

# Student learning rounds

How can leaders, teachers and students in a Local Partnership share responsibility for accelerating improvement in teaching and learning?

In Student learning rounds, students collaborate with leaders and teachers to identify 'Points of Practice'. Student teams conduct observations of classroom practice and contribute towards structures for improvement across the Partnership.

## Why have Student learning rounds?

Leaders and teachers acknowledge students' changing needs and involve them in deciding the direction of the curriculum.

*(TfEL – 2.3 Negotiate learning)*

Students are supported to build rich conceptual knowledge and mastery of complex skills.

*(TfEL – 3.2 Foster deep understanding and skilful action)*

Through Student learning rounds, students can generate data to inform Partnership improvement plans.

### TfEL elements made visible through Student learning rounds

Domain 2 Create safe conditions for rigorous learning	Domain 3 Develop expert learners	Domain 4 Personalise and connect learning
2.1 develop democratic relationships	3.1 teach students how to learn	4.1 build on learners' understandings
2.2 build a community of learners	<b>3.2 foster deep understanding and skilful action</b>	4.2 connect learning to students' lives and aspirations
<b>2.3 negotiate learning</b>	3.3 explore the construction of knowledge	4.3 apply and assess learning in authentic contexts
2.4 challenge students to achieve high standards with appropriate support	3.4 promote dialogue as a means of learning	4.4 communicate learning in multiple modes



*Until I got involved, I had no idea what teachers do, or how much thinking and planning it takes to get it right.*

Year 10 student, TfEL PILOT host school

*Learning rounds have been valuable for leaders. It is a logical, and exciting, next step to adapt the process to get students' insights on effective practice.*

Leader, TfEL PILOT host school

# Leader guide: Student learning rounds

■ Develop understanding ■ Into practice ■ Reflection ■ Where to next?

Process	Resource tools—a way in	Food for thought
1 As Partnership site leaders, develop your understanding of 'Student learning rounds' as a vehicle for improvement.	1   Student learning rounds overview—a guide for leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What's your prior experience of learning rounds?</li> <li>• Why adapt the process to involve students?</li> <li>• What could the procedure be?</li> </ul>
2 In each site, introduce Student learning rounds to staff and students. Negotiate with students to form teams of four and develop protocols.	2   Student learning rounds: Teams and protocols Factors to consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will you ensure wide representation in teams, and create a climate of non-judgement for teachers and students?</li> </ul>
3 At Partnership level, involve leaders, teachers and students in identifying a Point of Practice (PoP).	3   Student learning rounds: Point of Practice (PoP) Issues of who, how and what	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will Partnership/site priorities inform an actionable PoP?</li> <li>• How will students' views influence the decision?</li> </ul>
4 Negotiate where and how student teams will conduct observations and record their findings.	4   Student learning rounds: Observation of practice—a guide for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will teachers volunteer to have student teams in as observers?</li> <li>• How will you support students to use precise, non-evaluative language?</li> </ul>
5 Allocate time and be on hand as student teams debrief, analyse their observations and make predictions.	5   Student learning rounds: Observation debrief—a guide for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can you challenge students to find patterns in their observations?</li> <li>• Might students' predictions about what was learnt raise surprises?</li> </ul>
6 As Partnership site leaders, collaborate with students to share findings and discuss implications for practice.	6   Student learning rounds: Partnership sharing Template for forward planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What will be the impact of students' involvement?</li> <li>• How and with whom should the findings be shared?</li> </ul>
<b>REFLECTION</b> Support the student teams to review their learning, and reflect on Student learning rounds as a vehicle for improvement.		Prompts for students' reflection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What new skills did we develop?</li> <li>• What did we learn from working with leaders?</li> <li>• How did our work make a difference for the Partnership?</li> </ul>

## Where to next?

Structure a process (eg *TfEL Framework guide*, tan panels: Carousel brainstorm, p34) where leaders and students consider building on from the Student learning rounds:

- How can you and the student teams bring ALL students in at site level, for findings to be used by teachers and students to inform practice? What supports will they need?
- What have you learned from this Student learning rounds process, and what adaptations will you make next time?
- Could students' findings inform Local Partnership professional learning using the *TfEL Framework*?

# Resources



1 | Student learning rounds overview—a guide for leaders

2 | Student learning rounds: Teams and protocols

Factors to consider

3 | Student learning rounds: Point of Practice (PoP)

Issues of who, how and what

4 | Student learning rounds: Observation of practice—a guide for students

5 | Student learning rounds: Observation debrief—a guide for students

6 | Student learning rounds: Partnership sharing

Template for forward planning

## RESOURCE 1

# Student learning rounds overview

## A GUIDE FOR LEADERS

Consider adapting the following Student learning rounds process, to support your Partnership context, priorities and student learning needs. Above all, consult with students.

