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Education

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Your ref: PMcC/SMcG/1231

10 March 2014

Dear Peter

I refer to your letter of 28 February 2014.

Please find attached the Associate Assessor Handbook, which outlines on pages 5-7 the Associate Assessors' (AAs) involvement in inspection teams.

- The Handbook for Associate Assessors was developed to support AAs as they become part of the inspection team.
- It was issued to AAs at their training days in 2013 in its current draft form.
- As part of part ongoing engagement with stakeholders, the AAs have been asked to evaluate the document on inspection.
- ETI will be asking for feedback by the end of March 2014 as part of our ongoing consultation with stakeholders.

Training for AAs is usually carried out twice each academic year, normally in the first and second term dependent on need. On 7 March 2014 ETI are training AAs to be more involved on inspections (see programme attached). ETI are also seeking their views on the revision of performance levels.

Below are examples of comments from AAs in the most recent training October 2013 in response to the following question.

Evaluation Comments from AAs

How have you used the knowledge and skills you have acquired and/or developed in your role as an AA to improve the quality and provision and / or outcome in your setting?

- Every inspection helps to re-evaluate our school's provision.
- Awareness of what the whole process is about.
- Importance of capacity to continually self-evaluate.
- Knowledge gained affirms practice and leadership.
- The training has been worthwhile and thought provoking.
- Updated information on key issues e.g. safeguarding.
- Improved my staff training ability and my observation skills.
- More aware of my responsibility to strive for good practice.
- Used examples to share with staff.
- Experience was used on a daily basis in classroom environment.
- Promotes continuous professional development.
- Supports my work.
- More confidence in practice and supporting others.
- Used to enhance self-evaluation process.
- Have used formats for classroom observation for SMT meetings.
- Information has been disseminated to leadership team and discussed in relation to improving teaching and learning.
- Increase in my own confidence impacting on school improvements.
- Several things I have observed in classroom I have brought back to school.
- We have bought the full DVD of the clips you showed today and have used them in training.
- Encourages me to continue to evaluate my own school by viewing outstanding schools.
- Used best practice examples and implemented in my own school.
- Observed excellent practice and shared it with teaching staff in our school.
- Better insight into the process and this can be communicated to staff.

Yours sincerely

Veronica

VERONICA BINTLEY
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

Education and Training Inspectorate

Associate Assessor Handbook



2013-2014

PROMOTING IMPROVEMENT IN THE INTERESTS OF ALL LEARNERS

Introduction

Welcome to the role of Associate Assessor (AA) in the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). We acknowledge your professional expertise and your commitment to enhancing and supporting the inspection process across a wide range of organisations in which the ETI operate. In partnership with the inspectors, you will strive to and fulfil the mission statement of:

‘promoting improvement in the interests of all learners’.

In order to ensure an effective and efficient service, the AA training, which you will complete on an incremental basis, seeks to develop the knowledge, skills and qualities required by you to deal with the range and variety of the duties that will be assigned during your time working with the ETI.

This handbook aims to bring together all the information which might be required by an AA about the practices of the ETI. It will be updated and modified, as new procedures and protocols are introduced.

There is an expectation that you will work with the inspection team to evaluate the quality of the learning and practice in an organisation in a manner that is professional and respectful to the organisation’s context and within the protocols and values of the ETI.

The ETI Code of Conduct

The ETI will:

- recognise that the key priority must be the interests and well-being of the learners, in terms of the quality of education and training which they experience, and the outcomes they achieve;
- be sensitive to the circumstances of the organisation, and ensure tact and courtesy towards all with whom the inspector/s come into professional contact;
- evaluate objectively and consistently, be honest in communicating findings and demonstrate openness to ensure that evaluations reflect accurately the organisation’s achievements;
- show concern for accuracy and reliance on evidence-based evaluation;
- show fairness in dealing with individuals and groups;
- respect the organisation’s privacy and treat confidential issues concerning the organisations in an appropriate way;
- comply with our statutory duties to make sure the organisations receive equality of service;
- endeavour to minimise the stress on those involved in the inspection;
- take responsibility and be accountable for the quality of our work.

- be committed to ensuring that queries are answered promptly and concerns dealt with, within a defined timescale;
- be sensitive to the effect on others of evaluations and reports, but without compromising the principles, values and standards of ETI;
- take prompt and appropriate action on any safeguarding or health and safety issues; and
- act with integrity at all times.

