

*Workshop presented at  
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### **W3. Making the most of teaching observations: Being an observer and being observed**

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- How can we make the most of teaching observations – as the observer and as the teacher - for developing teaching and for professional development?

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## Overview

- Benefits of teaching observations
- Observing effectively
- Making the most of feeding back
- What next? Avoiding 'file and forget' syndrome...

**Your experience of teaching  
observation:  
*What are the benefits?***

## Different types of teaching observations

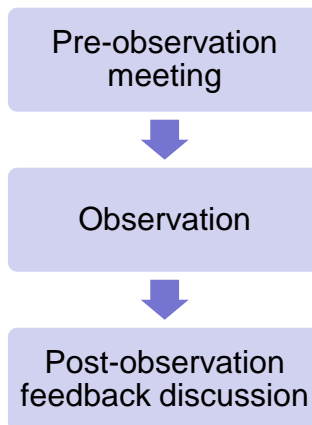
### Purpose

- For development
- For assessment or evaluation of teaching

### Observer

- Subject specialist
  - A peer
  - Senior member of staff / trainer
- Education specialist

## Teaching observation process



## What is your experience of teaching observation (TO)?

- Taking part as the teacher – being observed?
- Taking part as the observer?
  
- What are the benefits?
- Who benefits?



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## What are the benefits of teaching observations?

- Help reflect on and develop teaching
  - External input, opportunity for discussion and development
- Provide evidence of teaching practice and development as a teacher
  - Can be used for appraisal, revalidation, recognition as a trainer, job application/promotion/awards
- Help meet GMC requirements
  - Standards for medical education & training, recognition and approval of trainers

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## What are the benefits of teaching observations?

- Help reflect on and develop teaching
- Provide evidence of teaching practice and development as a teacher
- Help meet GMC requirements

Benefits for  
both  
Observer  
and  
Observed...

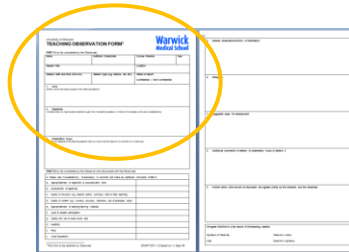
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## Observing effectively

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## PREPARATION before the observation

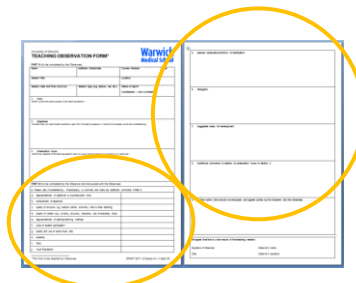
- Meet?
- Teacher provides information about the session
  - Type of teaching, title, aims, objectives, student group, level...
  - Identify specific focus?
- Agree the process, confidentiality etc
- Discuss any particular concerns and focus for the observation

The image shows a Warwick Medical School Observation Form. A yellow circle highlights the top section of the form, which includes fields for 'Name of the session', 'Date', 'Time', 'Location', and 'Observer's name'. The rest of the form is a grid for recording observations.

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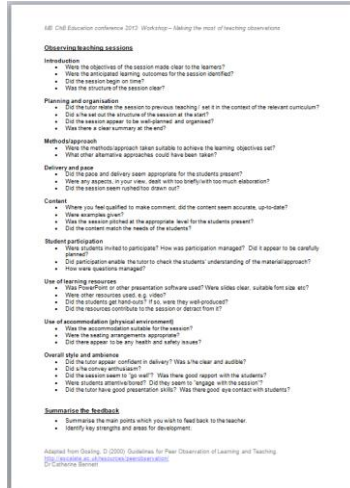
## FOCUS during the observation

- Inform students
  - Observation of teaching
  - Observer will not participate
- Observe and take notes
  - Form used to structure observation...
  - Make notes on specifics – what did you observe (evidence to support comments and discussion)
  - Complete relevant part of form

The image shows the same Warwick Medical School Observation Form as in the first slide. Two yellow circles highlight specific parts: one circle highlights the top section (session details) and another circle highlights the bottom section (observer's name and date).

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## FOCUS during the observation



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## Tips for the observation

- Be invisible - try to sit outside direct line of vision of students and teacher, but make sure you can see!
- Ask the teacher for a copy of their slides / handout / teaching resources in advance...
- Do **not** intervene during the session...

