinator will plan support activities and CPD, this will include:

- ❖ Intra-department support / CPD delivered by any member of the Reynolds Training Services team.
- ❖ Cross-department support through a range of twilight, lunch-time, and pop-in activities to provide bitesize CPD. These will be repeated on several consecutive days to ensure accessibility around teaching times.
- ❖ Teaching and learning coaching and mentoring.
- ❖ Sharing of innovation and excellence in practice, both within departments and across departments, facilitated by the Training Coordinator.



### Appendix A

<b>Observer</b>			
<b>Technical Trainer Name</b>			
<b>Date and Time of Observation</b>			
<b>Location</b>		<b>Staff Type</b>	Full Time / Associate
<b>Awarding Body</b>			
<b>Course Name</b>			
<b>Lesson Type</b>	Workshop / Classroom	<b>Lesson Plan</b>	Yes / No
<b>Lesson Context</b>			
<b>Summary of Observation</b>			
<b>Strengths</b>			
<p><b>Note:</b> In some cases, there may not be any clear strengths to the lesson therefore do not 'force' elements into strengths if this does not fully reflect what you observed, and list as meets expectations</p>			
<b>Area for Development</b>			
<b>Observation Grade</b>			
<b>Red</b> Requires Improvement	<b>Amber</b> Meets Expectations	<b>Green</b> Exceeds Expectations	
<b>Technical Trainer Signature</b>			
<b>Observer Signature</b>			





Appendix B

Positives	Negatives



Appendix C

What do you think went well?	What improvements could you make?
Technical Trainer Name:	Date:
Signature:	



### Appendix D

<b>1</b>	<b>Area for Development</b>		<b>Technical Trainer name:</b>	
	<b>Development Plan</b>		<b>By Whom</b>	<b>By When</b>
	<b>A</b>			
	<b>B</b>			
	<b>C</b>			
	<b>D</b>			
<b>Measurable outcome: (What will success look like, how will you know?)</b>				
<b>Benefits for learning/ teaching/assessment:</b>				

I agree to the areas of development highlighted above and will endeavour to incorporate these in future sessions. I also agree to inform the assessor of any difficulties in achieving any of the requirements. I will continue to look for opportunities to improve my practice, and those of my colleagues wherever possible.

Technical Trainer Signature:

Date:

Observer Signature:

Date:



Appendix E

Positives	Negatives
Impact of positives	Impact of negatives



Appendix F

<b>Technical Trainer</b>		<b>Peer Observer</b>	
<b>Date / Time</b>		<b>Session title</b>	
<b>Session Type:</b>			
<b>Number of Delegates:</b>			
<b>Agreed focus / purpose for the peer observation (if applicable)</b>			
<b>Specific learning objectives for the session observed</b>			

<b>Observer feedback on agreed areas/focus of observation</b>
<b>Observer feedback on other effective/less effective practice seen</b>