Core Values

Truth

Honesty coupled with openness and sensitivity make sure that there is a free flow of information, within agreed guidelines, across and outside the organisation. We will be honest, open and sensitive in all of our dealings with colleagues, customers and stakeholders.

Dignity

We will treat everyone with whom we come into professional contact (both inside and outside the organisation) with respect and consideration.

Example

We will work towards the highest standards of courtesy, behaviour and professional expertise and credibility.

Service

We will use our professional expertise to provide our customers, stakeholders and our colleagues with an effective service, which aims to promote improvement in the interests of all learners.

An AA will need to have access to a form of transport that will enable them to participate in inspections across Northern Ireland.

Background

An AA is usually a current practitioner¹ who holds a post of responsibility within their own organisation, who has been appointed as an AA through public advertisement and interview, and has successfully completed induction training.

An AA will normally join at least two inspections or inspection activities each year in the course of their tenure².

Confidentiality

AAs are required to sign a confidentiality agreement at the beginning of their tenure, and adhere to professional confidentiality before, during and after all inspections. AAs are also required to declare any conflict of interests that may exist prior to an inspection, or during an inspection if an issue arises.

During inspection activity, in line with the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) 'Laptop and mobile devices Security policy', (with the exception of the data provided by ETI) AAs are not permitted to record any data pertaining to the inspection on personal devices³.

Aims

By working with AAs, the ETI aims to:

- enable others to share in the process of inspection;
- provide the opportunity for current practitioners to experience, and to contribute to the inspection process;
- bring a current practitioner's perspective to the inspection process and to its continuous improvement;
- develop the concept of self-evaluation leading to improvement in relation to learning and teaching; and
- enable the AA to have a deeper understanding of how the process of self-evaluation helps the organisations in which we work to be more effective.

¹ If an AA retires, or leaves the profession, they will be unable to continue to work as an AA on inspection.

² If the organisation in which the AA is employed is evaluated as satisfactory or less following an inspection, the AA will not normally be deployed on inspections during the tenure of their appointment in order to allow them to focus on the necessary improvement work within their own organisation.

³ For example, personal laptops, iPads/tablet PCs, mobile device, etc.

Induction and training⁴

The induction provided includes training on:

- the principles of inspection;
- the procedures, protocols, and processes used in inspections;
- observing and evaluating lessons/sessions as relevant to a phase;
- recording and assigning performance levels;
- engaging in professional discussion with teachers⁵; and
- writing evaluatively.

Further professional development and training will be provided as necessary by ETI.

The AAs will have an opportunity to participate in paired observations of lessons/sessions with inspectors in order to help them to quality assure and moderate evaluations and performance levels.

Prior to an inspection activity

Inspection Services Branch (ISB) will:

- contact the AA to inform them of their inclusion on an inspection team and the name of the Reporting Inspector (RI).

The RI will contact the AA to:

- ensure that all relevant documentation in relation to the inspection has been received;
- discuss details of the inspection, including roles and responsibilities; and
- answer any general queries, or specific concerns, about the inspection.

The AA should contact ISB immediately if there is a problem relating to the inspection documentation, or advice is required, for example, on directions for travel or housekeeping.

The AA will:

- acknowledge receipt of documentation by email;
- complete the Conflict of Interest form and return to ISB; and

⁴ An AA must complete the relevant induction and training programme in order to join an inspection team.

⁵ The term teacher should be taken to mean teacher, lecturer, trainer or youth worker.

- contact ISB immediately if there is a problem relating to attendance at the inspection, the inspection documentation, or advice is required on, for example, booking and paying for hotel accommodation (Appendix 4).
- If the AA needs to cancel his or her attendance at the inspection, s/he should contact ISB during Monday to Friday, 09:00-17:00. Phone: 028 9127 9726 or E-mail: inspectionsservices@deni.gov.uk

If this occurs at the weekend, please email or telephone the RI before the morning of the inspection

Role of an AA during an Inspection

The RI has responsibility for determining the way in which an AA is deployed during any given inspection, taking account of their experience and expertise.

The RI is also responsible for ensuring the integrity and quality of the inspection process. The AA as a member of the inspection team will be managed by the RI, who will monitor the work of the team and provide feedback, guidance and support to team members, as well as take action if any issues or performance matters arise.

Open communication between the RI/inspectors and the AA throughout the inspection is essential.

