

Getting the most from the review

Tips and traps

Tips for Pre-visit

- Planning
- Preparing
- On-line meetins

Plan well

- The visit timetable is crucial to a successful review
- Plan in the Guidelines document is suggestion only.
- Team agrees roles
- Team agrees meetings: Who? When? Why?
- Agree draft day 2 timetable with the School Director
- Check with Director (online meeting, if possible):
 - staff, student and teacher availability etc.
- Build in Reviewer meeting times
- Flexislot: try and build in at least one flexislot on the second day

Prepare as much as possible

- Lead Reviewer to get as many of the key documents as possible in advance
- Think of team strengths

Communication

- Communication between team members and communication between the lead Reviewer and the team are crucially important.
- Try to include online meetings where possible
 - Between the lead Reviewer and team members
 - Between the lead Reviewer and the Director

Tips: the site-visit

- Put people at their ease
- Effective use of time
- Listen well!
- Record accurately

Put people at their ease

- You will get most out of people, if you try to put them at their ease by, for example
- Introductions
 - Introductions to staff available during first orientation walk around the premises
- Talk to teachers?
 - Is it possible to for the reviewers to say a brief 'hello' to the teachers at the beginning of the day?
- Be collegial in approach and tone
- Smile!

Effective use of time

- Keep to time
 - Keep to time during all phases of the review
 - Keep to the timings in the programme, otherwise ...
 - Keep interviewees brief and focused. How?
- Multitask during observation
 - In addition to observing teaching check:-
 - teaching space, furniture (appropriate), classroom equipment
 - level of the class – is it as stated? is it reasonably homogeneous?

Listen well!

- Employ active listening tactics such as
 - Confirm that you have understood by restating
e.g. “So what you’re saying is ...”, “So you think...”
- Use open wh- questions
- Explore answers where necessary
 - “Could you be a bit more specific?”
 - “Could you give us a bit more detail on ...”
- Listen, don’t give opinions!

Record accurately

- Why is this important? Evidence- based
- No audio recording
- Take time, slow people down
- Ask for repetition / clarification if necessary
- Organise your notes and try to write legibly

Traps

During reviews, tensions and potential conflict situations can emerge. How can reviewers reduce the risk of tricky situations?

- Reserve judgement
- Keep your response to yourself (and the team)
- Be criterial

Reserve judgement

- Don't be too hasty in your judgements
- Look for / be open to counter-evidence
- Keep you thoughts to yourself, be neutral
 - Useful phrase: “That’s interesting.”
 - Beware of body language
- Keep smiling!

Keep your responses to yourself

- Don't voice judgements – criticism or praise - to any staff of the institution during the review
- Try not to betray a positive or critical response through body language or facial expression.
- Keep your thoughts to yourself and to your co-reviewers until the oral feedback and keep looking for evidence. Remember, you might see something to change your mind before then!

Be criterial

- Remember your purpose is to review the School in terms of the Minimum Standards and the Indicators / Evidence that is stipulated for this NER Scheme ...
- *Not* according to your or anyone else's criteria.
- Referencing the standards and criteria protects the reviewer and the School.
- If, having carried out the pilot reviews, you think some standards should be removed / added to or amended in some way, give this feedback at the end of the pilot.