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**Making the most of feeding back**

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**Good feedback?**



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## Feed back to BOOST

- **B**alanced: Include both good and bad points
- **O**bserved: Only give examples of what you have seen the learner do, don't bring in your preconceptions or previous experience
- **O**bjective or **O**wned: Make sure your feedback is factual and based on actions, not any prior emotional response you may have to the person
- **S**pecific: Always use specific examples to illustrate a comment. Exactly why or how was the action done well or badly? Avoid broad statements
- **T**imely: Feedback should be given as close to the event as possible to ensure accuracy and effectiveness

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/medicalschooll/teaching-portal/teaching-skills/teaching-resources/giving-feedback>

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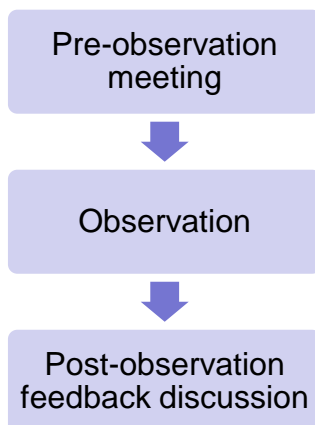
## Feed back to BOOST

- B**alanced: Good and bad points
- O**bserved: What you saw
- O**bjective: Factual, based on actions
- S**pecific: Use specific examples
- T**imely: As close to the event as possible

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- Prioritise your feedback
- Feedback conversation:
  - General comments from teacher
  - Discuss positives (teacher first)
  - Discuss areas for development
  - Agree action plan

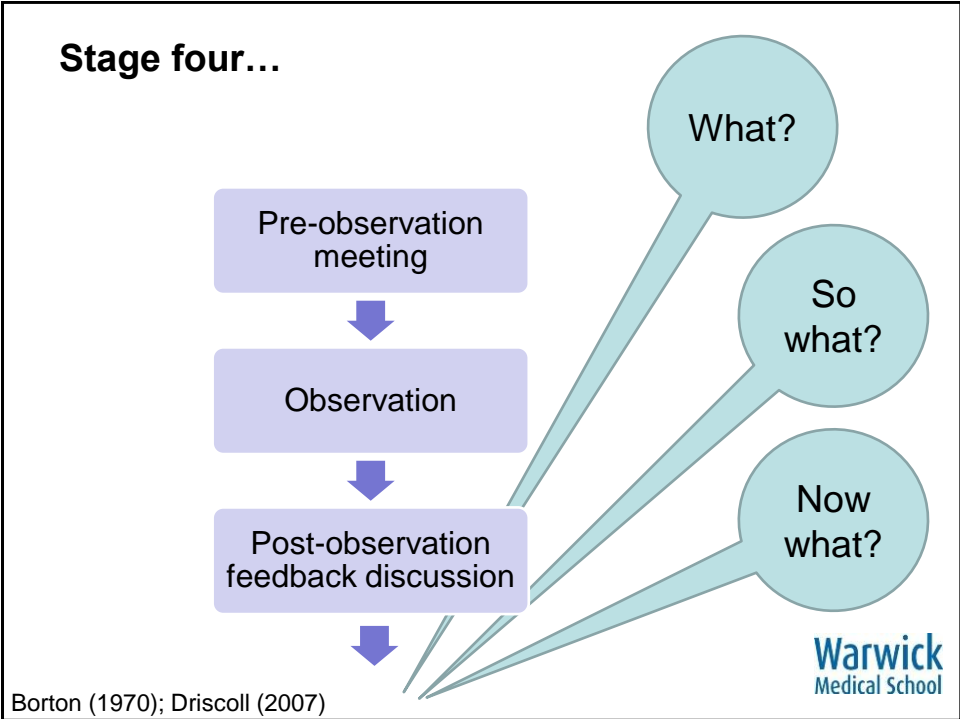

## Teaching observation process



**File  
and  
forget?**



**What next?**  
*Avoiding 'file and forget' syndrome...*



## As teacher or observer

### What...

- Happened?
- Did you do?
- Did you observe?

Includes the observation and feedback process as well as the teaching session observed

### So what?

- Your analysis, diagnosis?
- How and why?

### Now what?

- Options?
- Actions?

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## Teaching observation process: The three Rs...

Pre-observation meeting



Observation



Post-observation feedback discussion



**Reflect  
Record  
Revisit**



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## What? So what? Now what?

- Use “What? So what? Now what?” to reflect on a recent teaching observation or episode. What will you change, develop or put into practice?
- How can you make the most of teaching observations – for developing teaching and for professional development – as teacher and as observer?



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## Summary

- Benefits of teaching observations
- Making the most of observing...
- Effective feedback...
- What next? The three Rs for avoiding ‘file and forget’ syndrome...
  - Reflect, Record, Revisit

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