

Classroom management observation tool

Setting behaviour expectations for completing learning tasks

February 2025

Effective classroom management creates safe and supportive learning environments for all students. This practice resource is part of a suite of [observation tools](#) that complement the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO)'s [foundational classroom management resources](#). These observation tools are designed for experienced teachers and school leaders to use with AERO's practice guide, [Supporting a Colleague with Refining their Classroom Management Practice](#).

With your colleague, you can use this tool to identify specific aspects of the practice they demonstrate, take notes on what you observe and use these to help identify strengths and areas for refinement.

Before the observation

It's important you take time before an observation to prepare well. This is essential to clarify objectives and gather relevant, accurate and useful information to support your colleague in identifying strengths and refining their practice. Preparation will also help you become familiar with this tool's format and content so it's easier to use during the observation.

Before using this tool:

Read AERO's practice guide, [Supporting a Colleague with Refining their Classroom Management Practice](#).

Follow step 1 – Build and maintain a collaborative relationship.

Follow step 2 – Decide on a specific practice or skill to observe and prepare for the observation.

Before observing:

Read AERO's [Setting Behaviour Expectations for Completing Learning Tasks](#) practice guide to familiarise yourself with the steps.

Read the information in this observation tool.

Discuss with your colleague what will be observed, how long the observation will be and how evidence will be collected.

During the observation

Observe your colleague and tick the boxes for any actions observed. To support the feedback discussion, objectively record what your colleague says and does at key moments, as well as how students respond.

1. The teacher gains all students' attention

The teacher:	Observation notes
<p><u>gains all students' attention</u> by using a countdown, call and response, or visual cue or gesture</p>	
<p><u>deliberately pauses</u></p>	
<p><u>scans</u></p>	
<p><u>acknowledges</u> students meeting behaviour expectations and <u>praises</u> students exceeding behaviour expectations</p>	
<p><u>responds to disengaged and disruptive behaviours:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> using <u>non-verbal corrections</u> using verbal corrections (if required) giving a choice to correct their behaviour or receive a consequence (if required) implementing the consequence (if required), ensuring it is related to and correcting the behaviour <u>acknowledging</u> students when they correct their behaviour. 	

2. The teacher clearly communicates the behaviour expectations for the learning task

The teacher:	Observation notes
<p><u>clearly communicates</u> by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> using as few words as possible breaking instructions down into a small number of manageable, actionable, sequential steps explaining the behaviour expectations for the learning task, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> where students should be (if required) how they should move to get there (if required) what they should be doing and how they should be working (individually, pairs, group or whole class) how they are to interact with each other, if relevant, and how they should be speaking and listening to and considering what others are saying how long they have how they should <u>gain teacher attention</u> to request assistance, ask a question or share important information. 	
<p><u>deliberately pauses</u></p>	
<p><u>scans</u> to ensure students understand and are following instructions.</p>	

3. The teacher models and practises the behaviour expectations

The teacher:	Observation notes
demonstrates what the expected behaviours look and sound like	
checks for understanding	
corrects misunderstandings	
provides opportunities for students to practise demonstrating the expected behaviours	
<p><u>acknowledges</u> students meeting behaviour expectations and <u>praises</u> students exceeding behaviour expectations specific to them</p>	
<p><u>responds to disengaged and disruptive behaviours</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> using <u>non-verbal corrections</u> using verbal corrections (if required) giving a choice to correct their behaviour or receive a consequence (if required) implementing the consequence (if required), ensuring it is related to and correcting the behaviour <u>acknowledging</u> students when they correct their behaviour. 	

4. The teacher starts the learning task

The teacher:	Observation notes
<p>prompts students to start learning tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> keeping instructions simple and brief using the same prompt every time, such as the verbal cue 'You may start'. 	

5. The teacher monitors and reinforces the behaviour expectations

The teacher:	Observation notes
<p>positions themself to see all students</p>	
<p><u>deliberately pauses</u> in their strategic position</p>	
<p><u>scans</u></p>	
<p><u>circulates</u> the classroom to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>acknowledge</u> students meeting behaviour expectations <u>praise</u> students exceeding behaviour expectations specific to them support students requiring clarification of an instruction or extra assistance <u>respond to disengaged and disruptive behaviours</u>, <u>acknowledging</u> students when they correct their behaviour. 	

After the observation

Follow step 3 – Conduct a feedback session in our practice guide, [Supporting a Colleague with Refining their Classroom Management Practice](#).

Before the feedback session, you may want to document:

What did they do well that you can praise? What have they refined since your previous feedback session (if relevant)?

Before or during the feedback session, you may want to document:

What is their next priority to focus on? Is it a single step of a practice, a specific skill or an element of a skill? Within the practice step or skill, what specifically needs refinement? What evidence is there to support this?

During the feedback session:

Model for your colleague, then support them to plan and rehearse the practice step, skill or skill element they will focus on refining. You may want to document:

When will they next use the refined skill or step of a classroom management practice?

What key elements of the refined skill or step will they make sure they include?

How will they know if they've been successful in refining their practice?

When is a suitable time to re-observe the refined step or skill?