OTLA policy

Date ratified: 10 February 2023

Date policy due to be reviewed: February 2025

Committee responsible for policy: Board of Governance

Geraldine Kelly – Chair of the Board of Governors

Review No.	Date	Summary of Changes	Reviewer

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Policy Statement

The purpose of the Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy is to clearly state how The Ridge Employability College (TREC) will:

- quality assure the delivery of teaching, learning and assessment
- develop teachers / tutors and drive high standards of teaching, learning and assessment across all provision
- identify where further support and mentoring is required
- identify and share best practice across all provision
- evaluate the quality of learning experienced by learners.

Responsibility

The overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the process rests with SLT who will review the policy every two years.

Process

The OTLA process includes:

- formal observation (Appendix 5)
- classroom visits (Appendix 6)
- planning(Appendix 3) / work scrutiny evaluative activity (Appendix 7)
- peer visits – this enables teaching staff to informally observe other teaching staff. Teaching staff participating in this activity are expected to reflect on their learning from observing other staff and identify how their teaching skills will develop as a result. (Appendix 1)

Standards and Targets

TREC has set its standard for teaching, learning and assessment observation profile based on the National Teaching Standards,

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards

1. Set High Expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge learners
2. Promote good outcomes and progress by learners including life after college
3. Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge
4. Plan & teach well-structured lessons
5. Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all learners

6   Make accurate and productive use of assessment
7   Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment
8   Fulfil wider professional responsibilities

- **Effective** if 6 out of 8 standards are met with the exception of Number 7 that is a non-negotiable.

- **Developing** if less than 6 standards are secured.

- **Not effective** if Number 7 is not met.

For all standards not met individual development points will be raised and shared on the observation documentation and will be supported by the Head of Curriculum.
If a qualified teacher did not meet 50% of the standards required this process would fall under the first stages of informal process as per the Capability Policy.

For the purpose of reporting the overall college grade to SLT & Governors the Quality of Education will be measured by reporting the total number of standards across the teaching team considered to be effective against the total number of overall standards. This data will be anonymised in relation to person and area of development, with the exception of referencing if Standard 7 (Safeguarding) was identified

All teachers/tutors will be formally observed no more than 3 times during the year. Prior notice will be given of 5 working days and formal feedback following the observation will be shared within 5 working days. There will be an opportunity to share revised planning with the observer(s) no later than 48 hours prior to the formal observation. Observations will be completed by Head of Curriculum and external advisors appointed by TREC.

Teachers/tutors who are new to the teaching team for TREC will be observed during their first half term.

Classroom visits (Appendix 6)

All teachers/tutors and learning mentors will be part of classroom visits that will be carried out periodically to support the College Action Plan and provide information to support the development of the curriculum.

Classroom Visits Procedure
These visits will be completed by a member of SLT, external advisors appointed by TREC and/or a member of the Board of Governance and will last no more than 20 minutes. Feedback will be shared as part of the whole team College Action Plan half termly review.

Procedure for Lesson Observation

- Teachers/Tutors will be given 5 working days' notice of the intention to complete a formal observation, with the exception of external inspection.
- Observations will be carried out by experienced observers, including the Head of Curriculum supported by an external consultant.
- Observations will not necessarily last for the entire duration of a teaching session but teachers / tutors can expect to be observed for a minimum of 45 minutes.
- A provisional grade (1-8) will be given for each observation standard and be confirmed to the teacher / tutor on the OTLA record.
- All OTLA records and feedback are confidential, results will be anonymised for the purpose of reporting the overreaching 'Quality of Education' and informing Development Plans.
- Development Plans from previous observations will be reviewed as part of the OTLA cycle.

The Development Plan resulting from the observation will be monitored by the Head of Curriculum and progress records.

During the visit

- The observer can arrive at any time during the session and will introduce themselves to the teacher / tutor.
- The observer will observe for a minimum of 45 minutes
- The teacher / tutor will make learners aware of a possible visit and reassure them of the process.
- The teacher / tutor planning and all materials appropriate to that session should be available to the observer.
- The observer will make notes during the session
- The observer will talk to learners and look at their work and Individual Learning and Development Plans. The questioning of learners by the observer will be informal but professional. It will not personalise issues to do with the teacher / tutor or raise doubts in learners' minds about the programme of learning.