### In each site, identify teams of students

Consult with students

Aim for three diverse site teams – 4 students in each team. Team protocols must ensure clear direction and safe conditions for rigorous discussion.

**Adaptation:** For your Partnership, which might you identify first – student teams or Point of Practice (PoP)?

### Identify a Point of Practice

Consult with students

The PoP could come from an existing Partnership focus, or be developed from Partnership/site plans. Consider how leaders, teachers and students will be involved in the decision.

A Point of Practice:

- focuses on the learning core
- is directly observable

- is actionable, within the Partnership's control, and can be improved in real time
- connects to a broader strategy of improvement – site, partnership, system
- is high-leverage, and if acted upon, would make a significant difference to student learning.

**Adaptation:** Could you use the *TfEL Framework guide* by referencing a Partnership priority against a TfEL element, and developing a PoP from the Teacher actions and Practice check in that element?

### Plan an observation day in each site

Consult with students

**OBSERVATION OF PRACTICE WITH VOLUNTEER TEACHERS** (Team rotation – 3 x 20 minute sessions per team, with 5 minute breaks)

- In each site, three teachers volunteer to have student teams observe in their teaching/learning spaces.
- The three student teams work in a rotation through the three teaching/learning spaces.
- The observation focus is descriptive; specific; about the learning core; and related to the PoP.

**Adaptation:** Would teams conduct observations in their own site, or might they observe in other Partnership sites?

**OBSERVATION DEBRIEF** (60 minutes)

This is a student-driven process, where the three student teams come together. They may choose to ask a site leader to advise and support their discussion.

Student teams:

- describe exactly what they saw
- analyse the evidence, eg 'Can the data be grouped into patterns?'
- make predictions about the learning, eg 'If you were a student in this class and did everything you were asked to do, what would you know and be able to do?'

**Adaptation:** Might students invite an adult to join them as an equal team member in observations and debrief?

### Partnership sharing

Consult with students

Site leaders and student teams meet to review findings. Each team nominates a representative to accompany the leader to a Partnership meeting.

How will the outcomes be shared with, and actioned by, staff and students across Partnership sites?

Adapted from Teitel L (2009) 'Improving Teaching and Learning through Instructional Rounds', *Harvard Education Letter*, 25 (3), pp1–2



## RESOURCE 2

# Student learning rounds

## Teams and protocols

### Identifying a team

- Each student team needs four members.
- In your school, you'll need three teams.
- They will focus on a Point of Practice and conduct observations of classroom practice.

#### How will you ensure diversity? Why?

- Different ages and year levels?
- Gender balance?
- Students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds?
- Different learning strengths or interests?
- Curriculum focus – same or varied, and for what purpose?
- Students' varied experience with observations and feedback (eg online TfEL Compass)?

#### Who will identify a team? Why?

- Leaders?
- Students?
- Teachers?
- Leaders, students and teachers together?

### Protocols

- Student learning rounds are not an evaluation, judgement or assessment of teachers or schools.
- They are looking for action related to a Point of Practice.
- Processes require safe conditions for rigorous discussion.

#### How will teams develop purpose and rigour?

- Understand the process
- Be clear on the language to be used
- Agree on ways for all to have an equal voice
- Seek and value each other's strengths
- Negotiate times with adult supporters
- Ask advice to build new skills
- Collaborate in decision making

#### New challenges

- Would all teams be site teams, or could teams include students from different sites?
- Could teams have primary and secondary students working together for your Partnership?

## RESOURCE 3

# Student learning rounds

## Point of Practice (PoP)

A Point of Practice is a learning point that the Local Partnership wants to address in order to improve teaching and learning.

### Who identifies a PoP?

- Would it be a group of leaders, teachers and students?
- When might it not be useful to have such a group involved?
- Could students select from a list of already identified points?
- If the PoP is decided by a few, is it compelling to everyone and understood by all?

### How will a PoP be identified?

- Does the Partnership already have a shared point on which to focus, or will a PoP be developed from Partnership priorities?
- Could it be one main Partnership teaching/learning focus, within which each site frames its own PoP?
- Could it come from a brainstorm of unresolved questions or issues?
- Could it focus on a TfEL element?

### What is your Point of Practice?

Here are some examples:

- Does the task encourage students to seek, receive and use feedback in learning?
- Does the learning activity increase the ratio of student to teacher talk?
- Does the lesson include structured dialogue opportunities for all students?
- Is 'wait time' incorporated for students to think and respond?
- Does the learning activity encourage making mistakes as being positive for learning?
- Are the learning intention and success criteria clear to all students?
- Does the learning activity include inquiry processes?

