

Observation

For this assignment I have observed two different lecturers on the same course. The lectures were for different levels on the course and were teaching different topics, Lecturer A was working with level six students on the course teaching a module on classroom management, Lecturer B was working with the level four students on the course for the study skills module. When reflecting on my observations I will be using Gibbs reflective cycle (1988).

The first observation was made prior to both lectures taking place. For both groups of students, the lecturer uploaded the modules power points, resources, the assignment and the reading list for the students to have access to before the module had started. This shows the lecturers have covered the teaching standard “plan and deliver effective learning, teaching and assessment” (Welsh Government, 2023). The lessons being planned and uploaded in advance allows the students to look at the module if they so wish and to be familiar with the topic. This is particularly useful for students with a specific learning difficulty, for example dyslexia, as it allows them to print or adjust the resources, and the lecture power points in a format that suits their needs. Welsh government (2015) identified that students with specific learning difficulty may need adaptations made for their learning for it to be more accessible to them. This would mean that by giving the students to access the information and resources prior to the session that this allows time for any adaptations to be made to suit the learners. This would benefit all students on the course as they would have access to the reading lists and resources, so if they so wished they could access the information prior to the lecture to make themselves familiar with the topic.

This could be identified as a point of best practice as by doing this you are meeting the needs of all the students, without singling out the students that have additional learning needs. This would also meet the teaching standard “Value and promote diversity, equality of opportunity and inclusion” (Welsh Government, 2023).

When looking at my own practice I feel this is something that would be beneficial to the students I am working with as it ensures that the lecture resources are inclusive to all

learners and gives equal opportunities for the cohort to do prior research if they so wish. To meet the needs of my students I must make sure that all my resources are available to the students and can be adapted to meet their needs, this would also include insuring that any videos that I use have subtitles available for deaf or hard of hearing students and the option for audio descript for visually impaired students.

The set up of both lectures is blended learning with some of the students attending online and others attending the lectures on campus, receiving face to face teaching. Garrison and Vaughan (2008) describe blended learning as “a new approach and mix of classroom and online activities consistent with the goals of specific courses or programs”. This led to the first observation that was made in lecture A, where the lecturer had difficulties with the use of teams in the setting, meaning that those students that were accessing the lecture online were unable to access the lesson until the issue was resolved, the issue was resolved with the help of one of the students. Difficulties with technical issues were also witnessed in lecture B, however on this occasion the issue was with logging on to the system, this was unable to be resolved by the lecturer and the university’s technology support was needed to aid with the situation. “How computers are used in the classroom dictates technology's effectiveness as an instructional tool” (Ivers, 2003 p11), this implies that if the technology is not effective then it is not of benefit to the lectures. Both of lectures were delayed in starting because of the technical issues.

From this I can critically look at the benefits of using technology in education settings. As the use of digital resource ensures that the lessons are sustainable, by not providing paper resources for the students, it may be at the detriment of accessibility and user engagement. The use of technology, as well as digital resources, fits into the teaching standard ‘Demonstrate a commitment to sustainability’ (Welsh Government, 2023), where the lecturers are promoting sustainability, both by the use of the digital resources and by the option for students that are further away from the university to access the lectures online, rather than travelling to attend in person, which could suggest that by doing this the students are being more sustainable learners. This could also be linked to the professional standard ‘Plan and deliver effective learning, teaching and assessment’ (Welsh Government, 2023) as in both lecture A and B the lecturers used technology to

provide effective teaching to students both on campus and online. Mekhitarian (2021) described highly effective blended learning as the blend of effective practices that can be found in the traditional classroom and the effective practices that were found in distance learning. If this description is to be believed then it would imply that blended learning incorporates the best of both styles of teaching, suggesting that blended learning should be the best of both worlds. However, when there are issues with technology during blended learning, due to the reliance on digital technology when, then it can mean that the lesson cannot go ahead as planned and has the potential to isolate some members of the cohort who then cannot access the learning.