Feedback

Feedback arrangements must ensure sufficient time for both observer and teacher / tutor to allow the session to be reviewed thoroughly and take the opportunity to review and reflect on the teaching practice observed. It is recommended that both the teacher / tutor and the observer set aside at least 30 minutes to ensure that this process is developmental and involves a 'two way' professional dialogue between the teacher / tutor and the observer. Verbal feedback will be given within one working day, unless otherwise agreed. Where possible, this will be included within the working day.

It may only be possible to carry this out via telephone (or online discussion) but face to face is preferred.

Teachers / tutors should be advised that the observer may reflect on the observation before detailed feedback is provided.

During the feedback, teachers / tutors are encouraged to be actively involved in the review of the session and their subsequent actions for improvement. Questions on the observation report support this process.

Teachers / tutors will receive written feedback within 5 working days.

The teacher / tutor will have the opportunity to discuss the observation further with the observer at a face to face meeting if requested.

General teacher / tutor development needs identified through the OTLA process will inform professional development opportunities within the college.

Appeals

If the teacher / tutor disagrees with the observer's judgements, then initially this should be discussed with the observer.

If, after subsequent discussion, the teacher / tutor still disagrees with the judgements, the teacher / tutor must contact the Head of College by email within 5 working days. The OLT report will be reviewed and the Head of College will contact the teacher / tutor to discuss the issues within 5 working days.

Following the discussion and review of the evidence, the decision by the Head of College will be made and communicated to the teacher / tutor within 5 working days to uphold the original judgements or to carry out a second observation by an alternative observer.

Mentoring for Newly Appointed teachers / tutors

TREC will ensure that newly appointed teachers / tutors are supported and have regular reviews of their schemes of work and session plans including a review of the teaching, learning and assessment strategies planned. This includes all statutory requirements for the Early Careers Framework.

Unqualified teachers

Unqualified teachers will follow the same procedures as qualified teachers.

Observation Training

Observers will have the relevant support/experience to conduct formal observations.

Teachers / tutors may also receive updates through observation training packages which includes best practice, for example in giving feedback and general best observation practice.

Ways of sharing Good Practice

The Head of College will produce a schedule of CPD events for all teachers / tutors in which sharing good practice and teaching and learning strategies will be a focus.

Sharing good practice may be done through:-

- Network meetings: where workshops are arranged which focus on:
- teaching and learning issues that arise from observations and staff development which is cascaded
- Presentations or interviews with learners, teachers /and tutors.
- Mentoring arrangements made by observers as a result of OTLs
- Teaching and learning Conferences or CPD sessions
- Teaching and Learning updates

Peer Observations

TREC encourages teaching staff to participate in Peer Observations where possible. This enables teaching staff to informally observe other teaching staff in order to develop skills and knowledge with regards to specific areas of the curriculum, or wider contexts within college.

Teachers / tutors participating in this activity are expected to reflect on their learning from observing other staff and to identify how their teaching skills will develop as a result.

Appendix 1

Sharing Good Practice Record

Provider	The Ridge Employability College	Teacher / tutor	
Subject / Platform		Focus	
Date(s)		Method of identification (please select)	

Description of Best Practice used, including any resources and source of idea (if applicable)	
What was the impact on learning?	
Practical tips for other teacher / tutor possible development?	
Suggested actions for sharing of Best Practice within your own team or across the college	

Validated by: **Date:**

Appendix 2   Grade Descriptors

Ofsted handbook – updated December 2022

Grade descriptors

Outstanding (1)
- The provider meets all the criteria for a good quality of education securely and consistently.
- The quality of education is exceptional.

In addition, the following apply.