The AA will be an integral member of an inspection team and will:

- uphold at all times the ETI's core values of truth, dignity, example and service;
- gather analyse and interpret relevant evidence, take notes of meetings and discussions, and assist the RI and inspection team as required;
- observe and evaluate learning and teaching, and engage in professional discussion with the teacher in order to promote improvement (including sharing key strengths and areas for development or reflection)⁶;
- observe and evaluate aspects of the organisation's work, as agreed with the RI;
- discuss and clarify issues/findings with the RI and other inspectors, as appropriate;
- where appropriate, and following a brief from the RI, engage in professional discussion with the organisation being inspected, in relation to the context of inspection, in order to promote improvement;
- ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times; and
- be aware that the work of ETI is subject to the Freedom of Information (FoI) Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998..

⁶ If a lesson/session is evaluated as less than satisfactory, the RI should be informed as soon as possible.

If an AA takes a lead in evaluating an aspect of the work of the organisation:

- the findings will be moderated by, and agreed with, the RI and/or an inspector;
- in collaboration with the RI and/or an inspector, the AA may be asked to draft evaluative text (including key strengths and areas for improvement); and
- the AA will be accompanied by the RI or an inspector in reporting back any formal evaluations⁷.

Safeguarding

In the event of a learner making a disclosure the AA must follow the ETI's guidance on Safeguarding (appendix 2).

Engagement, interaction and exchange with an organisation's staff members

Observation is an important part of all inspection activity. Where possible, arrive at the start of a lesson, alert the staff member to your presence and, without causing disruption, introduce yourself. The staff member will have been asked in advance to have a free seat for the AA and will have set out documentation and samples of work. It is important to engage with the learners; listen to their responses, discussions and show an interest in their work. Move around the room and read the work displayed on the walls. If appropriate, talk to the staff member, but do not hold up the lesson. At the end of the lesson it is important to engage the staff member in a brief exchange highlighting strengths and any areas for improvement/reflection.

In best practice, exchange is done sensitively when it is clear that the staff member/classroom assistant is able to engage with the inspectors and, not at times, when they are totally engaged with children.

A note of the content of the exchange should be made in the Record of Inspection booklet.

Lone working

There are occasions when members of the inspection team work by themselves. In this context, AAs may find themselves in a wide range of situations: for example, they are often at venues working alone, travelling between locations, working outside normal working hours and working with children or young adults with behavioural problems.

The AAs have a responsibility to make sure that their working practices throughout inspection are in accordance with the organisation's Safety in Lone Working Guidance (Appendix 3).

The Moderation Meeting (MM)

The AA will attend and contribute to the MM by:

- contributing to the inspection team's evaluations, and overall evaluation, of the organisation's provision; and

⁷ It is at the discretion of the RI as to who leads at a formal report back.

- evaluating the inspection procedures overall.

Written records

All written records relating to an inspection that are produced by an AA must be fit for purpose and submitted within the required timescale. At the conclusion of the MM, the AA must give all notes taken during the inspection (and any documentation belonging to the organisation) to the RI. Materials may be subject to a FOL or DPA request in line with the Department of Education's FOL policy.

Post-inspection

The AA will not be required to:

- lead in the writing of the inspection report; or
- edit an inspection report.

Travel and subsistence

The AA will be entitled to claim travel and subsistence expenses, at the standard NICS rates, for the duration of the inspection. An expenses form will be sent directly to the AA from ISB prior to the inspection. The RI will check and sign the completed form before the AA returns it to ISB.

Key documents available on the ETI [website](#)⁸

Contact

Leiomi Caldwell
Inspection Services Branch
Department of Education
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43 Balloo Road
Bangor
County Down
BT19 7PR
Phone: 028 9127 9726
Fax: 028 9127 9721
E-mail: inspectionsservices@deni.gov.uk

⁸ Link to TTI would be good to have an AA link into the website for relevant documents

WHAT TO DO

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult discloses to you abuse by someone else:

- i. Allow him or her to speak without interruption, accepting what is said, but do not investigate or ask any leading questions.
- ii. You must refer information according to the policy and procedures in the organisation, and those of the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI); you must not investigate.
- iii. Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement.
- iv. Let him/her know you are glad they have shared this information with you.
- v. Advise the child or young person that you must pass the information on.

The content of a disclosure of abuse by someone else should be referred to:

- i. the head of the establishment and/or the designated member of staff for safeguarding/child protection, the MI Safeguarding, the relevant phase ACI and the ACI Safeguarding.

If you receive an allegation about any adult or about yourself:

- i. Immediately tell the head of the establishment and/or the designated member of staff for safeguarding/child protection or chair of governors/management committee, the MI Safeguarding, the relevant phase ACI and the ACI Safeguarding.
- ii. Try to ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise.

