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#### **Why are we doing Observation of Teaching?**

The Observation of Teaching Policy is a clear, developmental path through which we can take pride in the innovative and high quality teaching demonstrated throughout the University. It's also a way in which the academic community can continually improve, champion and recognise good practice in its most significant asset: its staff. The Policy provides a safe environment for teaching staff to observe different teaching methods in practice and to share their own teaching practice with colleagues with the aim of placing consideration of the student experience at the heart of our endeavours.

#### **What is the University's Observation of Teaching Policy?**

The University's Observation of Teaching Policy can be found [here](#). A [flow chart](#) summarises the steps in the process.

#### **Is participation in Observation of Teaching compulsory?**

##### **Full-time and part-time academic staff**

All full-time and part-time academic staff with teaching responsibilities, including the supervision of taught projects and dissertations, will be expected to take part.

##### **Hourly paid academic staff**

The OoT Policy will not apply to hourly paid lecturers and associate lecturers unless Schools make local arrangements to apply the Policy. Schools may decide a threshold number of hours that hourly paid staff must teach for the Policy to apply.

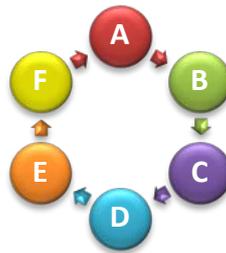
##### **Exemptions**

Academic staff who are registered on the PGCAP Learning and Teaching in Higher Education module that includes observation of teaching at the University can, in the academic year they are doing the module, opt out of this University-wide OoT scheme as they will be engaging in observations as part of their studies.



#### How will Observation of Teaching work?

The Quality and Enhancement Office will organise, on a random basis, groups of between six and seven participants, creating a 'chain' model where each group member 'observes only once and is observed only once' in a non-reciprocal manner, i.e. –  $A \text{ observes } B \rightarrow B \text{ observes } C \rightarrow C \text{ observes } D \rightarrow D \text{ observes } E \rightarrow E \text{ observes } F \rightarrow F \text{ observes } A$ , etc. Groups can choose a different order if they wish to but should retain the model whereby each academic should observe once and be observed once in a non-reciprocal manner.



All participants will be expected to agree and adhere to the [Observation of Teaching Code of Practice](#). This code was developed collectively as part of the staff development sessions that ran during the Observation of Teaching Pilot in the College of Science of Technology in 2013-14. A [flow chart](#) summarises the steps in the process.

■ See also [What happens if I have concerns about the group I have been allocated?](#)

#### Will the groups be organised by grade?

Groups will be made up of a mixture of academic staff on different grades. It is important that a collegial approach is taken as this sends a clear message about the nature and purpose of teaching observation.

It is recognised that staff who are newer to teaching are more likely to have benefited from formal provision such as the PGCAP or, at least, to have experienced this provision more recently. They may, therefore, be well placed to assist more experienced colleagues with their own development.

#### What happens if I have concerns about the group I have been allocated?

Groups will be organised randomly by the Quality & Enhancement Office. An advantage of organising groups via the chain model is that it provides colleagues with a greater number of people with whom to work (e.g. you are observed by a different person from who you observe). If, having taken this into consideration, you have concerns about the group you have been placed in, please contact [geo-general@salford.ac.uk](mailto:geo-general@salford.ac.uk).

■ See also [When will I find out about the group I am in?](#)

#### When will I find out about the group I am in?

Staff will be advised of their groups early in Trimester 1.

■ See also [What happens if I have concerns about the group I have been allocated?](#)



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#### *When will Observation of Teaching take place?*

The period for observations will begin on **Monday 17 October 2016** (Trimester 1, week 4) and will run until **Friday 11 August 2017** (Trimester 3, week 10). During this period participants should have both observed and been observed teaching at least once.

#### *Which aspects of teaching should be observed?*

Those who are being observed are free to determine the circumstances in which the observation takes place. This could include choosing whether to be observed in small or large group teaching as well as when the observation takes place; which groups of students are involved etc, thereby allowing for example, laboratory classes and distance learning to be observed. Observations are expected to be for at least an hour.