- The provider's curriculum intent is strong. Throughout the provider and its subcontractors, teachers have a firm and common understanding of the intended curriculum and what it means for their practice.
- The provider's implementation of the curriculum is consistently strong. Across all parts of the provider, including in subcontracted provision and for learners with SEND and those with high needs, teaching and training are of a high quality. Training activities contribute well to delivering the curriculum intent.
- The work that learners do over time embodies consistently demanding curriculum goals. It matches the aims of the curriculum in being coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment.
- The impact of the taught curriculum is strong. Learners acquire and develop high-quality skills and produce work of a consistently high standard.
- Learners consistently achieve highly, particularly the most disadvantaged. Learners with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes.

To judge whether the quality of education is good, requires improvement or is inadequate, inspectors will use a 'best fit' approach, relying on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Good (2)
- Leaders adopt or construct a curriculum that is ambitious, appropriately relevant to local, regional and national employment and training priorities and designed to give learners, particularly the most disadvantaged, the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life.
- The curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment.
- The provider is ambitious for all its learners, including those with SEND and those who have high needs, and this is reflected in the curriculum. The curriculum remains ambitious and is tailored, where necessary, to meet individual needs.
- Learners study the intended curriculum. Providers ensure this by teaching all components of the full programmes of study.
- Teachers have expert knowledge of the subject(s) and courses they teach. Leaders provide effective support, including for those teaching outside their main areas of expertise. Where relevant, teachers have extensive and up-to-date vocational experience.

- Teachers present information and/or demonstrate skills clearly, promoting appropriate consideration of the subject matter being taught. They check learners' understanding systematically, identify misconceptions and provide clear, direct feedback. In doing this, they respond and adapt their teaching as necessary, but without having to use unnecessary, time-consuming, individual approaches to presenting subject matter.
- The work that teachers give to learners is demanding and ensures that learners build knowledge and acquire skills, improving on what they already know and can do.
- Teachers encourage learners to use subject-specific, professional and technical vocabulary well.
- Teachers work effectively with support staff to ensure that all learners achieve as they should.
- Over the course of study, teachers design and use activities to help learners remember long term the content they have been taught, to integrate new knowledge into larger concepts and to apply skills fluently and independently.
- Teachers and leaders use assessment well, for example to help learners embed and use knowledge fluently and flexibly, to evaluate the application of skills, to check understanding and inform teaching, or to understand different starting points and gaps as a result of the pandemic. Leaders understand the limitations of assessment and do not use it in a way that creates unnecessary burdens for staff or learners.
- Teachers create an environment that allows the learner to focus on learning. The resources and materials that teachers and trainers select and produce – in a way that does not create unnecessary workload for staff – reflect the provider's ambitious intentions for the course of study and clearly support the intent of a coherently planned curriculum, sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning, independent living and employment.
- Any remote education is well integrated into the programme of education/training, and is well designed to support the wider implementation of the provider's curriculum.
- Learners develop detailed knowledge across the curriculum and, as a result, achieve well across all areas of their study. Learners make substantial and sustained progress from their identified and recorded starting points in each of their courses and, where applicable, across the curriculum. Where appropriate and available, impact is reflected in results from national examinations, which meet government expectations, or in the qualifications or apprenticeship standards obtained.
- Learners are ready for the next stage of education, employment or training. They have gained qualifications or have met the standards to go on to destinations that meet their interests and aspirations and the goal of their course of study. Learners with SEND/high needs have greater independence in making decisions about their lives.

Requires improvement (3)
- The quality of education is not yet good.

Inadequate (4)

The quality of education is likely to be inadequate if any one of the following applies (unless they apply solely due to the impact of COVID-19):

- The curriculum has little or no structure or coherence, and leaders have not appropriately considered sequencing. Learners experience a jumbled, disconnected series of lessons/training that do not build their knowledge, skills or understanding.
- Learners' experiences in lessons or sessions contribute weakly to their learning of the intended curriculum.
- The curriculum does not prepare learners for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain.
- Weak assessment practice results in teaching that fails to meet learners' needs.
- Learners do not develop or improve the English and mathematical skills they need to succeed in their next stage, whether that is in education, training or employment or in greater independence.
- The attainment and progress of learners are consistently low and show little or no improvement over time, indicating that learners are underachieving considerably.
- Learners with SEND do not benefit from a good-quality education. Staff's expectations of them are low. Staff do not identify learners' needs accurately, and are therefore unable to support learners' development effectively.
- Learners have not attained the qualifications, skills or behaviours appropriate for them to progress to their next stage of education, training or employment.
- The curriculum does not meet the needs of learners or employers, the local community or local, regional or national economies.

