

# How to use the Quality Standard for: *Teaching, Learning and Assessment*

## Stage 1: Understanding what *outstanding difference* looks like

### Introduction

'Outstanding' is not short for 'outstanding teaching', but 'outstanding difference made to learning'. Teachers are free to choose whatever teaching strategies they wish, as long as learners are different (in a good way) by:

- the end of the learning session,
- key points in their programme of study, and
- by the time they leave.

The stages needed to make this happen are:

1. to agree what 'outstanding difference made to learning' looks like
2. to plan effective strategies to produce this difference, and
3. to review the chosen strategies to check they had the desired effect.

Too often, however, teachers simply set out to do 'stuff' (learning activities) without any careful consideration of how learners will be different as a result of the doing. By working through this short workbook on how to use the Quality Standard for teaching, learning and assessment teachers will learn the essential fundamentals of how to plan and deliver outstanding learning experiences that will transform the lives of their learners, and make their own lives easier as a result.

OUTSTANDING

is *not* short for  
'outstanding  
teaching'

## Content of workbook 1

Stage 1: Understanding what <i>outstanding difference</i> looks like	Page
<b>Part A: Writing vocational learning outcomes</b>	2
An outstanding lesson:	2
Task 1: Lesson plan review	3
Task 2: Learning objective review – part 1	4
Task 3: Learning objective review – part 2	5
Task 4: Learning objective review – part 3	6
<b>Part B: Writing an expert-learner learning outcome</b>	6
Components of a learning outcome	6
Three types of learning outcome	7
Task 5: Integrating creativity and problem solving	7
<b>Part C: Expert/independent learning</b>	8
Task 6: Integrating expert/independent learning outcomes	8
Quality Standard for teaching, learning and assessment – extract	9

## Stage 1: Understanding what *outstanding difference* looks like

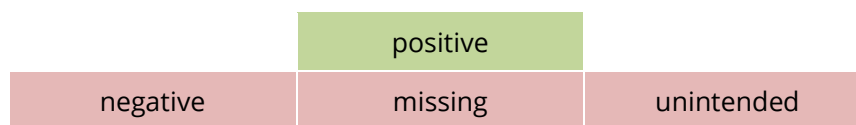
### Part A: Writing vocational learning outcomes

#### The issue

At its worst, the process of judging teachers' effectiveness can be bruising and demotivating, and fail to add any positive value to teachers, learners or their organisation. At the heart of this problem are observers who evaluate teaching effectiveness by considering what the teachers and learners *do* in the lesson. This often leads to observers telling teachers that they should *do things* in a different way – in other words, to teach how they would teach. In turn, this leads teachers to try to second guess what an observer wants to see them *doing*.

#### The solution

A lesson is not said to be outstanding because of what teachers do, but because of the difference they make to learners – the impact on learning. So the role of the observer should be to help teachers carefully evaluate the *difference* their chosen strategies make to learning, whether this impact be:



In order to be able to do this effectively, all parties need to agree on what this impact looks like. This is reasonably complex, so let's start with a brief overview.

#### An outstanding lesson\*:

- is **unmissable**
- **takes all learners from A to B**; from their individual starting points to appropriately individual and **challenging** end points
- develops all learners' skills to **learn independently**
- inspires learners to want to **learn between lessons**.

While these are essential high-level impact statements, they are not sufficient to help teachers plan, deliver and review impactful lessons. So what is it that teachers need to get right in order to be able to achieve the four statements above?

Teachers need to be proactive, to:

- make learners **curious** – engaging them in learning and its discoveries
- develop a sustainable, high-performing **social community** within each class
- create an environment in which **'mistakes' are treated as valuable** learning experiences
- ensure learners experience and contextualise their learning, so **creating learning sustainability through visual, audio and physical 'anchors'** into the learning
- use evidence-based acknowledgement of learners' endeavours as they **build learners' reflective skills** and learners' own understanding of how they are changing as a result of the learning
- coach learners to **understand their learning successes** and their next set of challenges, and to ensure learners **look forward** to their onward journey.

\* This is an extract from the full Quality Standard for TLA, available from [www.ccqi.org.uk/redresources](http://www.ccqi.org.uk/redresources). Password: red4686

## Task 1: Lesson plan review

Lay out five lesson plans and ask the following questions.

