**Outstanding teaching, learning and assessment: case study on operational project led by Jobwise Training**

**Development of the Observation of Outstanding Teaching and Learning (Ootl) Process**

**Introduction**

Jobwise Training Ltd. (Jobwise) is an independent learning provider and operates from training premises in the City of London. It holds government-funded contracts for apprenticeships as well as traineeships and the study programme. Jobwise also delivers a private recruitment and training service. Jobwise has had approximately 904 students this contract year, 165 16 to 18-year-olds and 739 19+ students. Approximately 12.4% have a disability, 55% are categorised as white British, 21% as black African and 20% as Asian.

The aim of the project was to identify the key elements of outstanding teaching, learning and assessment and develop user-friendly software called “Observation of outstanding teaching and learning” (Ootl)

Ootl was not designed to replace existing observation schemes but to enhance them by focusing on the outstanding elements of a session and any good practice.

Jobwise has been working with AlloyFish to develop the software programme and has begun to pilot it with two training providers. 2nd Chance is a 19+ training provider based near Elephant and Castle in London working with unemployed young adults to progress them to employment. East London Advanced Technology Training (ELATT), an Ofsted grade 1 provider, is based in East London and works with 16 to 18-year-olds and 19+ young adults.

**Approach**

The initial stage was to identify what was meant by outstanding teaching, learning and assessment. Jobwise decided to focus on the teaching and learning aspects. Assessment will be phase two of the project and will involve the assessors and work-based apprentices.

Jobwise initially involved three managers, seven tutors and 11 students to identify key features of outstanding teaching and learning. They drew up a list of 10 themes with statements identifying key outstanding features and four overview areas cross-referenced to the Professional Standards and Ofsted criteria. Ootl only focuses on outstanding elements and good practice. The existing observation system covers all areas.

Seven tutors and five student observers were involved in phase one of the pilot. Each observation had two observers (student and peer) and self-reflection by the tutor. Discussion followed the observation and an action plan was developed. This was signed off and monitored by a manager. The system provided the tutor with a spider diagram/heat map highlighting areas of improvement and achievement. The tutor was able to view their ongoing progress on Ootl. All examples of outstanding and good practice were recorded and reviewed by the team of tutors, and standardised to develop a resource list of outstanding elements, good practice and the ‘norm’.

Equality and diversity were key features in the development of the project. Selection of student observers was based on the development it would offer students rather than only selecting the high achievers, and Ootl includes students’ views. This has had a positive impact. A key feature of Ootl is the integration of equality and diversity both in the themes and as an overview tab to ensure it is included in sessions. Team meetings now include a discussion of equality and diversity examples in the lessons in the past week.

**Outcomes and impact**

The key outcomes were:

* Managers and tutors regularly discuss the difference between outstanding teaching and learning and good practice.
* The project has empowered managers, tutors and students to take ownership for delivering outstanding teaching and learning.
* The number of outstanding teaching and learning elements within the classroom has increased and all tutors now show elements towards outstanding practice.
* Ootl ensures that mathematics, English, equality and diversity, social, spiritual, moral and cultural skills are embedded within lessons and celebrated.
* Regular student feedback has helped to identify an understanding of what students see as outstanding.
* An outstanding and good practice guide, which is updated monthly, will be shared with the sector.
* The Ootl website will be available for any organisation to use as a resource.

The outcomes and benefits are tangible:

*“I have really enjoyed the observation process and have found that it has helped me have a clearer understanding of the difference between best practice and outstanding and how I can implement outstanding practices into my lessons.”*

*Jobwise Training tutor*

*“I was a bit worried that the tutors would be angry at me if I was too hard on them when observing …. At the end of the session, the tutor thanked me for my feedback and actually asked me how I felt he could improve!”*

*Jobwise Training student*

*“At school we were never asked for our feedback which is crazy since we are in them (lessons) every day so we know more than any observer.”*

*Student quote from the student forum*

Monitoring the impact of the project includes a review of:

* discussion at Monday team meetings
* lesson plans
* Ootl reports and improvement plans
* feedback from students
* the number of outstanding elements in lessons recorded on Ootl and the observation process

This will continue and monitoring and evaluation tools will be developed as part of the ongoing development of the Ootl website.

**Lessons learned**

The key lessons learned are:

* Agreeing a framework of outstanding features as everybody has different ideas.
* It is not enough to ‘feel’ that a session has outstanding features. It needs to be supported by hard evidence.
* Due to the positive nature of these observations, tutors are happy to be observed more frequently.
* Tutors appreciated the process as it showed that managers recognised their knowledge was key in differentiating between outstanding and good practice.
* A key benefit of the project has been the debate this has generated.
* Once students realised that tutors valued their feedback, they produced more critical and constructive feedback.

Jobwise could not have learnt the lessons it has without the strong staff and student buy-in from the outset, which kept the enthusiasm throughout the process.

Implementing Ootl is not difficult. Here are some hints and tips:

* Management must be willing to learn from tutors and students.
* Brief students on the process and train student observers.
* Tutors must be willing to work together and share their thoughts.
* Tutors need time to observe, review the findings from the process and integrate them into their lesson plans.

One area of improvement would be to review the observation data entered into Ootl after each observation. This would have identified any data errors and improved the quality of each observation as they progressed through the department.

**Sustainability and transferability**

A number of training organisations are already requesting to use the system. Ootl will be fully launched in August and the licence fee will be kept as low as possible. Each licence holder must name a partner organisation to implement the system at the same time. This encourages partnership working, support and sharing of resources. All licence holders must upload at least four outstanding resources a year. This provides a continually developing resource bank for the sector to download and use (regardless of holding an Ootl licence). Grade 1 providers, or providers who become grade 1 with the assistance of Ootl, will not be charged for a licence.

Jobwise will be running workshops for London-based training organisations through the London Work Based Learning Alliance and are planning to run webinars for other training organisations.

Jobwise plans to adapt Ootl for field-based assessors dependent on funding availability.

Ootl will create a network that celebrates grade 1 tutors, and works alongside licence holders to deploy these grade 1 tutors into other providers to mentor and support underperforming tutors.

Ootl is now an integral part of the observation process at Jobwise and is making a very positive impact on both tutors and students. Observations show an increase in the number of outstanding examples in lessons.

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