This issue could possibly have been avoided by preparing for the session in advance of the students attending, therefor ensuring that any technical issues were resolved before the session. This would mean that the difficulties that were faced did not take time out of the lecture to resolve. The difficulties observed could also show a need for a back-up plan for alternative provision should the technical issue be unable to be resolved. The use of digital media and technology during the lesson is displaying engagement with both the traditional classroom teaching and the online model, demonstrating the best practice by merging the two with the option of blended learning.

In both lecture A and B, the lecturers used the Welsh language in their teaching, as well as using studies and statistics that were based in Wales. This meets the professional standard 'Understand the importance of the Welsh culture and language as a bilingual nation' (Welsh Government, 2023). The use of the Welsh language was also present in all the power point presentations during the lectures as the slides were bilingual, displaying the information in both Welsh and English, thus meeting the needs of all students. This demonstrates best practice as classrooms in Wales include students who display a varying degree of Welsh language competence (Jones, 2017).

Triebold (2020) stated that the use of a person's native language does not just benefit the learner's sense of self and well-being but also their career opportunities and the economy. This highlights the need for the promotion of the Welsh language in education settings. The use of Welsh studies, and statistics that are from Wales, also played a part in both lectures observed, this demonstrating to the student the local

significance of their learning, making the session more personal to the learner and their experiences.

From this I can see that it would be beneficial for me to work on my Welsh language skills so that I can use them in my lectures. I will also need to ensure that best practice is met in all my lectures by ensuring that my slides are bilingual, in both Welsh and English. I will also ensure that alongside sharing international and national policies, procedures and statistics, it would be best practice to ensure that I am sharing Welsh policies, procedures and statistics as well as using studies that were based in Wales where possible. This will help the students to relate it back to their work and promote the Welsh language and culture in all my work.

Learner engagement between the lectures varied greatly, Cook-Sather and Yi Loh (2023) found that the best way to maintain student engagement was to move away from the 'traditional teaching' method, and instead to co create, working collaboratively with the learner and building a relationship of mutual respect and trust. In lecture A the students were a lot more engaged than in lecture B where the students were quieter and were less willing to contribute to the lesson. It was also noticed that the students that were attending the session online were less likely to contribute to the session than those who were attending the session on campus. The students who were attending online often needed to be prompted to engage in the session and were less likely to put forward their contributions. This is contradictory to the study by James and Swan (2021) who found that a by offering the student's blended learning with a mix of online and face to face learning experience, the students were more engaged and led to a higher retention of students.

The students who were accessing the session online were encouraged to put the cameras on for the session to promote engagement in both lecture A and B, however, students in Lecture A were more likely to use the cameras when accessing the session online. It should be noted that learners in lecture A have been together for three years on the course and are so familiar with each other, whereas the students in lecture B are new to the university setting and so are not familiar with each other.

The students who were accessing face to face learning on the campus were all visibly engaged, however the students in lecture B were more tentative when coming forward with shared experiences and ideas than the students in lecture A, again this may highlight the familiarity that the students have with each other.

The students in lecture A also seemed to be much more relaxed around the lecturer than the level four students in lecture B. the interactions between lecturer and students were very different in the sessions with one lecturer taking a more relaxed manner during the session and one having a naturally more authoritative presence in the room. Wettstein, Ramseier and Scherzinger (2021) conducted a study that implies that the relationship between the student and the teacher has an impact on their experience in lessons, from this it may suggest that the relationship between the lecturer and the students could impact on the student's confidence in participating in the session and in sharing their own views, opinions and experiences. With the students in lecture B having only just started their course this would suggest that they are yet to form positive working relationships with each other and with the teaching faculty.