■ See also *How should I approach observation of teaching of a 1:1 supervision or small group tutorial?*

#### *How should I approach observation of teaching of a 1:1 supervision or small group tutorial?*

The [Observation of Teaching Code of Practice](#) highlights that it is important to prepare the students for the observation. When observing larger groups of students it is acceptable to do this at the start of the session but for small groups or observing 1:1 supervisions it is more appropriate to give the student/s some notice of the observation. For example, at the end of an earlier session tell them that for the next session you would like to invite a colleague of yours (give name) to observe the next session. Emphasise that the colleague is there to give you feedback on the session and is not making any judgements about student/s. Also emphasise that you hope the student/s are happy with this as it is important to help you reflect on how you support students and is part of the University's Observation of Teaching Policy that is aimed at enhancing teaching and learning. Ask the student/s if he/she/they have any questions and confirm that they are happy for the observation to be part of the next session. Hopefully they will agree, but if they object you will need to find another session to be observed.

At this start of the observation it is important that the observer and observee check that the student/s is/are still happy with the observer's presence. During the session it is particularly important that the observer does not get drawn into the discussion and that the observer aims to be as unobtrusive as possible.

■ See also *Which aspects of teaching should be observed?*

#### *Is there any documentation I should use?*

Participants can use whatever approach suits them to plan the session that is to be observed and to document the observation process (optional). However, a [template](#) has been developed as a resource for optional use. The template also emphasises the link between observation of teaching, reflective practice, and the Higher Education Academy (HEA) UK Professional Standards



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Framework (UKPSF). If you are interested in finding out about professional recognition from the HEA see <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/professional-recognition>

■ See also [\*What staff development opportunities and other resources will be made available to support the staff taking part in the process?\*](#)

#### [\*Who will organise the observation sessions?\*](#)

Staff will be expected to contact other members in their group to arrange mutually convenient times for observing/being observed. In some circumstances it may suit both the observer and observee to agree dates based on having looked at each other's timetable. For guidance notes on how to do this see [below](#).

#### [\*Will Observation of Teaching be used as a measure of competency?\*](#)

The approach taken is not part of any competency assessments of staff generally.

#### [\*What should I do if I have serious concerns about what I have observed?\*](#)

The OoT staff development sessions will cover this issue but the answer depends on the nature of the serious concerns.

- A. If your concern relates to having observed behaviour that is not in accordance with the [University's Dignity at Work and Study Policy](#) you should follow the processes set out in that policy.
- B. If, in your opinion, you have observed seriously poor teaching (but it is not an issue re Dignity at Work and Study) you should raise it in your post-observation discussions with the observee in line with the OoT Code of Practice. You should sensitively make it clear that your concerns are serious. In order to keep the process entirely developmental and outside the PDR process you should not discuss the matter with anyone other than the observee. See note below for more information.

*Further note re B* – It should be noted that there are other mechanisms that the University uses to help ensure that teaching is satisfactory. If there is a general issue with seriously poor teaching it is likely that it will have been/be identified through student feedback and other processes including the Programme Monitoring and Enhancement Procedure (PMEP). The developmental and supportive approach to OoT will be undermined if judgements made about observations of teaching may be reported to line managers or others. Academics being observed should feel that they could choose to be observed in an area of their practice that they struggle with without concern that this may go beyond the observer/observee relationship. For this reason, observers should only escalate concerns about teaching if the concern falls into category A above.