- How many learning objectives (LOs) are there in the five lesson plans?
- How many of these objectives focus on what learners will *do* by the end of the lesson?
- How many focus on how learners will be *different* as a result of what they will do?
  - Of these, how many are untestable, e.g. 'Learners will *understand/know/recognise* XYZ'?

Lesson plans	1	2	3	4	5	Totals
No. of learning objectives						
No. focused on what learners will do						
No. focused on how learners will be different						
No. untestable (e.g. over-relying on <i>understand</i> as the main objective)						

## Evaluation

While this is in no way a presumption, it is not uncommon for some teachers:

- to not plan any LOs, simply relying on a list of activities for learners to complete
- to write mostly untestable LOs, such as: 'learners will *understand/know/recognise* XYZ'
- to find virtually all of their LOs are focused on what learners will do; for instance, 'By the end of the lesson, learners will have done XYZ'
- to not recognise or have ever considered the disparity between 'doing' and 'difference' LOs.

Compare the following:

### Version 1: focused on *doing* 'stuff'

By the end of the lesson, learners will:

- carry out mean, median, mode and range average calculations.

Here, the teacher may well be happy if s/he sees learners have *done* the calculations. However, simply *doing* activities in no way guarantees that learners will be different as a result; for instance: can now use the skill fluently in a range of situations?

### Version 2: *untestable*

By the end of the lesson, learners will:

- *understand* how to use mean, median, mode and range average calculations.

All too often, teachers who use the word 'understand' as the main learning outcome are happy if at the end of the lesson learners answer 'yes' when asked if *they understand*. One step up from this are the teachers who test whether the learners can *remember* what they've been told. For instance, in the above scenario, the teacher might test the understanding by asking learners to give

## A GOOD TIP

A good tip for avoiding writing '*understand*' in an LO is to replace it with: '*hear what I have to say about*'. When you re-read the LO with this substitution, it becomes immediately clear what the issues are.

the definitions for each of the average calculations. However, this emphasis on *recall* is a very low-level impact to aim for and is weak (easily forgettable) learning.

### Version 3: focused on *impact*

By the end of the lesson, learners will:

- demonstrate their understanding of the different types of averages (mean, median, mode and range) by selecting the most informative calculation for a variety of given scenarios, completing the calculations accurately, and using evidence from each scenario to support the choices they make.

When learning outcomes are written correctly, the 'difference made to learning' will be explicit and be a guiding influence on the teaching and assessment strategies required to achieve them.

### Task 2: Learning objective review – part 1

The following LOs are all taken from real Media lesson plans. *They are **not** examples of good practice.* Your task is to categorise them as either:

- doing 'stuff'
- untestable, or
- impact focused.

	Course	Learning outcome <b>By the end of the lesson, learners will:</b>	Category?
1	<b>Media (Radio) level 3, year 2</b>	'recognise the nature of, and demand implicit in, the [project] brief.'	
2	<b>Media level 2</b>	'be in a position to be writing a first draft [of press release] with standfirst and introductory paragraph, as well as planning documentation saved in preproduction folder.'	
3	<b>Media (TV and film) level 3, year 1</b>	'know about how different advertisements highlight the characteristics of products.'	
4	<b>Media (TV and film) level 3, year 2</b>	'have developed their video production idea through further research and planning.'	
5	<b>Media (TV and film) level 3, year 2</b>	'have presented and explained their video proposal idea with clarity and an engaging style. As a result of subsequent group critiques, learners' use of media terms and the ability to form opinions using evidence will have improved significantly, enabling them to reflect effectively in writing on how their own work will now develop.'	

### Task 3: Learning objective review – part 2

Rewrite any of the outcomes that you categorised as ‘doing stuff’ or ‘untestable’ so that they are focused on ‘difference made’.

	Original learning outcome <b>By the end of the lesson, learners will:</b>	New, impact-focused learning outcome <b>By the end of the lesson, learners will:</b>
1	‘recognise the nature of, and demand implicit in, the <i>[project]</i> brief.’	
2	‘be in a position to be writing a first draft <i>[of press release]</i> with standfirst and introductory paragraph, as well as planning documentation saved in preproduction folder.’	
3	‘know about how different advertisements highlight the characteristics of products.’	
4	‘have developed their video production idea through further research and planning.’	
5	‘have presented and explained their video proposal idea with clarity and an engaging style. As a result of subsequent group critiques, learners’ use of media terms and the ability to form opinions using evidence will have improved significantly, enabling them to reflect effectively in writing on how their own work will now develop.’	