In all cases:

- i. Record the facts and report these as above.



The Education and Training Inspectorate -
Promoting Improvement

Education and Training Inspectorate

**SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN,
YOUNG PEOPLE AND
VULNERABLE ADULTS**

**A Code of Good Practice for
Members of Inspection Teams**

August 2013

YOU SHOULD

- treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect;
- provide an example of professional conduct you wish others to follow;
- ensure that there is another adult present during your inspection activities with children, young people or vulnerable adults, or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others;
- respect a child's, young person's or vulnerable adult's right to personal privacy;
- encourage those children, young people or vulnerable adults to whom you talk to tell you if they are uncomfortable with any line of questioning with them;
- remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned;
- recognise that special caution is required in moments when you are discussing sensitive issues with children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- operate within the ETI's Organisational Values and Associated Behaviours and the procedures of the establishment.

YOU SHOULD NOT

- have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate or attention-seeking behaviour;
- make suggestive/derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- jump to conclusions about others without checking facts;
- initiate 'caring' physical contact with a child, young person or vulnerable adult (eg a hug);
- exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues;
- rely on your good name or that of ETI to protect you from scrutiny of your conduct;
- believe 'it could never happen to me';
- take a chance when common sense, policy and practice suggest another more prudent approach;
- ignore the Child Protection/Safeguarding guidelines and procedures operating within the establishment.

Personal Safety in Lone Working

Risk Assessment

Reporting Inspectors should remind inspection teams of their responsibilities in relation to the health and safety of themselves and others.

Associate Assessors should exercise their responsibility by:

- having regard to the advice on health and safety provided by the organisation being inspected;
- drawing on their knowledge of health and safety practice in their own specialist area;
- being observant as they go about their business;
- having regard to good practice in dealing with people who may be anxious or disturbed; and
- identifying and, where appropriate, withdrawing from risky situations.

Likely Scenarios

Two generic situations which are likely to present themselves outlined below along with some recommendations on how to combat these risks.

Travelling By Car

- Plan your route; write down some directions before you leave, use a map and keep it handy in case you need directions.
- Let someone know where you are going, who you plan to see and some contact details, the time you are expected to arrive and return.
- Check you have enough fuel and oil before starting your journey and think what you would do if you need to change a tyre or your vehicle suffers a mechanical breakdown.
- Ensure you have a mobile telephone with you in case of emergencies and check the battery is properly charged. Do not use the mobile telephone when driving.
- Keep valuables such as bags, mobile telephones, laptop computers out of sight - they are easy pickings for a snatch thief in stop-go traffic. Keep windows closed use sunroof, air-conditioning or fan for ventilation.

- If you think you are being followed or feel threatened, breath out slowly and relax, keep driving until you come to a place such as a police, fire or ambulance station or a garage forecourt.
- If a car pulls up alongside you and the occupants try to attract your attention, ignore them and do not make eye contact.
- If you see an accident or someone tries to flag you down, ask yourself if it is genuine and if you could really help it might be best to drive on to the nearest police station.
- If you break down, pull as far off the road as you can and switch on your hazard lights. Use your mobile telephone or walk to the nearest telephone and seek assistance, emphasise to the contact that you are travelling alone. Exit your car from the passenger side, as you are less likely to become involved in a collision with another vehicle. If you stay in your car, lock the doors.
- Avoid parking your car in an isolated area, if you must do so endeavour to ensure adequate lighting. Do not leave valuables in the car.
- Consider appropriate breakdown cover.
- Do not drive when overtired, take breaks on long journeys and build this time into your overall journey time.
- Check the road conditions before travelling and in the winter, is that early morning meeting really necessary?

Off-Site Visits

For example, visits to learners at work placements; visits to detached youth workers; or observing outdoor education sessions.

- Plan the visit in advance, making clear the purpose of your visit.
- Tell someone where you are going and your expected time of return.
- Carry and display your identity card at all times.
- Always consider the risks beforehand making appropriate enquiries, those whom you are visiting can provide valuable advice on the local area.
- Avoid parking in isolated areas or 'dead ends' with inadequate lighting; ask about parking when planning your journey.
- When travelling on foot carry only necessary items, try not to carry visible valuables.
- It is recommended that you carry a fully charged mobile telephone to call for help, should a potentially threatening situation occur.

- When holding meetings that involve one-to-one with staff members or learners, ensure that proper procedures are followed, for example, leaving the door open where appropriate.