Appendix 3

TREC Planning Scrutiny Record	Date:			Subject / Platform	
Planning	Lack of detail Learning outcomes for session not sufficiently defined Inappropriate level for learners and subject	Relevant outcomes but could be more clearly expressed' Content sufficiently develops all learners' knowledge and understanding / skills	Detailed Clearly expressed learning outcomes deepen learners' knowledge / understanding / skills Lesson content supports learners' development	Appropriate, relevant and challenging outcomes for learners. Session planned to enable learners to achieve these challenging outcomes.	
Notes:					
Preparation e.g. of strategies, resources, equipment, environment and any available learning support. Takes account of subject being taught.	Under-prepared or unprepared in strategies, resources, environment. Lack of attention to detail	Lesson is adequately prepared, although level of attention to detail would impact adversely on the teaching and learning taking place	Detailed preparation which takes account of the learners, the context and teaching and learning in the subject	Preparation enables a degree of flexibility in anticipation of the needs of learners, the context and teaching and learning in the subject	
Notes:					
Structure and sequencing e.g. recap, intro, chunking and linking of content, opportunities for application of learning	Lesson plan does not show appropriate structure and sequence. Insufficiently linked to planned outcomes.	Structure and sequence is evident but does not take sufficient account of individual learners and context.	Lesson is organised, structured and sequenced appropriately to enable learning outcomes to be achieved.	Organisation of the lesson content is thoughtfully and intentionally structured and sequenced to a high level to achieve planned outcomes. Flexible and able to make responsive adjustments in line with learners' needs and context.	
Notes:					

To be completed as part of performance development cycle

Appendix 4 - Teaching Standards Recording Sheet

Standards	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Notes
1. Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils				
• establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect				
• set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions				
• demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.				
2. Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils				
• be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes				
• be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these				
• guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs				
• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching				
• encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.				
3. Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge				
• have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings				

- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship
- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject
- if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics
- if teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies.

4. Plan and teach well structured lessons

- impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time
- promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity
- set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired
- reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching
- contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).

5. Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these

- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development 12

- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

6. Make accurate and productive use of assessment

- know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements

- make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress

- give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

7. Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

- have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy

- have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly

• manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them						
• maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.						
8. Fulfil wider professional responsibilities						
• make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school						
• develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support						
• deploy support staff effectively						
• take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues						
• communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.						

Appendix 5 – Formal Observation Record

Date:	Subject/ platform:
Observer:	Venue:
Staff present:	No. of learners -

Teachers' Standards Summary, as evidenced through tracking document:	/8

Conclusion:	
Strengths:	Teachers' Standards
Areas for Development (to be observed in the next lesson observation): including teaching standard:	Teachers' Standards
Areas for Development from previous observation (to be observed in the next lesson observation):	Teachers' Standards

Observation notes

Quality of Education:
Including employability links.

Personal Development

Behaviour and Attitudes

Discussion with learners and staff:	Resources/Access to Learning:		
Effectiveness of Support Staff	TA Training/Mentoring Opportunities identified:	Ye s	No
British Values;			

Communication score: 1 = highest - 5 = lowest

ILP	Auditory/Visual support (Moon, Makaton etc.)	Time to process	Use of In Print 3	Differentiated levels of questioning?	Key vocabulary identified?	Opportunities for 'talk'

CAP focus:

Additional points raised during feedback:	Date of feedback:

CPD identified:

Appendix 6
Classroom Visit Record

Subject / platform	Number of students	Staff present / ratio	Venue / time
Visited by:		Date:	