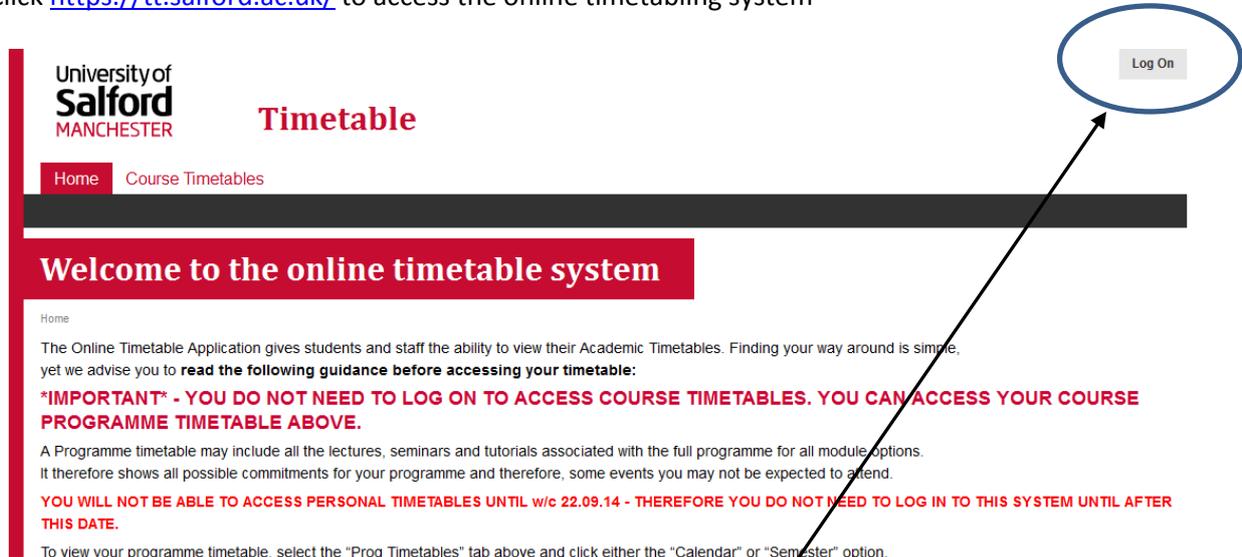
#### [\*What staff development and other resources will be made available to support the staff taking part in the process?\*](#)

A staff development [screencast](#) is available to support Observation of Teaching (see OoT area of the Quality & Enhancement Office web pages).

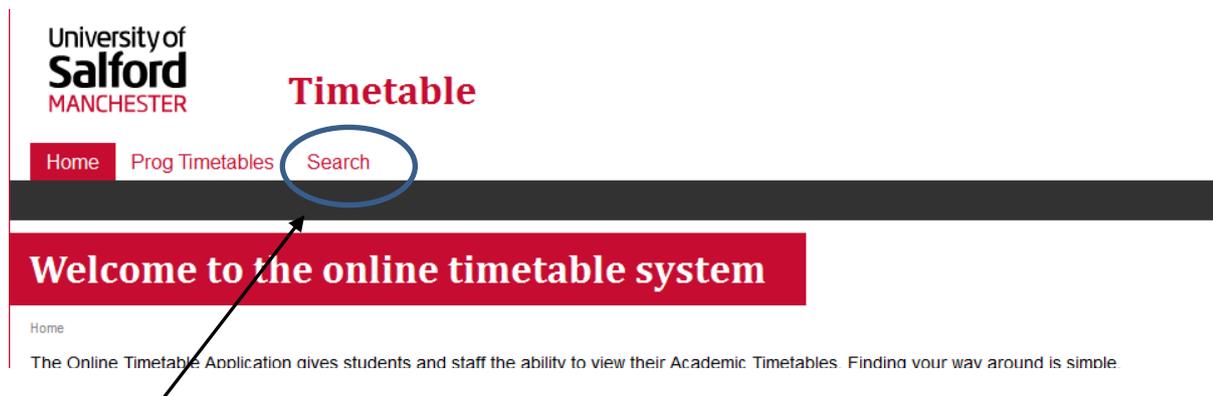


### How to access timetables

Click <https://tt.salford.ac.uk/> to access the online timetabling system



Click Log on and enter your University user name and password.