[Review your answers here: <http://ccqi.org.uk/PzR1S.>]

### Task 4: Learning objective review – part 3

Consider the five of your own lesson plans reviewed in task 1. Choose one of the lessons and review/rewrite any learning outcomes that you would now categorise as overly focused on ‘doing stuff’ or ‘untestable’.

Now read over your planned learning strategies and consider how, if needed, these might be developed to secure the intended learning impact for *all* learners. Rewrite your lesson plan as required.

(You may wish to consider the ideal content of a lesson plan as discussed in the ‘Rubric for an outstanding lesson plan’, available from [www.ccqi.org.uk/redresources](http://www.ccqi.org.uk/redresources).)

### Part B: Writing an expert-learner learning outcome

Learning outcomes should always be written first when designing a new learning experience. As described above, when learning outcomes show clearly how you intend learners to be different by the end of the lesson, they heavily (and creatively) influence the teaching strategies you design to achieve them, and the assessment strategies you need to assure yourself that you have achieved your aim. However, it should be stressed that precise learning outcomes do not have to produce *uniformity* of learning. Many of the most powerful learning outcomes are about building the expert/independent learning skills learners need to be individuals; to be unique.

Consider the following learning outcome taken from the Centre for Creative Quality Improvement’s (CCQI) Quality Standard for Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) [See Appendix 1 for the full standard]:

#### 3.1 Expert/independent learning

##### 3.1.3 Creativity and problem solving

Gold standard intended impact:

*Learners use a range of skills to solve problems creatively, making enlightened connections between new and existing knowledge.*

Few would doubt that this is an essential skill all learners should have, yet very, very few teachers write such an outcome in their lesson plans. But why?

While there are many possible reasons, one explanation might be that teachers become fixated with covering syllabus content within guided learning hours (contact) time, forgetting that if they develop learners’ independent learning skills, learning can happen more effectively *between* lessons – outside of contact time.

### Components of a learning outcome

Let us consider learning outcomes in a little more detail. There are two headings we need to look at:

- Broad aspirations (aims, goals)
- Learning outcomes

#### Broad aspirations (*aims, goals*)

Definition: A statement that describes in broad terms what the learner will gain from the lesson

Example: Learners will gain an appreciation of how **writing for different audiences changes their writing style.**

Its job is to set the overall context of the learning – if you like, a big arrow pointing in a particular direction. It's in the second heading though, that things begin to get interesting.

### Learning outcomes

Definition: A specific statement that sets out how learners will be different as a result of the lesson.

We call this: 'the walk across the carpet'. They're at one side at the beginning of the lesson, and we want them to be at the other side of the carpet by the end of the lesson. The learning outcomes define what 'the other side of the carpet' looks like.

There are three components to a learning outcome:

an	<b>Label</b>	to set the context for the outcome
a	<b>Verb</b>	to show what the learner should do, and
an	<b>Outcome</b>	that sets out how learners should be different by the end of the lesson.

Let's have a look at this colour coding in action.

#### Example 1

Learners will **list three characteristics** that make the **writing style for an article** published in the BBC's Top Gear magazine different to that found on the government's DVLA website.

#### Example 2

Learners will use their understanding of the distinctive **characteristics of the Top Gear magazine writing style** to **develop** the **content for a short training programme** for level-2 English learners on how to write for specialist niche magazines.

### Three types of learning outcome

There's one additional element to discuss about writing learning outcomes – the type:

- **Brain** – *Brain power needs to be enhanced* (cognitive; knowing)
- **Body** – *Physical skills need to improve* (psychomotor; doing)
- **Mind** – *Mindset needs to be energized* (Affective; feeling)

Which types of outcome were examples 1 and 2?

*Brain*

It's very important to keep checking the type of outcomes you write so that you don't simply stick to one. Which one do you think might typically be overlooked?

*Mind*

### Task 5: Integrating creativity and problem solving

Consider the five of your own lesson plans reviewed in task 1. Choose one of the lessons in which it is suitable to include the **3.1.3 Creativity and problem solving** learning outcome. *[If this lesson is different to the one chosen for Task 4, then all learning outcomes should be reviewed as described in task 3.]*

- How might your learning strategies now be developed to achieve this new outcome?

- To what extent do your learning outcomes include the 'object/verb/outcome' content (notwithstanding that in some instances the object and outcome may be represented by the same words)?
- To what extent do your learning outcomes cover brain, body and mind?

