Peer Observation of Teaching – Guide

Background

The Peer Observation of Teaching program (the Program) is organised by the Victorian Deaf Education Institute (VDEI). The Program provides an opportunity for five (5) Victorian teachers of the deaf to visit an interstate deaf education setting (Host). They will be able to undertake unobtrusive and reflective classroom observation in consultation with their Host’s teachers (placement). The placement period is for five (5) days in Term Two.

Purpose

This guide provides placement teachers, their principals, and Hosts with the terms of the grant for the Peer Observation of Teaching Program. It explains the expression of interest process and also the expectations about how the Program will be conducted.

The Program grant

The VDEI will award five (5) grants, each valued at $6,500.00, to pay for reasonable costs associated with a Placement. This includes (but will not be limited to) casual relief teaching costs, and the Placement teacher’s accommodation, food, and travel. The principal of a successful applicant must ensure that the Program grant is applied to these reasonable costs and is accepted by their school’s council.

Expression of Interest

The VDEI will be awarding five (5) Program grants annually for the Peer Observation of Teaching program. The VDEI will invite teachers of the deaf to submit their expression of interest for the Program grants (EoI). To be eligible to submit an EoI, an applicant must:

- be a qualified teacher of the deaf currently teaching Victorian students who are deaf or hard of hearing;
- have a current Victorian Institute of Teaching registration;
- have a current Working with Children Check; complete an ‘Expression of Interest Form’, which includes:
  - their principal’s approval to participate in the Program;
  - their consent to the terms of the Program set out in this Guide; and
their Host preference.

**Award of Program grants**

Three panel members - two from the VDEI and one external - will review the applications. A Program grant will be awarded to applicants who meet the eligibility criteria outlined above as and an in-house candidate scoring rubric.

**Coordination of the Placement**

*The VDEI will:*

- confirm with the five (5) Hosts their hosting of the Placement;
- publish the EoI;
- notify the Hosts of the release of the EoI and intended Placement dates;
- receive and process the EoI submissions;
- notify unsuccessful applicants;
- notify the Placement teachers of their successful application by providing:
  - details of the program grant;
  - an informal framework of observation for the Placement teacher to use at a pre-observation briefing;
  - a reference to their own responsibilities detailed in this Guide; and
  - a reference to their principal’s responsibilities detailed in this Guide;
- notify the Placement teacher’s Hosts, confirm the dates of the Placement, and inform them that the successful applicant will initiate contact shortly;
- follow up with the Placement teacher at the Program’s expiry to remind them of their post-Placement responsibilities; and
- follow up with Hosts at the Program’s expiry to remind them of their post-Placement responsibilities.

*The host school’s principal will:*

- choose a teacher(s) to pair with the Placement teacher;
- liaise with the Placement teacher’s principal and settle the terms of the placement teacher’s health, safety, performance, and conduct during their Placement period;
- welcome, orient, and support the Placement teacher during their Placement;
• familiarise the Placement teacher with the school’s unique policies and environment;
• provide a chair and adequate space for the Placement teacher to sit in the classroom(s); and
• foster the co-operation of their school’s community.

The Placement teacher’s principal will:
• obtain the Placement teacher’s agreement to the terms of their placement relating to their health, safety, performance, and conduct during their Placement;
• agree with the Host principal:
  o to provide the necessary information to ensure that the Host can provide for Placement teacher’s health, safety, performance, and conduct. This should include emergency contact details and any relevant health information;
  o who may issue reasonable directions to the Placement teacher;
  o who must report to Placement teacher’s principal immediately on major incidents concerning the Placement teacher’s health, safety, performance, and conduct; and
• support the Placement teacher to ensure the full benefit of their professional development opportunity during their Placement.

The Placement teacher will:
• notify their principal after receiving their letter of acceptance within the Peer Observation of Teaching program;
• contact the Host in accordance with the instructions provided in that letter to coordinate their Placement;
• agree to the terms of their Placement as it relates to the Placement teacher’s health, safety, performance, and conduct during their Placement;
• assist the Placement teacher’s principal to liaise with the Host setting out the terms of the Placement;
• make their own arrangements regarding travel to and from the Host site, and their own accommodation and food;
• attend the Host site to observe the teaching of another teacher, or teachers, for five (5) days. Their presence in the classroom and consultation with the instructing teacher is expected to be unobtrusive and reflective.

• complete an informal observation framework supplied by the VDEI by recording their observations in a journal;

• be flexible when abiding by the policies of the Host;

• articulate their professional development during and after their Placement by reflecting on their own teaching practices and learning from the observed teaching;

• present their observations and reflections to the VDEI after their Placement with a written report and a PowerPoint presentation; and

• transfer their new knowledge into their future teaching instruction.

Further information
If you would like more information, please contact Dr Paul Jacobs at the VDEI: jacobspaul.g@edumail.vic.gov.au