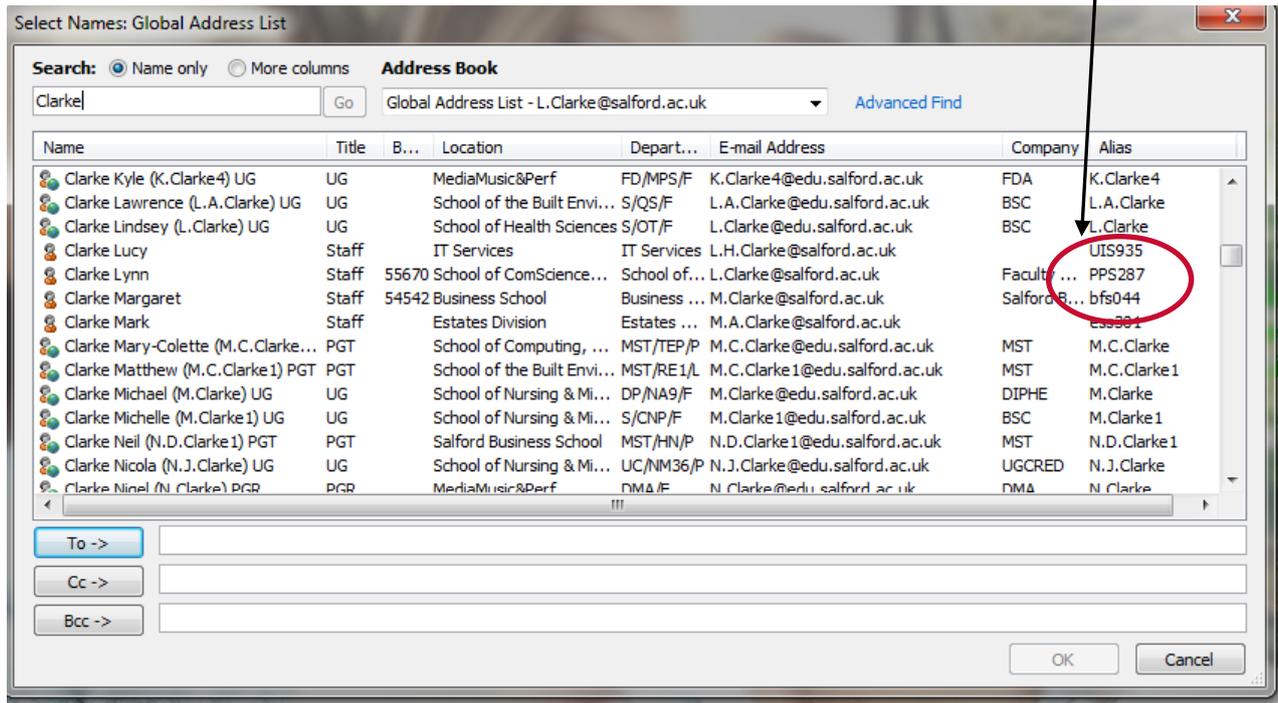
Click 'Search' and enter the user name of the person whose timetable you wish to view, then click 'Impersonate User'.

User names can be found in the Global Address List in Outlook/Webmail under 'Alias' – see below for instructions on how to do this.



### To access the Global Address List via Outlook:

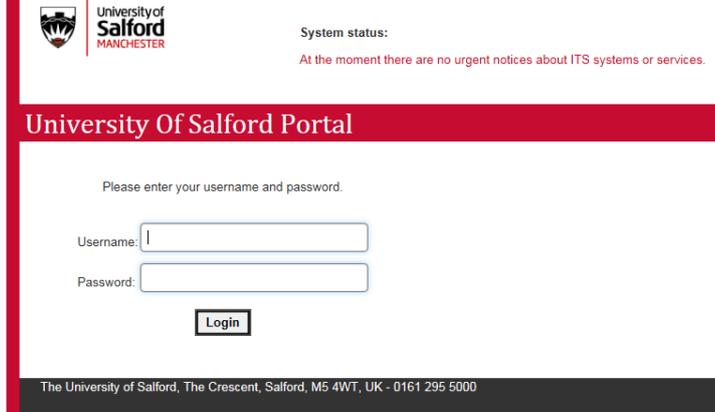
Open Outlook and click 'New E-mail'. Click 'To...' to bring up the Global Address Book. In the search box type in the name of the person whose alias you. Name will automatically appear, scroll to find the exact name match if there are multiple entries of the same surname. Alias details can be found on the far right.





To access the Global Address List via Webmail:

Log on to the portal.



Click OWA – Web Outlook.



Click 'New' to create a new email message. Click 'To...', to bring up the address book. In the search box type in the name of the person whose alias you want to find and press Enter, then scroll to find the exact name match if there are multiple entries of the same surname. Alias details can be found in the right hand pane.

