



Clinical Teaching Observation Record: guidelines for use

Context and principles

It is a requirement, both of the General Medical Council and of the University of Birmingham, that clinical staff engaged in teaching undergraduate medical students participate in a programme of peer observation of teaching. Peer observation provides tutors with feedback that allows them to improve the quality of their teaching. Benefits also accrue to the observer, who has the opportunity to learn from observing the practice of a teaching colleague.

In peer observation, the emphasis is on development of practice rather than judgement *per se*. Colleagues have the opportunity to discuss teaching approaches and share ideas. This Clinical Teaching Observation Record is primarily intended to provide a structured basis for discussion between the tutor and the observer and should be completed with this aim in mind.

Confidentiality of the peer observation process is paramount, with information from clinical teaching observation records or from accompanying discussions only being released to a third party with the consent of both observer and tutor. However, from time to time, general issues may arise that observer and tutor may wish to bring to the attention of the Head of Academy.

Please note that Heads of Academy are required to keep records of the clinical teaching observations that take place and of which staff have participated.

Definitions

Small group: any group ranging from 1-2 students in a clinic setting, to 4-6 students in a typical bedside teaching session or up to 20 students in a tutorial or seminar session

Large group: More than twenty students, typically in a lecture setting

How to use these forms

To ensure that both tutor and observer benefit from the observation process, please use these forms in the following way:

1. **Briefing:** tutor and observer meet briefly before the session to discuss session context and details, student group(s) involved etc
2. **Observation:** observer notes areas of good practice and any areas for development and completes the appropriate form (small /large group).
3. **Review:** tutor and observer discuss the session either immediately afterwards or within 2-3 days, using the completed Clinical Teaching Observation Record as a basis. Observer offers the tutor constructive feedback on the session, with suggestions for improvement if appropriate.
4. **Report to the Head of Academy:** tutor and observer complete and return **ONLY** the report to the Head of Academy, noting any general issues or comments that they wish to bring to their attention. **NOTE: all other forms remain confidential to observer and tutor.**

Further information and resources

For further information about the peer observation process, please contact your Head of Academy. A useful article is given below:

Siddiqi ZS, Jonas-Dwyer S, Carr SE 2007. Twelve tips for peer observation of teaching. *Medical teacher* 29(4): 297-300



Clinical Teaching Observation Record: large groups

Session	Date	Topic	Student group	Nos	Duration	Tutor name	Observer name

Observation details: please circle as appropriate (1=needs improvement; 2=satisfactory; 3=good; 4=excellent)

Explanation of session aims and learning outcomes	1	2	3	4	N/A
Session set in context of previous work/principles of clinical medicine	1	2	3	4	N/A
Patient problems used as a focus for learning	1	2	3	4	N/A
Encouraging/supportive learning environment	1	2	3	4	N/A
Active participation by students encouraged	1	2	3	4	N/A
Level of intellectual challenge for students appropriate	1	2	3	4	N/A
Integration of relevant basic sciences	1	2	3	4	N/A
Clarity and structure of session	1	2	3	4	N/A
Presentation style	1	2	3	4	N/A
Use of audio-visual aids/handouts	1	2	3	4	N/A
Session management (timing, dealing with interruptions etc)	1	2	3	4	N/A
Closing summary: emphasis of key points/suggestions for further work	1	2	3	4	N/A

Overall comments

Areas of good practice
Areas for development

Signature (observer)

Position



Clinical Teaching Observation Record: small groups

Session	Date	Topic	Student group	Nos	Duration	Tutor name	Observer name

Observation details: please circle as appropriate (1=needs improvement; 2=satisfactory; 3=good; 4=excellent)

Students briefed on session: aims, content, expectations etc	1	2	3	4	N/A
Session set in context of previous work/principles of clinical medicine	1	2	3	4	N/A
Patient problems used as a focus for learning	1	2	3	4	N/A
Role modelling/demonstration of clinical skills	1	2	3	4	N/A
Encouraging/supportive learning environment	1	2	3	4	N/A
Active participation by all students	1	2	3	4	N/A
Students receive feedback on their work	1	2	3	4	N/A
Relevant basic sciences integrated	1	2	3	4	N/A
Students debriefed/key learning points emphasised/suggestions for further work	1	2	3	4	N/A

Overall comments

Areas of good practice
Areas for development

Signature (observer)

Position



Clinical Teaching Observation Record: report to HOA

We confirm that the clinical teaching observation described below has taken place.

Session	Date	Topic	Student group	Nos	Duration	Tutor name	Observer name

We would like to make the following general comments to the Head of Academy (HOA) (optional)

<p>General comments</p>
<p>Issues for consideration</p>

Signature (observer) Position Date

Signature (tutor) Position Date