When reflecting on my own practice it is felt that I do have a more relaxed manner when teaching however that could leave me vulnerable to inappropriate comments, because of this it will be important that I share my expectations with the students for their conduct in my sessions. It is also important that there are professional boundaries in place to show respect in the classroom. This would then meet the teaching standard "Demonstrate dignity, courtesy and respect towards others" (Welsh Government, 2023) as it would be ensuring that there is respect both between teaching staff and the students as well as between the student cohort. I will also build positive professional relationships with the students, so if they are having any difficulties they can come and speak to me about it and either I can provide additional support or signpost them to more specialist support if required.

It was noted from the observation that the students were more interactive in the lecture when they were more comfortable with each other and with the lecturer. For my own practice this is something that I would encourage as the sharing of information, support and experiences can introduce new ideas into the lesson. This is also something that I would encourage when taking part in blended learning, to ensure that the students are

still interacting with the session and engaging with the learning. To do this I would try to take a more interactive approach with the use of group work and activities, as well as encourage the cameras to be on, so if the students are losing engagement, it can be seen and rectified as soon as possible.

From observing the lectures, I can see that the teaching standards are being met in all areas of learning, and that there were many areas of best practice observed. These, I will carry forward with me into my teaching career and will put them into practice to provide the best possible learning experience for the students that I work with.

Goal	How will it be achieved	When do I want to achieve this by?	Where can I get support?	Review date
Planning and preparation of the lesson to meet the needs of all the learners	Ensuring that my lessons are planned far enough in advance and upload them onto to teams/Moodle for the students to access if they wish to before the lecture.	May 2025	Placement mentor Personal tutor Academic support University/college services	February 2025
	Support any students with SpLD or ALN to ensure that I have met their accessibility needs.	April 2025		
	Working alongside academic support to ensure I do what is possible to meet the needs of my students.	January 2025		
	If the lesson or resources are not accessible for the learners, then ensure that an appropriate alternative is found.	January 2025		
Confidence using technology in the classroom for blended learning.	Team teaching along side a lecturer for experience.	March 2024	Personal tutor Placement mentor	January 2025
	Trialling different digital programmes to see which one I feel most comfortable with.	April 2025		

	Observing more lectures that include blended learning to learn different techniques of keeping the students engaged when online.	January 2025		
The use of the Welsh language in lectures	Build my own confidence in using the Welsh language by using incidental Welsh in my lectures. Communicate with my Welsh speaking peers more using the Welsh language to build on my confidence and fluency. Ensure that my power points and resources are prepared ahead of time so that I can send them to be translated into Welsh.	May 2025 December 2024 December 2024	Personal Tutor Welsh speaking peers The university Digital learning tools for the Welsh language	January 2025
Build positive professional relationships with the students to encourage engagement	Get to know and understand the individual needs of the students. Work collaboratively with the students when planning lessons to understand their preferred ways of learning.	April 2025 December 2024	Placement mentor Personal tutor Professionals I am working along side The university/college setting	March 2025

	Place professional boundaries in place and have the confidence to enforce the boundaries when needed.	December 2024		
	Offer support to the pupils with their work if they are struggling and need additional support.	February 2025		
	Get to know the services that the university/college provides so that I am able to sign post students to additional support if they need it.	April 2025		

Wordcount - 2560

References

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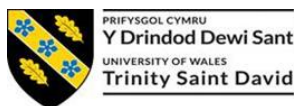
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Teacher Observation Form



Teacher	Lecturer A
Date	11 th September 2024
Group	Inclusive Education – Level 6
Topic/Context	Classroom Management
Notes on the lesson:	
• First module of level 6 • Students are based in primary, secondary, STF and PRU units. • All students agree that behaviour is getting worse. ○ No discipline at home ○ Children being left to own devices. ○ Use of phones and iPad for parents and children ○ No routines ○ No supervision online – access to inappropriate content ○ Lack of after school activities • Discussion about the impact of staff on classroom management • Characteristics of effective classroom management (group discussion) ○ Feedback ○ Confidence ○ Charisma ○ Respect ○ Patience ○ Positivity ○ Preparation ○ Routines ○ Relationships	

- Empathy

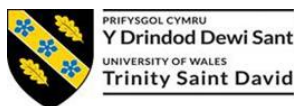
What I have learned:

- Technical issues – Arrive early to ensure that all technology is working.
- The use of encouragement and personal experiences in the classroom
- Learning from peers – Personal experiences and shared ideas
- Clear explanation of the assignment – discussion
- Human side of teaching – mutual respect between the lecturers and the students
- Working both in the classroom and engaging at home learners
- Provide a reference list for the power point.
- Assigned directed learning.

