

Record of Observation or Review of Teaching Practice

Session/artefact to be observed/reviewed:

Size of student group:

Observer: Karen Matthewman

Observee: Ellie Sweeney

Note: This record is solely for exchanging developmental feedback between colleagues. Its reflective aspect informs PgCert and Fellowship assessment, but it is not an official evaluation of teaching and is not intended for other internal or legal applications such as probation or disciplinary action.

Part One

Observee to complete in brief and send to observer prior to the observation or review:

What is the context of this session/artefact within the curriculum?

The current BA3 Embroidery students are almost halfway through their Final Major Project. This unit runs through the Spring and Summer terms, the brief is very open, and the outcomes are negotiated by the students in relation to their chosen career paths/future aims but in keeping with an embroidery outcome.

The focus of the embroidery workshop is for the students to self-direct the continuation of their project, in this full day class (9:30-4:30) they are encouraged to focus on sampling whilst they have priority of the workshop machinery.

Within this session I see each student 1-1 for a 20 minute tutorial to check on the progress of the project.

How long have you been working with this group and in what capacity?

I have been the BA3 Embroidery workshop tutor since the start of the academic year, their current FMP project started in January 2025. They have one workshop a week every Tuesday and is an integral part of the course.

What are the intended or expected learning outcomes?

On completion of this unit students will be able to demonstrate:

LO1 The ability to consolidate, extend and apply subject knowledge and understanding (knowledge, enquiry)

LO2 An advanced application of the methods and techniques learned, in order to consolidate your final major project proposal (enquiry, process, knowledge)

LO3 Critical refinement, evaluation and achievement of a range of solutions to your proposal (knowledge, process, realisation)

LO4 Management of the process of realisation in an objective, creative, professional and mature manner (realisation)

LO5 The structuring, coordination and execution of a body of work, to a professional standard, which successfully achieves its own identified aims and objectives (communication, realisation)

LO6 Evidence of engagement with proactivity, resilience and curiosity principles of the Creative Attributes Framework (enquiry).

An element of all of these will be touched on through the process of discussing the students body of work in the 1-1 tutorial setting.

What are the anticipated outputs (anything students will make/do)?

Within the session I will look through all aspects of the student's project, some weeks I dedicate a main focus so students don't need to bring everything in each week currently I am mainly looking at samples however below is the required submission elements by the end of the unit.

Students can submit additional aspects, in relation to their individual direction, but **MUST** submit content that covers all 5 mandatory components below

1. Visual research and design development sketchbook(s): Your sketchbook must demonstrate the development of new ideas and areas of investigation, showcasing the journey and evolution of your project through research, design development, and the visual communication of how you have used paperwork to support textile sampling proposals. Largescale primary research can be documented with photographs. For collaborative work, include appropriately referenced contributions from others, such as range plans or lineups.

2. Presentation for Final Major Project; suitable for your chosen industry direction/career. Content can take various forms, and the format can be physical/bound and/or digital (where requested). Students will outline aims in their FMP brief.

SUGGESTIONS – as a guide only:

- Textiles portfolio
- Fashion-focused presentation portfolio and/or look book of collaboration collection.
- Self-promotional booklet and/or look book of textiles collection.
- Trend led material or technical presentation book and/or textiles-led film.

If collaborating, where appropriate, students can include referenced work of others. Collaboration aims should utilise the individual strengths of the collective team.

3. Technical folder (relevant to your specialism and brief proposal/s): A collated technical investigation relevant to your proposed aims, containing communication and reflection of your technical aims. Aims to be discussed with tutor to showcase strengths. Depending on chosen direction, this can also include mock-ups of textiles for fashion details such as seam testing, finishing's, mock-ups of garment details; relevant if you have chosen to collaborate.

4. An industry toolkit in relation to career development; This 'Industry Toolkit' is simply ONE COLLATED file, including different pages (TOTAL 2000 words).

Below SUGGESTIONS as a guide only, in addition to your Project Brief (up to 500 words), students can choose to include:

- Evaluative Statement: a summarised reflection of project decisions in relation to personal career aims and strengths.
- Tailored CVs (reflecting your Designer Identity and audience)

- Tailored Cover Letters (tailored to the audience needs through research) ▫
- Competition / MA applications (can include visuals)
- Press Release and/or Artist Statement
- Website/ Online Portfolio planning or development
- Enterprise planning or aims (can include visuals)

Your Industry Toolkit should reflect your aesthetic and design identity.

5. A collection of fashion textile products in relation to negotiated outcomes, individual and/or collaborative: This is your Collaborative Realisation with garment/fashion course(s) and/or Material Sample Route Collection(s). The 'collection' may take a variety of forms depending on the nature of the final project proposal and its solution, taking into consideration the level of craft/ innovation considered within the range, and if you have chosen to collaborate as part of your collection. Collaborative work/ should reference the collaboration, partners and courses

Are there potential difficulties or specific areas of concern?

Difficulties for the workshop tutorial can include getting round to see everyone as some tutorials overrun or are delayed if the students are busy on a piece of equipment. In the past I have tried a pre-determined time slot system, but this doesn't work due to absence and late arrivals, so I organize in order of arrival.

Another difficulty is if a student has been absent for a few weeks when they come in they are usually behind and therefore their tutorial can take longer or cover different objectives to what the session intends. Usually if a student who has had poor attendance is in, I prioritize seeing them first.

