Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment POLICY AND PROCEDURE 2026-2027

SECTION 1: CONTEXT

1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Uphold Green Labyrinth's (GL) mission statement "Empowering Learning, Transforming Lives" for measuring the quality of education through observations of teaching staff.
- Provide clear guidelines on OTLA policy and procedures at Green Labyrinth.
- Outline GL's commitment to ensuring that observation of teaching, learning and assessment is developmental and supportive with outcomes for learners being central to the process.
- Ensuring that the overall performance and quality of the delivery are of a high standard across all training provision and delivery.
- Define GL's quality framework for observing delivery which ensures robust and reliable systems are in place. This is to firstly quality assure the delivery and secondly to drive quality improvement so that the learning experience of learners is positive, leads to high achievement and is highly rated by learners.

1.2 Green Labyrinth recognises that effective teaching, learning and assessment are promoted through high expectations, strong relationships, inclusive practice, effective safeguarding and evidence-informed teaching approaches. The OTLA process is intended to support continuous professional development and improve outcomes for learners.

SECTION 2: STATUS

2.1 This policy was approved by the Senior Leadership Team in August 2026.

2.2 The OTLA Policy links to the following:

- Staff Handbook
- 121s and Job Descriptions
- GL's Quality Improvement Plan
- Teaching Standards
- Ofsted's Quality of Education
- Quality Assurance Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Learner Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy (if applicable)

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SECTION 3: DEFINITIONS

3.1 Observation is the process of watching a teacher's performance in the classroom and online to evaluate their teaching strategies and identify areas for improvement. The goal is to help teachers improve their skills and enhance learning outcomes.

3.2 Assessment is the techniques involved in collecting, analysing, and using information about learners to improve learning. These can be formative and summative.

3.3 Green Labyrinth recognises that high-quality teaching, learning and assessment should meet the needs of all learners, including those with SEND, EHCPs, SEMH needs and other identified vulnerabilities.

SECTION 4: PURPOSE

4.1 GL's system for observing teaching, learning and assessment will:

- ensure that learners are receiving a high standard of education, training and assessment which meets internal and external standards.
- monitor the impact and effectiveness of teaching and resources on learning
- identify opportunities for improving the quality of the learning experience to fully support and maximise learner achievement and enjoyment.
- evaluate the extent to which teaching supports learner progress, personal development, attendance, behaviour and preparation for next steps.
- ensure learners feel safe during the learning experience and that safeguarding and equality and diversity are promoted throughout the learner journey together with inclusive learning practice.
- develop solutions to teaching and learning issues and implement appropriate CPD.
- promote staff and curriculum development and dissemination of good practice.

SECTION 5: TYPES OF OBSERVATIONS

5.1 The following types of observation will be planned and carried out as part of GL's observation strategy:

- Formal

- To be undertaken by a member of leadership for observed performance to be evaluated against GL's OTLA criteria in Appendix One and current Ofsted Further Education and Skills Inspection Framework and guidance

- Informal

- To be undertaken by managers as part of GL CPD developmental activities.
- The focus of the developmental OTLA is based on recognising strengths and identifying areas for improvement in individual practice, in order to drive continuous improvement and inform future staff CPD.

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- Peer
- These may be undertaken by any Tutor/Trainer/Assessor/Manager to support the development of staff through the sharing of good practice, introduction of a new course or new learner activities. For example, team building activities, team problem solving, or when a new programme is introduced.

- Recorded
- These are for bespoke programmes only, including home-schooled and online learners. Due to the individual needs of these learners, it will be the teacher's choice as to whether the observer joins live or the session is recorded. For recorded lessons, observations are to be observed within a week of the lesson date. Recordings and observation records will be retained and managed in accordance with data protection requirements.

SECTION 6: PROCEDURE

6.1 Leaders aim to carry out 2 formal observations for all teaching staff in an academic year in November and April. Staff will be informed on the dates and times of these. These may be more frequent in cases of trainee teachers, requirements of teaching qualifications and cases of cause for concern. Peer observations will take place in December and February.

6.2 Teaching Assistants will also be observed as part of this process.

6.3 Informal observations will be carried out at least twice a year with no warning to delivery staff.

6.4 Should dates change for any reason, a minimum of 2 days' notice will be given by the observer to the member of staff being observed.

