

Record of Observation or Review of Teaching Practice

Session/artefact to be observed/reviewed: **Preliminary materials for a new module on Social Justice**

Size of student group: 51

Observer: **Rachel Marsden (tutor)**

Observee: **Lee Mackinnon**

Note: This record is solely for exchanging developmental feedback between colleagues. Its reflective aspect informs PgCert and Fellowship assessment, but it is not an official evaluation of teaching and is not intended for other internal or legal applications such as probation or disciplinary action.

Part One

Observee to complete in brief and send to observer prior to the observation or review:

What is the context of this session/artefact within the curriculum?

A New unit on Social Justice: Materials from introductory seminar and first lecture.

How long have you been working with this group and in what capacity?

I previously gave 2 lectures last term. This is a new unit that I am leading.

What are the intended or expected learning outcomes?

1. Demonstrate a critical engagement with ideas of collaboration in the development of a project (Enquiry; Knowledge)
2. Demonstrate independent research skills (Process)
3. Communicate your ideas and research effectively and clearly in a written essay or in an essay film, adhering to academic conventions (Communication; Realisation)

What are the anticipated outputs (anything students will make/do)?

A written essay or an essay film.

Are there potential difficulties or specific areas of concern?

New terminology (in lecture notes, new terms are often highlighted in bold, to unpack).

How will students be informed of the observation/review?

I informed them in the first session (teaching remotely).

What would you particularly like feedback on?

Overall coherence; suggested areas for improvement.

How will feedback be exchanged?

Written, or a recorded conversation.

Part Two

Observer to note down observations, suggestions and questions:

Thanks for sending over the package of materials Lee – the unit assignment brief PU002544, lecture slides, lecture notes, unit schedule and lesson plan. For the purposes of the tutor review, and time given for a review of practice (up to an hour), I've reviewed the unit brief only - I hope this is ok. Below are some reflections, suggestions and prompts provided as questions to help think about different aspects of the unit brief – an opening up of possibilities and ideas. Note, if updates are made to the unit brief, these might need to be considered as formal modifications so please discuss within your team. I have been mindful and respectful of the fact you are working with a new brief yet a legacy brief structure and have a feeling it likely uses the approaches referenced in the [LCC Staff Guide to Unit Assessment and Project Briefs](#). Therefore, I wonder if any of the ['Templates and Useful Information'](#) section might be useful here?

On first look at the unit brief, page 1 includes a range of different font sizes between the title, subtitles and main information. It can be difficult to read and delineate between the 9 sections. I wonder if more clear subtitling, or background colour variations, would make a difference? Is there an order to the reading of the 9 areas? Also, the deadlines seems to get lost in the table and don't stand out - what do you think? This makes me think about the [Dyslexia friendly style guide](#), which might provide some pointers on readable fonts, headings, structures, colours, layout and more (there is also a [PDF guide here](#)). I've also provided some further links below about creating accessible digital content and documents that might inform the brief (and your lecture slides too as I took a brief look).

- [Create accessible digital content](#)
- [Creating accessible documents](#)

The assignment title states 'Ideas in Practice' yet this is not referenced/ defined within the 'Your Assignment' section on page 2. Perhaps explaining what the ideas relate to...as mentioned in other areas of the brief - ideas of social justice, collaboration...what else? You state the essay questions will be provided - how and where can they be accessed? Would a definition or outline of social justice be welcomed here too? It is brilliant to see there are alternative assignment options between an illustrated essay or essay film - are these approaches that are familiar to participants? As in what comprises an illustrated essay in comparison to an essay film? Providing choice and flexibility in assessment formats, allows students to have more agency, choice and control over their learning experience and best suited to their strengths and learning style. This can also support more inclusive teaching and learning to address social justice issues by considering the diverse needs of students and student groups. This makes me think about UAL's Course Designer document ['Designing Inclusive Assessment'](#) and wider [Academic Enhancement Resources](#) that might be of interest.

Looking at the learning outcomes section of the brief on page 2, it is often preferred that only one [criterion](#) is set against a learning outcome rather than two combined as it can make the learning outcomes harder to interpret and assess. I think the evidence column of the learning outcomes start to make linkages as to expected evidence, however these statements are broad and would benefit from practical application. Could examples/ links be made to what this practically looks like in the illustrated essay or essay film? I'm interested to know whether 'good quality' can be quantified? What does this look like? Do terms such as 'demonstrate discernment,' 'reflective and critical,' need defining? This makes me think about the ALDinHE ['Instruction words in essay questions'](#) document (and how UAL doesn't have such a document that I can find). Therefore, is there an opportunity to provide information on academic skills in the guidance?

I wonder if there's an in-session opportunity to map and work with the [assessment criteria](#) and learning outcomes to understand them in practice, which could be periodically revisited throughout the unit (you might already do this)? Furthermore, is there further scaffolding you could state in the unit brief to support students in the development of their writing and academic skills. For example, links to [academic support online](#), or [library/ Academic Support sessions](#). This also draws me to UAL's work on:

- [Designing Inclusive Assessment](#)
- [Scaffolding critical engagement with texts](#)

Some additional notes include:

- Could [PCSA](#)s also be stated and linked to in conjunction with ISAs?
- Is it helpful to provide the names/ email addresses for the teaching team specific to the unit (this might vary hence the general email address)?
- 'How you will receive feedback' doesn't actually state what format – In writing? Verbally? Again, this links to inclusive assessment.
- Are there any formative opportunities to receive feedback?
- Might a link to information on applying for additional time/ Extenuating Circumstances be provided on page 1 and/ or on page 4 under 'Assessment Guidance' (similarly PCSAs)?
- Under 'costs associated,' might digital equity be considered? For example, where might participants borrow laptops/ access software? It is positive to see an invitation to speak to the unit leader about these costs prior to starting the research project – perhaps some confidential drop-in sessions might be provided.

Overall, I want to reassure you this is a good unit brief Lee. I wonder if (some of) the above might serve as an opportunity and give agency to open up conversations within your team about writing assignment briefs? **Feel free to select/ choose areas to respond to in 'Part Three' of the ROT form below (rather than responding to it all) and I hope it's been helpful.**

Part Three

Observee to reflect on the observer's comments and describe how they will act on the feedback exchanged:

Thank you for the massively helpful feedback, helping me to see and understand many things that I did not previously know about. Also, critically, things that I need to know in order to better do my job. Among these things, making documents 'accessible' and following the Dyslexia guide to good practice. Indeed, I have already begun to translate my course documents (and powerpoints) to accessible formats. I have asked our administrator about this aspect of documents and whether we need to make more time to deal with these issues. I will definitely, carefully bring this up as my team prepares to revalidate the entire course. A good opportunity to make good our practices.

I am wondering how many other things that should inform my professional life am I unaware of? I am grateful to you for *all* of the detail regarding good practice here around designing briefs and learning outcomes. I agree with you about the 'good' and 'discerning' comments, which were added by my boss in her edit of what I had written.

I am also made aware of how little information is shared and distributed among current team members. Indeed, there has been a history of incommunication here, and I hope that starting to share and implement good practice will be a major part of our revalidation efforts.

I also realise how unhelpful it was of me to submit so much material in this part of the assessment, as my recording was too unsatisfactory to use. In future, I might seek advice about what exactly is required.