Targets to improve my own practice (mapped to professional standards):

- Demonstrate commitment to learners, their learning, safety, and well-being.
 - Blended learning with some students attending online and some in person teaching showing a commitment to the accessibility of the learning.
- Understand the importance of the Welsh culture and language as a bilingual nation.
 - Use of the Welsh language in the lesson
 - Bilingual slides
 - Use of Welsh studies and statistics
- Demonstrate dignity, courtesy, and respect towards others.
 - Respect In the classroom between the students and lecturer
 - Students are encouraged to share their experiences and knowledge.
 - Views and opinions are respected in the lecture.
- Know how to use evidence and research to improve my practice.
 - Sharing research from a range of sources – looking critically at the sources
- Plan and deliver effective learning, teaching, and assessment.
 - Lesson planned and prepared.
 - Resources prepared and shared with the students before the lecture.
- Build positive and collaborative relationships.
 - Positive relationship between students and lecturer
 - Students seen speaking to the lecturer about issues they may have.
- Enable learners to share responsibility for their own learning and assessment.
 - Showing the students the aims and objectives of the session, allowing the students to evaluate if they have met the lesson aims.
 - Encouraging self-directed learning
- Demonstrate a commitment to sustainability.
 - Learners who are living further away can access the session online rather than traveling to the campus – sustainability travelling a distance.
 - Digital resources, no papers

Teacher Observation Form



Teacher	Lecturer B
Date	24 th September 2024
Group	Inclusive Education – Level 4
Topic/Context	Study skills – resources.
Notes on the lesson:	
• Technical difficulties logging on to the computer in the university – technical support was called to support the lecturer. • Recap of the last weeks lessons • Research skills, article, looking at critical thinking and note taking. • Bilingual slides in Welsh and English • Critical reflection • The importance of reputable sources • Where to find sources of information • Differences in websites – their reliability and bias • Note taking- How to note take, tips. • Running through the assignment	
What I have learned:	
• Importance of recapping last week, refreshing their memory • More interaction in person (those online not as engaged) • The online students – check engagement and understanding. • Be aware what is on the board / if the board has turned off. • Local / Welsh studies used as an example.	

- Provide reference list.
- Assignment sheet
- Link to work-based learning.

Targets to improve my own practice (mapped to professional standards):

- Understand the importance of Welsh culture and language as a bilingual nation.
 - Bilingual slides
 - Use of Welsh studies for examples and statistics
- Enable learners to share responsibility for their own learning and assessment.
 - Self-directed learning, recap on self-directed study
- Demonstrate commitment to learning, their learning, safety, and well-being.
 - Reassurance
 - Not expected to know it all
 - Check on well-being and that if there are any difficulties who to turn to and feel supported.
- Plan and deliver effective learning, teaching, and assessment.
 - Power points and links available on Moodle prior to the session
 - Use of a range of media
- Demonstrate dignity, courtesy, and respect towards others.
 - Students were encouraged to share their views and opinion.
 - Opinions and views are respected by staff and pupils.
- Build positive and collaborative relationships.
 - A new group but are starting to build relationships within the cohort.
 - Starting to build a teacher student relationship
- Enable learners to share responsibility for their own learning and assessment.
 - Assignment given and explained in detail.
 - Directed learning task set.
 - Aims and objectives on the session shared allowing the students to evaluate if they have achieved the lesson aims.
- Demonstrate a commitment to sustainability.
 - Blended learning is available so students who cannot travel to campus can still attend online.