6.5 Where appropriate 'no notice' observations may be carried out.

6.6 The Observation Form in Appendix One will be completed.

6.7 During the observation, the observer

- Must minimise disruption and remain unobtrusive
- Observe for up to 45 minutes or drop into different stages of the lesson such as the beginning, middle and lesson end
- Note attendance and punctuality
- Evaluate the achievement of learning outcomes
- Record the promotion of equality and diversity, inclusiveness and embedding of Functional Skills (English, Maths and ICT) where relevant
- Evaluate how effectively safeguarding, learner wellbeing, attendance, behaviour and inclusion are promoted through teaching and learning.
- Consider whether reasonable adjustments and SEND support are evident where relevant.

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- Note any cross-curricular content and learning value to other areas of life
- Aim to interview the learner or group of learners as part of the observation process, in order to triangulate evidence and to check if the lesson is typical of the learners' normal experience.

SECTION 7: MEASUREMENT OF OTLA

7.1 GL teaching observations **will not be graded**. Formative feedback will be given which highlights good practice and areas for improvement. See Appendix Two for a list of these criteria.

7.2 Professional standards for teaching and learning are informed by the E**ducation and Training Foundation Professional Standards,** awarding organisation requirements and current Ofsted expectations. OTLA judgements will focus primarily on the quality of education experienced by learners.

7.3 Judgements of the Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment are required to be comprehensive, detailed and standardised, based on the evaluation of a variety of criteria, primarily observations of teaching and learning and assessments and learner feedback.

7.4 Observation evidence should be triangulated, where possible, with learner work, learner voice, attendance, achievement, progress and assessment information.

7.5 Staff whose performance is judged as Cause for Concern will be provided with a formal action plan, agreed within 10 days of the observation. It should be directed to address key areas for improvement through SMART targets. This action plan will be measured through 3-weekly observations for a term (12 weeks) to support the member of staff to develop their practice. These may be joint observations by leaders who are available to do so.

SECTION 8: FEEDBACK

8.1 Feedback will be provided in the following order:

- Verbal feedback within 1-3 days of observation.
- Written feedback provided within 3-5 working days of the observation.
- Feedback will be developmental, constructive and focused on improvement. Strengths should be recognised alongside areas for development.
- The member of staff should be encouraged to evaluate their own performance by identifying what went well and less well, prior to the formal feedback session. Self-reflection is critical to the observation process. An evaluation form is provided on GL Lesson Plan.
- Face to face discussion of observation will take place within 10-14 days of the observation.

8.2 Observer providing formal feedback.

- Member of staff will share their reflections first.
- Observer feedback will be evidence-based and clearly demonstrate how judgments were reached.

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- The observer must provide sufficient opportunity for the member of staff to ask questions and seek clarification of any points that are unclear.

8.3 Good practice identified through the observation process will be shared across GL through the following methods:

- Team and staff meetings
- Peer Observations
- Sharing of resources
- Standardisation
- CPD and Development Days

It will inform future CPD sessions and form part of the QIP.

SECTION 9: OTLA IN QUALITY CYCLE

9.1 Formal observations will take place in November and April.

9.2 Peer observations will take place in December and February.

9.3 Immediately following the observation, the Observers will provide a copy of their completed observation record and judgements for discussion. They will agree the judgements or provide sufficient evidence to moderate the judgements.

9.4 Trends of best practice will be identified and shared with team in team meetings.

9.5 Common areas for improvement across the delivery will be highlighted and reviewed against upcoming staff training. Amendments to this training may take place to target staff training needs. This may be internal or external training.

9.6 Any cause of concerns and action plans will be discussed and agreed.

9.7 If the parties agree that there is insufficient evidence to confidently moderate observations, the parties should agree and plan for additional joint observations to provide the evidence. This may include the support from GL SLT.

SECTION 10: MONITORING

10.1 This policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team. Observation outcomes, identified strengths, areas for development and staff CPD needs will be reviewed regularly as part of the quality assurance cycle.

