

Case Study:

The challenge of a learner completing a peer observation when both learners have Autism Spectrum Condition

'Assessment and learning: involving the learner'. LSC funded project.



The context:

Within Thornbeck College (part of the North East Autism Society), there is a wide range of learning experiences on offer as part of the learning for living and work programme for learners with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC). All learners are encouraged to access all areas of the social enterprise before choosing their preferred pathway as part of their extended initial assessment. Observations are a vital part of the learner journey during this process.

The challenge:

To support learners with ASC to peer observe each other during the extended initial assessment period and the challenges / barriers they would face.

We needed to design an observation tool for learners to use based on the criteria taken from the learners extended initial assessment document. The peer observation document was differentiated to meet the individual need of the observer. The purpose of this exercise is for learners to peer observe each other to capture criteria required during the learning journey with such things as learner working safely and systematically, ask for help when needed, uses tools and equipment appropriately and tolerates working in a range of environments.

The final purpose of this would be for the observer to share learner development and give feedback to each other to reflect how they work and also for the learner to share how they felt during the process. The observation can take place during any of the living and working programme areas and can then develop this through observations of transferring skills.

What we did:

Two delegates involved in the CETTIL / LSC project met up and discussed the criteria required from the extended initial assessment document within Thornbeck College. After discussion it was agreed to devise a learner peer observation document to engage the learners in the learning journey peer process.

- Typed up a written and pictorial version with key points to identify.

- 1 learner observed another in the retail environment using the written format.
- 1 learner observed another in the Horticulture environment using the pictorial format.
- Each learner gave verbal feedback to the observed learner.
- Observed learner had the opportunity to comment how they felt from the observation.
- Staff have completed documents to feedback at next CETTIL training day
- All parties reflected on the activity.

The outcomes:

To effectively include learners to be part of the learning journey process. To support learner's in identifying how to work effectively and safely within a working environment. Peers can analyse and give feedback to each other and share practices.

- Learners to benefit from each other's experience.
- To share practice and feed back to each other.
- Informs learners of what is expected of them when working as part of the living and work programme.
- Ensures learner involvement during college tuition.
- Observation document can be tailored to support individual learner needs for observer and observe.
- Can be used to develop social interaction skills, communication skills and team work.

The impact:

Due to the nature of the disability (Autism Spectrum Condition) the learners face challenges associated with the triad of impairment

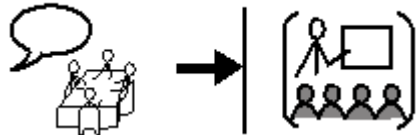



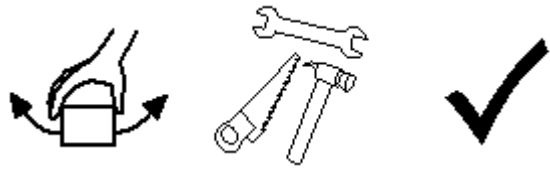
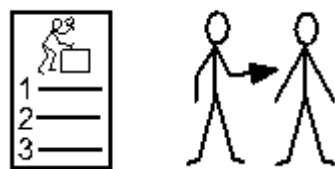

- Social interaction
- Communication
- Flexibility of imagination/ thought

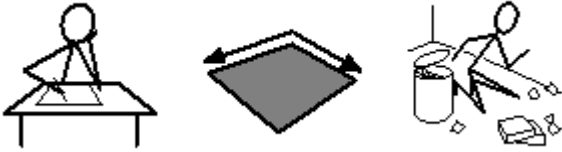





This can cause barriers for the learners which they need to overcome to be successful in completing peer observations.




The observation feedback from learners was positive with both learners giving feedback to their peers. Both learners felt more involved in their learning programme. One learner commented that he felt more responsible being able to share his experience as a second year learner to the new first year learner. After the observations learners identified that they felt engaged and successful in taking part in the process.

The completed observation forms have identified areas that require support to enable a learner to work safely in their curriculum timetable taken from their extended initial assessment. The information can be used to develop further learner peer observation sessions as part of the learning journey and can be expanded to assess other areas.

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 <p>Learner Observation</p>	 <p>YES</p>	 <p>NO</p>
 <p>Attend session on time</p>	<p>✓</p>	
 <p>Use tools correctly</p>	<p>✓</p>	
 <p>Organise yourself</p>	<p>✓</p>	
 <p>Uses work system correctly</p>	<p>✓</p>	

 <p>Make sure your work area is not messy</p>	<p>√</p>	
 <p>Understand and obey rules</p>	<p>√</p>	
 <p>Follow instructions properly</p>	<p>√</p>	
 <p>Understand hazards, obstructions and dangers</p>		<p>√</p>
 <p>Know where emergency exits are</p>	<p>√</p>	
 <p>Can work around other learners</p>	<p>√</p>	

 <p>Can work with loud noises around yourself</p>	<p>√</p>	
 <p>Can ask for help when needed</p>	<p>√</p>	
 <p>Feedback to Learner</p> <p>Observer comments:</p> <p><i>xxxx works hard</i></p> <p><i>Well done xxxx</i></p> <p>Learner comments:</p> <p><i>I like this activity</i></p>		

Signed xxxx

Date 2nd December 09

Learner Observations	YES	NO
Attends session on time	√	
Use tools correctly	√	
Organise yourself	√	
Uses work system correctly	√	
Make sure your work area is not messy	√	
Understand and obey rules	√	
Follow instructions properly	√	
Understand hazards, obstructions and dangers	√	
Know where emergency exits are	√	
Can work around other learners	√	
Can work with loud noises around yourself		√
Can ask for help is needed	√	

Feedback to learner

Observer comments:

I know xxxx doesn't like loud noises and that's why he changed the observation to work downstairs where it was quieter for xxxx.

Learner comments:

I liked xxxx watching me work.

Signed: xxxx

Date: 2.12.09