Rewrite your lesson plan as required.

### Part C: Expert/independent learning

Building on Part B above, imagine for a moment that, say, by the middle of their programme of study, all your learners were *experts at learning* – able to learn independently of you.

Some learners are fortunate to have the sort of school and home environments in which these skills develop well; others less so, and exhibit a high dependency on the teacher to instruct them. This can be draining for teachers.

To produce expert learners then, teachers should seek to include one or more expert/independent learning outcomes in each of their lessons. In the CCQI Quality Standard for TLA, these outcomes are listed under the following headings:

#### 3.1 Expert/independent learning

- 3.1.1 Curiosity
- 3.1.2 Commitment, motivation and ambition
- 3.1.3 Creativity and problem solving
- 3.1.4 Learning management
- 3.1.5 Reflective practice
- 3.1.6 Research
- 3.1.7 Confidence
- 3.1.8 Resilience
- 3.1.9 Literacy
- 3.1.10 Evaluation skills
- 3.1.11 Informal and formal communication

#### Task 6: Integrating expert/independent learning outcomes

Consider the above list of expert learning skills and the associated learning outcomes printed below. Look ahead to a lesson you are about to plan or refine and choose at least one of these outcomes to integrate into your new lesson.

The heading for this paper is: *Teaching, learning and assessment*. The outcomes printed below represent the *learning* you intend to produce. The *teaching* component is the strategy you choose to achieve your outcome, and the *assessment* element is the technique you use to check that the outcome is being, and has been, achieved. But it is important to remember that a lesson's effectiveness can only be judged by evaluating the extent of the *learning*.

- How has consideration of these expert learning skills changed the ideas you have for the learning experience?
- Is there anything (skills, resources, etc.) that might hold you back from planning this integration?
- Do you need to carry out a little research on your chosen element (learning outcome) to better understand how you might integrate it/them effectively?
- Would you find it useful to have a peer help you to evaluate the impact of the teaching strategies you design?



## Quality Standard for teaching, learning and assessment - extract

Area 3 Teaching, learning and assessment		
Aspect	Elements	Gold Standard intended impact
3.1 Expert/independent learning	3.1.1 Curiosity	Learners are excited, stimulated and curious about their subjects. They enhance their learning through explorations outside of the classroom which deepens their passion for their studies. While immersed in their learning experiences, learners are oblivious to every-day distractions.
	3.1.2 Commitment, motivation and ambition	Learners are motivated and focused to achieve the highest grades and their ambitious next steps. They work in a rewarding 'can-do' environment where high levels of personal investment in learning are the norm. They attend all lessons, are punctual and are advocates and ambassadors for their courses.
	3.1.3 Creativity and problem solving	Learners use a range of skills to solve problems creatively, making enlightened connections between new and existing knowledge.
	3.1.4 Learning management	Learners are well-organised, set ambitious personal targets and manage their time effectively to achieve milestones and deadlines.
	3.1.5 Reflective practice	Learners' continual reflection on their own performance keeps them on track, continually achieving the highest grades in their work.
	3.1.6 Research	Learners use a range of effective strategies to research information. They evaluate published material effectively and synthesise well to produce coherent, evidence-based opinions.
	3.1.7 Confidence	Learners' confidence and self-belief drives their success. They enthusiastically volunteer positive contributions during lessons and pursue their own learning through effective questioning of others, including the teacher. Due to their personal confidence and confidence in their group, they willingly go beyond their comfort zone when learning.
	3.1.8 Resilience	Learners' recognise the 'plateaus' typical of any learning journey and use effective strategies to overcome them. They achieve all of their milestones and goals, never getting behind with their work. Staff use coaching and constructive feedback well so that learners are not daunted by the onward journey.
	3.1.9 Literacy	Learners are articulate and confident in all aspects of their written work, demonstrating effective higher-order critical thinking and reflection skills in different contexts, including: course work, independent study, and career planning.
	3.1.10 Evaluation skills	Learners use a combination of their well-developed vocational and evaluative vocabularies to form coherent, evidence-based opinions that reveal a deep understanding of their subjects.
	3.1.11 Informal and formal communication	Learners communicate effectively in both formal and informal settings. These range from informal social interactions and peer-group work, to presentations, demonstrations and interviews. Learners awareness of their own body language and that of others gives them confidence to work effectively in all settings.