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SECTION 11: REVIEW

11.1 The policy will be reviewed annually.

11.2 The next date of review will be August 2027.

11.3 Subsequent Reviews:

Reviewer	Review Dates	Amendments Yes/No	Amendments Approved & Date
Emma Gallagher	19/08/26	Yes	Updated for Ofsted, DfE, safeguarding, SEND and quality assurance requirements. Removed references to graded observations and strengthened triangulation of evidence.

APPENDIX ONE

LESSON OBSERVATION FORM 2026-2027

Teacher:	**Observer:**	**Date and Session Time:** **In-Person/Online/Recorded (please circle)**
Year Group:	**Subject:**	**Number of learners:** **Number of EHCPs:**
Support staff or teaching assistants (TAs):		
Observation Focus:	**Lesson Context:**	

Summary of main points:

TEACHER: Planning, Instruction, Differentiation, Assessment including Marking, Targets

LEARNER: Behaviour, Engagement, Progress

OTLA: Lesson Start, Environment, Objectives, Content, Structure, Opportunities for Related Learning, Assessment (including AfL), Lesson End

TIME	ACTIVITY	COMMENT

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Observer Comments on Effectiveness of Support Staff:

Learner Voice on Lesson:

- *Is this a normal lesson?*
- *What qualification are you learning?*
- *Do you feel your needs are being met in lessons?*
- *How does TA help or support you?*
- *What is your target? How are you meeting it in this lesson?*
- *Do you feel safe in lessons?*
- *Do staff support you to achieve your targets and next steps?*
- *Do staff make any adjustments that help you learn?*

Key Strengths (see OTLA criteria):

Areas for Development (see OTLA criteria):

APPENDIX TWO

GL OTLA Quality Criteria:

Planning and preparation	○ Session plan/SoW available ○ Register completed ○ Learner cohort details available ○ Organisation of learners and resources ○ Effective planned use of TA within session
Learning Environment	○ Behaviour for learning – M Process and raffle tickets ○ Safeguarding ○ Positive learning environment ○ Mutual respect ○ Punctuality of learners ○ High expectations set by teacher ○ Attendance and punctuality promoted ○ Learners feel safe and know how to report concerns
Lesson Start	○ Clear Aims/Objectives shared with learners ○ Starter activity ○ Outcomes may be shared with learners ○ Link with previous sessions or value may be shared ○ Prompt start
Lesson Structure & Methods	○ Appropriate pitch ○ Appropriate tone ○ Appropriate pace ○ Teacher communication is clear ○ Teacher instructions are effective ○ Learner clarification sought when appropriate ○ Inclusive methods used ○ Effective use of lesson time (i.e. activities used in a valuable way) ○ Learners understand tasks most of the time ○ Activities build on previous lesson or clearly link ○ Demonstrates teacher pedagogical knowledge
Content & Resources	○ Resources and activities are relevant to content and objectives ○ Range of personalised resources in line with learner need and interest ○ Resources promote EDI where relevant

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	○ Support staff used to promote access to learning ○ Technology used appropriately ○ Opportunities for learner contribution ○ Demonstrates teacher subject knowledge
Opportunities for Related Learning	○ Numeracy ○ Literacy ○ Digital Skills ○ British Values ○ Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (including challenging prejudice) ○ Applying learning to other areas of life
Inclusion	○ Evidence of EHCP outcomes in planning/SoW ○ Evidence of EHCP outcomes in delivery ○ Evidence of EHCP outcomes in deployment of support staff ○ Reasonable adjustments evident where required ○ SEND strategies implemented effectively ○ Lesson plan shows how lesson meets individual needs ○ Opportunities to build emotional intelligence and resilience
Assessment	○ Learners know the course/unit they are studying and where they are in the unit and what is coming next ○ Learners can explain what they are learning ○ Checking understanding throughout lesson and addressing misconceptions ○ Visible evidence of progress towards objectives ○ Relevant formative and/or summative assessment ○ Evidence of teacher marking ○ Evidence of teacher target setting ○ Can learners articulate their learning/progress? ○ Use of questioning ○ Assessment information informs future planning ○ Learners receive feedback that helps them improve ○ Evidence of differentiation and challenge
Session End/Summary	○ Plenary activity ○ Review of objectives ○ Have objectives been met?