**Is your PoP suitable? Test it against the following criteria.**

#### A Point of Practice:

- focuses on what students are actually doing, rather than what they are being asked to do
- states something that can be directly observed, rather than an analysis of data
- must be actionable by the school/Partnership within a realistic timeframe
- involves teachers, students and content
- has a common goal, identified across the school/Partnership, that has buy-in from all
- would make a significant difference to student learning if acted upon



## RESOURCE 4

# Student learning rounds

## Observation of practice

### A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

At your site, three teachers volunteer to have your student teams as observers in their teaching/learning spaces.

Three student teams will conduct learning rounds; the teams will rotate through the three spaces, with a 20 minute observation in each space.

Observation data is descriptive, not evaluative; specific; about the learning core; and related to the Point of Practice (PoP).

## Recording observations

As a team, decide how you will each take notes. This proforma is a guide.

Point of Practice (PoP) observation proforma	
<b>What is the PoP?</b>	<i>Example: Does the learning activity increase the ratio of student to teacher talk?</i>
<b>Where is the PoP happening?</b>	<i>Example: In year levels</i>
<b>Where is this observation?</b>	<i>Example: Year 7 class</i>
<b>What are you observing?</b>	<i>Example: Maths learning session</i>
<b>What are you looking for that is related to the PoP?</b>	<i>Example:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How often the teacher talks to students and what about</li> <li>• How often the students talk to the teacher and what about</li> <li>• How often the students talk to each other and what about</li> </ul>
<b>What do you see and hear that is related to the PoP?</b> Be descriptive and detailed. What is happening? What are people doing and saying? <b>Possible sentence starters:</b> <i>I noticed that...</i> <i>Students/teachers did...</i> <i>I observed...</i> <i>I saw...when...</i>	<i>Example:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students working in groups, discussing</li> <li>• Students drawing maps and diagrams</li> <li>• Teacher walking around asking questions</li> </ul>



## RESOURCE 5

# Student learning rounds

## Observation debrief

### A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

The three teams from your school come together for 60 minutes.

This is a student-driven process to review your observation notes. Nominate one or two

student facilitators to keep the process running smoothly.

You may choose to ask your site leader to advise and support your discussion process.

### Share observations

In your own team of four, use a sharing process (*TfEL Framework guide*, tan panels: 'Think, Pair, Share', p33).

#### THINK

- Individually, use sticky notes to write what you saw and heard, related to the Point of Practice (PoP). Discard any observations not based on the PoP.
- Think about your descriptions. Do they have enough detail?

#### PAIR UP

- Take turns sharing your sticky notes. Remember that you are discussing what you saw and heard, not your reactions to what you saw or your judgements about what you saw or heard.
- What was similar/different? Can you group the sticky notes under headings?

#### SHARE

- As pairs, place your groupings on a table.
- Use a process (*TfEL Framework guide*, tan panels: Gallery walk, p66) to view other students' findings.

### Analyse observations

What was similar? What was different? Are there patterns emerging across teams from different times of observation? How does this relate to the PoP?

Mix your teams up and use a process (eg *TfEL Framework guide*, tan panels: Buzz groups, p59) to share what you observed in the different teaching/learning spaces.

### Make predictions

Look back over your detailed observations and the analysis you made from each class. If you were a student in this class and had done everything you were asked to do, what would you have learned? What would you know and be able to do? How does this relate to the PoP?

You could show your ideas in a visual way (eg *TfEL Framework guide*, tan panels: Mind maps, p65).

From your group discussions, think about the big ideas and issues for sharing with the Partnership. Keep your thinking to use with Resource 6: *Student learning rounds—Partnership sharing*.



## RESOURCE 6

# Student learning rounds

## Partnership sharing

As site leaders, organise a Partnership meeting with nominated student team representatives. Adapt this session according to the course you took in the Student learning rounds process.

- Revisit your Point/s of Practice. Are the students' findings supporting the intent? Might student descriptions, analyses and predictions differ from those of leaders or teachers? What might the Partnership gain from students' perspectives?
- Each site leader, with her/his student representatives, will present their findings from observation debriefs.
- As a Partnership group, determine the key findings across sites. Discuss how to collate, what to share with all students and staff in sites, and where to develop further.

### Point of Practice

#### Key findings from Student learning rounds teams

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#### Big ideas or issues

#### Does the Point of Practice inform the Partnership plan?

#### Suggestions for further development