



## **Teaching Qualification Further Education (TQFE) Virtual Observation Framework**

**Academic Year 2020-21**

**Publication date: 22 October 2020 (v1)**

**This guidance relates to TQFE teaching observations during session 2020-21 and is based on the guidance developed by SCDE**

### ***Purpose***

- To contribute to the support of lecturers during academic year 2020-21;
- To provide exemplification of 'observation protocols' for the college sector in light of COVID-19 restrictions;
- To outline various steps which should be considered before adopting a specific observation protocol;
- To establish a framework in support of a consistent but flexible approach to teaching-observations which reflects the needs and operational conditions across the college sector.

This paper provides exemplification of the different approaches to support assessment of professional practice which relies on a partnership approach. Observation of professional practice/placement by a university tutor visit is one of the methods used to assess lecturers as part of their professional practice/placement. In these exceptional circumstances, these observations together with professional dialogue and the ensuing lecturer's reflective review underpin the summative assessment process. Central to any of these approaches is the lecturer's own critical reflections on practice and professional dialogue with the college mentor.

### ***Scope***

Subject to exception through GTC Scotland accreditation or approval, this paper is strictly valid within the context of Covid-19 **in academic year 2020-21 only**. From session 2021-22 onwards, the accredited assessment practices resume.

### ***Background***

This document explores a range of approaches to teaching observations in the college sector in light of ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.

While the approaches explored in this paper arise out of necessity (Covid-19), others have explored a variety of approaches to teaching-observations before, for example:

- Harvard Centre for Education Policy Research study ([The Best Foot Forward Project: Substituting Teacher-Collected Video for In-Person Classroom Observations First Year Implementation Report](#))
- *The camera in the classroom: video-recording as a tool for professional development of student teachers* - <http://ojs.cumbria.ac.uk/index.php/TEAN/article/view/59/70>
- Video Recording as a Stimulus for Reflection in Pre-Service EFL Teacher Training - <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ923452.pdf>
- Recording Student Teachers' Learning Experiences - <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877920160101>

***Outline of possible observation protocols.***

The observation of professional practice/placement needs to be considered within a broader multifaceted assessment approach to assessing a lecturer’s teaching and professional learning. The observation process is not simply a process to judge a lecturer’s ‘performance’. It provides a rich opportunity which enables university tutors to evaluate teaching (using a variety of evidence) and learning from both students’ and lecturer’s perspectives. A range of approaches to observation enables flexibility to respond to local conditions whilst also providing a common framework within which robust professional judgements can be made.

In outline, the approaches to observation are based on the following scenarios for teaching in colleges during 2020/21:

Scenario	Observation as part of summative assessment	
On-campus face to face teaching	Synchronous Observation	Asynchronous observation
Online teaching	Synchronous Observation	Asynchronous observation

***Potential approaches to TQFE teaching-observations: Exemplification***

All options outlined below provide exemplification of potential summative assessment approaches. The approach agreed will be determined by local factors, programme needs and partnership arrangements.

One observation of teaching practice/placement must be undertaken by a university tutor.

### Exemplifications of potential assessment approaches

Scenario	Observation as part of summative assessment	
On-campus face to face teaching	Synchronous Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● University tutor/college mentor is physically present; usual observation protocols followed as part of summative assessment.</li> <li>● University tutor/college mentor observes the session remotely in real-time followed by virtual professional discussion as part of summative assessment.</li> </ul>
	Asynchronous observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lecturer records* (audio-visual failing which audio-only) the session, this is shared on a secure digital platform with the university tutor/college mentor, followed by professional discussion via a virtual platform as part of summative assessment.</li> </ul>
Online teaching	Synchronous Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● University tutor/college mentor observes the session as a guest followed by virtual professional discussion as part of summative assessment.</li> </ul>
	Asynchronous observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lecturer records* the session. This is shared securely via a digital platform with the university tutor/college mentor, followed by professional discussion via a virtual platform as part of summative assessment.</li> </ul>

#### ***Further notes / potential issues***

1. A session recording (audio-visual failing which audio-only) should be approximately 60 minutes. If the taught session is longer than this, then short (10-15 minutes) parts of the same session should be recorded.
2. There is an expectation that a recording will exemplify a range of teaching and learning approaches.
3. As the recording must reflect a recent episode of learning, a lesson plan will be for a lesson that has been taught during this academic session.
4. It is expected that a university tutor will conduct one observation; and a local college mentor will also conduct one observation.

***\*Potential issue in relation to recording of sessions***

For on-campus face-to-face teaching

1. The recording should give a good sense of the learning space and should allow the university tutor/college mentor to see the lecturer and, where appropriate permissions have been gained, the learners.
2. Issues of consent, GDPR and Data Protection need to be considered and any issues resolved ahead of time.
3. All parties must make appropriate arrangements for the secure storage and sharing of recordings. Universities must provide a secure solution for storing/sharing the recordings associated with university tutor observations. Recordings will be kept and destroyed in accordance with university data management policies for assessment.