Focus of visit (with reference to TREC CAP / subject action plan / CPD implementation)

Strengths:
Areas for Development

Quality of Education

Personal Development

Behaviour and Attitudes

Resources/Access to Learning:

Effectiveness of Support Staff

Employability

Focus area – e.g. Reading and use of vocabulary

Joint Collaboration Record / Information / agreed common trends

Appendix 7 –Work Scrutiny Record

Date:	Subject / platform:	Scrutiny staff:

Purpose:

- Does the work that learners do over time reflect the intended curriculum?
- Do learners know more and can they do more?
- Are the knowledge and skills learners have learned well sequenced and have they developed incrementally?
- What does the work say about the overarching quality of education across a subject, or groups of learners?

Theme			
Intent	The work that learners do over time does not reflect the intended curriculum	The work learners do over time partially reflects the intended curriculum	The work that learners do over time reflects the intended curriculum
	Learners' knowledge is not consistently, coherently and logically sequenced so that it can develop incrementally over time	There are elements of learners' knowledge that are consistently, coherently and logically sequenced so that it can develop incrementally over time	Learners' knowledge is consistently, coherently and logically sequenced so that it can develop incrementally over time
Building on previous learning	There is no evidence of progression from the simpler and/or more concrete concepts to the more complex and/or abstract ones	There is some evidence of progression from the simpler and/or more concrete concepts to the more complex and/or abstract ones	There is a progression from the simpler and/or more concrete concepts to the more complex and/or abstract ones
	Learners' work does not show that they have developed their knowledge. Evidence does not show that learners know more, remember more and are able to do more.	Learners' work shows some development in their knowledge.	Learners' work shows that they have developed their knowledge. They know more, remember more and are able to do more.

Category			
Depth and breadth of coverage	The content of the tasks and learners' work do not show that learners learn a suitably broad range of topics within a subject	The content of the tasks and learners' work show that learners learn a limited range of topics within a subject	The content of the tasks and learners' work show that learners learn a suitably broad range of topics within a subject
	Tasks do not allow learners to deepen their knowledge of the subject by requiring thought on their part, understanding of subject-specific concepts and making connections to prior knowledge.	Tasks show a limited impact on allowing learners to deepen their knowledge of the subject by requiring thought on their part, understanding of subject-specific concepts and making connections to prior knowledge.	Tasks also allow learners to deepen their knowledge of the subject by requiring thought on their part, understanding of subject-specific concepts and making connections to prior knowledge.
Learners' progress	Learners make no, or limited, progress from their starting points	Learners make some progress from their starting points	Learners make strong progress from their starting points
	Learners do not acquire knowledge and understanding appropriate to their starting points.	Learners acquire limited knowledge and understanding appropriate to their starting points.	Learners acquire knowledge and understanding appropriate to their starting points.
Practice	Learners are not given opportunities to revisit and practice what they know to deepen and solidify their understanding in a discipline.	Learners are sporadically given opportunities to revisit and practice what they know to deepen and solidify their understanding in a discipline.	Learners are regularly given opportunities to revisit and practice what they know to deepen and solidify their understanding in a discipline.
	Learners cannot recall information effectively	Learners recall limited information effectively.	They can recall information effectively, which shows that learning is durable.

Misconceptions are not addressed	Most misconceptions are addressed.	Any misconceptions are addressed and there is evidence to show that learners have overcome these in future work.
It is not clear what end point the curriculum is building towards.	End points are identified, with some guidance on what learners need to know and be able to do to reach those end points.	It is clear what end point the curriculum is building towards and what learners need to know and be able to do to reach those end points
Tasks do not encourage age-appropriate reading	Some tasks have been designed so that learners read at an age-appropriate level	Tasks have been designed so that learners read at an age-appropriate level
Assessment Assessment does not help learners to embed knowledge and use it fluently	Assessment is used to embed knowledge, but does not help learners to use it fluently.	Assessment helps learners to embed knowledge and use it fluently
Quality Work is consistently of a low quality	Work is improving towards being of a consistently high quality.	Work is consistently of a high quality