Difficulties that arise within the tutorials can differ from student to student sometimes students can be very quiet and not input which makes reviewing their thought process to the design elements hard to review, additionally some students whose first language isn't English tend to get confused more easily and the sessions take longer as I need to repeat or go slower with the information/explaining. These students tend to record the session to re listen to afterwards.

Reoccurring issues are students tend to get a lot of feedback each week (they have 4 different tutors) this can either create conflating design opinions, I have noticed students sometimes wait for the next tutorial to run other tutors' suggestions past me before going ahead with making and/or rely on tutor advice and find it hard to formulate and test ideas independently.

An area of concern is student agency within the tutorial, I would like for the students in 3rd year to initiate what they would like to discuss or get out of the tutorial so that it doesn't become repetitive in its format and reduce the likelihood of unhelpful feedback. However, with quiet students and with what they have perceived to be the standard format for tutorials from their 1st and 2nd year it has been hard to get them to develop in these areas.

How will students be informed of the observation/review?

My tutor observation is happening in a reflection format online not in person as I decided that having someone sit in on 1-1 tutorials can be off putting for the students and create a level of pressure or confusion as they may feel like they are being assessed or unwilling to talk about their personal projects Infront of someone new. I have however, recording a tutorial with a willing student which has allowed Karen to get a bit more insight into the room set up and general direction a tutorial can go in.

What would you particularly like feedback on?

I would like feedback on how to structure the conversation/how the student could take more agency or initiative with the content of the tutorial discussion.

How will feedback be exchanged?

There will be a chance for verbal exchange as we are meeting online to discuss my session as well as the observer filling in Part Two of the observation process.

Part Two (Karen Matthewman)

Observer to note down observations, suggestions and questions:

This was an interesting and wide-ranging discussion with Ellie about her practice as a tutor working in a studio setting to give 1-1 tutorials. We talked about many things, but I will focus on a few areas that I hope will be useful.

Firstly, we talked about the limitations of 1-1s as a teaching method. You mentioned the fact that some students are really well prepared, but some seem to come each time with nothing, and it sometimes doesn't seem as if they absorb anything from the previous tutorial or come prepared for the next. You also find that the tutorial time is short, and students are often distracted, wanting to focus on their technical work and get back to it, as they are 'taken out' of the studio to talk to you.

We discussed the issue of the time with you. We considered whether small group tutorials which could then be made a bit longer, and where students might feel more accountable to 'bring' what was asked for and would benefit from peer learning. You said you had considered this, but it would mean even more time away from the technicians. I wondered if there could be a clearer grouping plan arranged in advance with technicians so they could teach on the same group cycle with you, but you said the studio is very complex with multiple groups, so it might not work logistically.

Other areas we discussed were around the concept of student agency in a tutorial and how to ensure it is them doing most of the work. We discussed coaching techniques as a useful lens with which to view 1-1 tutorials. If students have a clear view of what they need to bring/discuss and that is written down by them in a form, e.g. three things they need to gain from the session, and if they are also tasked with summarising their agreed actions at the end of the tutorial, and writing them down, it is clearer that the onus is on them.

I said that this was a common way to frame coaching sessions, as it makes sure the beginning and the end of the sessions dictates whose session it is- i.e. the students' and puts the onus on them for action. You said that you have to fill in a form and summarise the discussion. This means you spend a lot of your time writing with little time to focus on the student. I suggested that you take a couple of minutes instead at the end to agree a summary of the key points together and means that you focus more on the conversation while it is happening. This could be followed by the student telling you what their next actions are.

We discussed a little the complexities of working in a teaching team with different approaches, priorities and ways of working, and agreed that sometimes even if large changes can't be made, as the power doesn't sit with us, we can have influence to make small improvements that might benefit everyone.

This was a really wonderful reflective discussion, and I got a little insight into your practice, Ellie, the constraints you work under and expertise that you hold. I'd love to find out how you go forward in this interesting area of practice.

Part Three

Observee to reflect on the observer's comments and describe how they will act on the feedback exchanged:

Thank you, Karen, for your insight and reflection on my teaching practice, the 1-1 tutorial set up can be odd to observe as it is only a segment of my practice at large and only shows my approach with one student. Even though the discussion aim with each student is the same the subtle changes and approaches differ, as a tutor you need to be able to adapt and from my discussion with Karen, I have been able to add more resources to pull from.

Although the idea of running longer tutorials by grouping students up is something I already run every so many weeks, I do think when I do this, I could change the expectations of the tutorial itself. Sometimes the students expect to still have their work looked at one by one even when in the group setting which means the other student are sometimes sat there for a long time, although the students technically could be learning valuable information from the other students back and forth with myself it can sometimes be isolating. Therefore, I could conduct these as more of a discussion and ask students to pull out parts of their work at the same time. One thing to consider with this is levels of skills and being sure not to demoralise a student who might have less work or not done the task.

The coaching technique is something I am going to implement more to help with student's agency over their tutorials. Having a weekly topic or question will hopefully keep the students focused and encourage them to pre plan by answering some reflection questions that I could send to them ahead of time. This will hopefully help them to be more vocal in their tutorials as they will be more aware of what we will discuss, this will be particularly beneficial with my students that struggle with language and communication challenges.

I really like Karen's point about small changes that I can control, within my wider team, unit edits or overriding how certain classes are run is not something I can change. However, with these teaching methods I can begin to test within my tutorials what is most effective for my students and relay this back. I am hoping that some of these edits will benefit both the student and myself.

Thank you Karen for the feedback.