

MCAEL Peer Review Support Questions/Strategies

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This document is designed to be used in collaboration with the Peer Review Chart. These documents were created to assist program staff in conducting a peer evaluation of another program and are based on the TESOL Standards.

The goal of this process is to (1) have an opportunity to receive constructive feedback from another program (2) learn about another program's processes (3) reflect on how the program is succeeding and how it could potentially improve.

The process for using this Peer Review Tool has been the following: (1) Set up a meeting at each program. If possible, visit a program site for classes. (2) Plan to meet with at least one staff member and then one instructor. If possible, talk to a student(s). (3) Anticipated time: 2-4 hours (approx.)(4) Use the chart to ask broad questions and use this document for more specific questions.

Support Questions/Strategies

Program Structure: Standard 1

1. Goals

- Review and talk about mission statement of organization.
- Go beyond "teaching English" (i.e. for what purpose is the program offering English classes)?

2. Intensity and Duration

- Discuss choices made by program and rationale
- Review publicity materials for learners/for referrals to the program by other programs.

3. Space/Transportation

- Visit the rooms where instruction is offered. Are the sizes of seats appropriate for adults? Space to move around? Can program move seats/tables?
- Anything the program would want to change if could?
- How has the program identified how students arrive at their location (observation, forms etc.)?
- If this has been done via a form, review forms.

4. Daily Operations

- Look at an instructor contact sheet/a class roster.
- Look at an attendance sheet for two weeks of classes.
- Review the database for maintaining data on attendance. Discuss ease of use – is it onsite or is everything done on paper and then moved to a computer.
- Discuss communications between staff and instructors – method (email, in person, how often etc.)
- Look at how technology is used/could be used on the administrative side.

5. Learner/Instructor ratio.
- Does the program have teaching assistants?
 - Is there a lead teacher to support instructors?
 - What happens if an instructor is sick and cannot come?

Learner Recruitment and Intake: Standard 4

1. Population

- How did the program determine a need for this population?
- Is the program serving other anticipated/unanticipated populations? If so, how has that occurred and has it altered how the program conducts recruitment and intake during the life of the program?

2. Recruitment

- Review publicity materials including email announcements, posters etc.
- Discuss how and where the program publicizes (i.e. how do learners hear about program?)
- Look at MCAEL student/class data from previous year/session.

3. Intake/Orientation

- Is this done on a specific registration day or on first day of class? Please describe registration.
- Is it part of an orientation? Please note if different from registration and describe process.
- When is the orientation done (first week of class etc.)?
- How does the program identify goals and expectations with the learners? Are the goals more specific than – I want to practice speaking/writing? How is this information shared with instructors?

4. Referrals

- Please note where the program refers individuals for ESOL services / what type/levels
- Please note how the referrals occur/process.

Employment Conditions, Professional Development and Evaluations: Standards 7 and 8

1. Qualifications

- Review job application
- Review some instructors resumes for teaching experience/ESOL experience, ESOL training
- Note if there are any organizational structures in place (i.e. use of AmeriCorps volunteers, cap on instructor pay, percent of volunteers required vs. paid)
- Discuss compensation of instructors
- Cross-cultural experience/training

2. Instructors and Orientation/Support

- Describe roles of staff
- Describe expectations of instructors
- Review printed materials that are used to orient instructors/staff
- Note timing/dates of group meetings (i.e. once each fall, at the start of the session etc.)

3. Resources

- Can instructors use tools in the room? – white boards, technology etc.
- Observe instructor areas – Library? Lounge? Desks?

4. Professional Development

- Requiring trainings internally each session and/or referral of staff/instructors for training externally. (not orientation – skills focus on ESOL)?
- Identify the specific internal and external training completed by each instructor.
- Encouraged/Supported financially to join professional organizations?
- Organization offers training in assessment tool being used (i.e. CASAS, BEST)
- How has this process of professional development been helpful?

5. Evaluation

- Review forms used for staff and instructors
- Review a sample(s) of completed surveys that are used to evaluate teachers.
- Peer review options?

Instruction and Curriculum: Standards 2 and 3

1. Curriculum

- If the curriculum is a series, please note all level books used
- Review curriculum materials.
- Review support materials
- Are they appropriate for adult learners?
- Are the materials up to date?
- How did the program decide on these materials?

2. Language Supports

- Realia? What real life materials do instructors use in class?
- How do the tools chosen support the specific population the program works with?
- How is the curriculum and instruction immediately applicable to the lives of learners? (i.e. how does the program know it is?)
- Does staff observe casually whether students are working in pairs or groups vs. the instructor always being the focus?

2. Learner Goals

- Review forms used whether for written purposes or oral
- Once goals identified, what happens? Shared with instructors?
- How/Do learner goals affect the curriculum each session?
- How does the program balance time with amount of materials and supports: i.e. choose chapters/topics?
- Does the program offer guest speakers, community trips. Who? Where?

3. Active learning

- Are there printed materials or instructions to orient instructors to this approach?

Assessment/Transitions: Standards 5 and 6

1. Placement

- What test does the program use for placement?
- How many skills does the test provide guidance on?
- Can learners place themselves?
- If a student continues, do they take the test again?
- Review test materials

2. Language gains

- What type of assessment/test is used?
- How is it working for the program?
- Are the learners provided with their scores afterwards? Are the instructors?
- What is the process to track learner gains? How often does this happen?

3. Indicators/Outcomes program-wide

- How does the program know that learners are achieving their goals (short-term/long-term)
- What are the outcomes expected for the program (x% complete level?).
- How are those outcomes measured?

4. Indicators Class

- Do instructors use can do lists each class?
- Do they use other strategies to help the learners see they are making progress? (notecards etc.)
- Are their printed guidelines about how to achieve this goal?

5. Transitions

- How long are individuals in the program on average?
- Do learners come back each session or skip sessions?
- Are learners given written referrals to another program? Do they go on a field trip to another program?

Other Questions:

- Technology?
- Wish Lists?
- Other: _____