Record Keeping

- Every situation will be different and the level of sophistication in the procedure to be adapted will vary in relation to the degree of risk. There are some basic principles, which can be used in determining the level of reporting to be used.
- Whilst lone-working, it is important that an Associate Assessor contacts the Reporting Inspector to notify him/her of their whereabouts, should there be a perceived threat or risk. If deemed necessary reporting should include contact on arrival at, and departure from, offsite locations.
- Any change to details should immediately be notified to the line manager or the designated person for record keeping.

Incident Reporting

Associate Assessors must report all threats or incidents, which pose a risk to their personal safety. Local management will investigate all such events and incidents. The investigation should focus on the cause and specific characteristics of the incident in order that preventative measures can be taken to reduce the risk of reoccurrence. A formal record will be kept of the incident, which will capture some basic details such as:

- Personal details, name, work address, home address, vehicle registration number.
- Incident details, date, time place and nature of incident.
- Reporting details e.g. Police station, name of officer informed.
- Witness details, name and contact details (address or telephone number).
- Line manager details, name, grade, signature and date of receipt of incident report.

Post-Incident Support

The first level of support is likely to be from the Reporting Inspector and Managing Inspector.

Conclusion

Associate Assessors are asked to put the guidance into practice, thereby ensuring, as far as possible, that we all remain safe and secure as they go about their professional duties.

Claim for Reimbursement of Travel and Subsistence Expenses Incurred by Associate Assessors
CLAIMANT DETAILS

APPENDIX 4

Name: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms _____ Address: _____ Post Code: _____ National Insurance No: _____

Bank/Building Society: _____ Address: _____

Sort Code: _____ Account Number: _____ Building Society Roll Number: _____

Name of organisation being inspected: _____ Reason for claim: _____

Please indicate phase: Early Years / Primary / Post-primary / Special / FE and Work Based Learning / Irish Medium Education _____

Date	Time Out	Time Return	<u>Detail of Journey</u>	Miles Claimed (Note 1)	Passenger Name	Passenger Miles	Subsistence Day/Overnight (Notes 2 & 3)
Totals							

SUMMARY OF CLAIM

Allowance Claimed	Number	@ Rate	Total
Mileage (see Note 1)		45p/mile	
Passenger Miles		5p/mile	
Day Subsistence (see Note 2)		£4.25	
Day Subsistence (see Note 2)		£9.30	
Night Subsistence (see Note 3)	-	-	-
• Bed and Breakfast (attach receipts)		Up to £80.00	
• Lunch and Dinner		£18.30	
• Overnight with Friend		£25.00	
• Personal Expenses		£5.00	
Residential Allowance (see Note 4)		£5.00	
Incidental Expenses (attach receipts) (see Note 5)			
Total Amount Claimed			

Has substitute cover been claimed?

Yes No

If applicable, are all relevant receipts attached?

Yes No

Please complete the Declaration overleaf and pass this form to the Reporting Inspector for signature.

Declaration

I declare that:

I made the journeys detailed in this claim and all expenses have been actually and necessarily incurred by me.

I hold a valid driving licence and my motor insurance policy covers the vehicle on official business and my vehicle is maintained in a roadworthy condition.

Signed: Date:

		Notes	
1.	Mileage Allowance Rates		45p/mile
	Passenger mileage allowance (first passenger)		5p/mile
	Additional passengers		5p/mile
2.	Day Subsistence Allowance (<i>not payable when a meal is provided</i>)		
	When away for over 5 hours		£4.25
	When away for over 10 hours		£9.30

Certification

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the facts given in this claim are correct and that the expenses were actually and necessarily incurred.

Signed: (Reporting Inspector)

Date:

Checked and Authorised: (Inspection Services Branch)

Date:

Signed: (Paul McAlister, Assistant Chief Inspector)

Date:

This form should be returned by the Reporting Inspector to Miss Jacqui Patterson, Inspection Services Branch, DE (telephone 028 9127 9621 for queries) at the end of the inspection period

- 3.a. Night Subsistence Allowance for a 24 hour period when staying in a Hotel
 - Actual **receipted** Bed and Breakfast Cost up to a maximum limit of £80.00 plus
 - Amount to cover cost of lunch and dinner £18.30 plus
 - Personal Expenses Allowance when away for over 24 hours £5.00
- b. Night Subsistence Allowance for a 24 hour period when staying with a friend or relative £25.00 plus
- 4. Residential Allowance – where all expenses are met directly by DE £5.00
- 5. Incidental Expenses
 - eg Car Park fees, Postage, Photocopying – must be supported by receipts