Review of Teaching Practice

Session/artefact to be observed/reviewed: **BA Design Management – Responsible Design Unit (LCC)**
Size of student group: **25?**
Reviewee: **Tim Harris**
Reviewer: **Sabrina Miller**

Note: This record is solely for exchanging developmental feedback between colleagues. Its reflective aspect informs PgCert and Fellowship assessment, but it is not an official evaluation of teaching and is not intended for other internal or legal applications such as probation or disciplinary action.

Part One
Reviewee to complete in brief and send to reviewer prior to the review

What is the context of this session/artefact within the curriculum?

This is the fourth session of this unit on Responsible Design. The students are first-year Design Management students and are currently being introduced to many concepts around sustainability, ethics, and justice. They will be working on a strategic report for the UN about the role of green spaces in cities as their project for this unit. They will produce a statement about their ethos in the form of a manifesto.

How long have you been working with this group and in what capacity?

I've met these students 3 times before for lectures and workshops. Before that, they know me from an introductory lecture I gave a few months ago.

What are the intended or expected learning outcomes?

The intention is prime them for a lecture about ecological justice. The learning outcomes for this session are to encourage them to use physical media, drawing and writing, as a way of thinking and exploring. I want them to be able to control and manage the connections between digital and physical media, while knowing that human-centred approaches in management rely on being compassionate and present in time and space with others.

Additionally, I want to model using multi-sensory inputs to create space and a condusicve atmosphere for creative work: sound, music, stories, light, space, and silent moments for reflection and digestion.

What are the anticipated outputs (anything students will make/do)?

They will make a few drawings and take some physical notes during the sessions. I have one drawing exercise where they will draw each others' faces to learn about how our brains activate empathy, and the power of looking, as well as facial recognition and expression.

Are there potential difficulties or specific areas of concern?

None. This is a great bunch of talented and motivated students. I am aware that two students struggle with the English language. Also, I don't remember all of their names yet, so I will be asking them again, and apologising for that.

How will students be informed of the observation/review?

I will explain at the beginning of the session. I did mention it last week, also, but I'm not sure they really understood.

I plan to keep it really informal and casual, and of course explain: Sabrina is here to observe me, and it's a fun course we're taking together to help us improve our teaching.

What would you particularly like feedback on?

Pacing, and information overload. Is this too much to take on in the time we have? Too many tasks? Time enough for reflection and group conversation?

How will feedback be exchanged?

Written in this form, please! :)

Part Two

Reviewer to note down observations, suggestions and questions.

Thank you for inviting me into your session and for asking specifically for feedback on pacing. It was a really valuable opportunity to witness your approach to holding space with the students and to observe the ways you are experimenting with the structure of the class.

Overall, I didn't experience the pacing of the tasks themselves as too fast. The timing of the exercises felt manageable and students appeared to have enough time to engage with what was being asked of them. What occasionally made the session feel more difficult to follow was less about the speed of the tasks and more about the clarity of the overall structure of the class — particularly how the different exercises connected to the wider aims of the unit or the learning objectives for that specific session.

Atmosphere and arrival
One of the things I really appreciated was the way you created space for students to arrive into the class. The atmosphere felt calm and unpressured, which can be quite rare in teaching environments.

I particularly enjoyed the moment when you began playing music while waiting for the remaining students to arrive and while finishing setting up. It helped establish a relaxed tone in the room. Similarly, the use of the chime/bell to gather attention and signal the beginning of the session felt like a clear and harmonious transition into the class.

Storytelling and opening activity
Beginning the class by sharing your journey into LCC that morning was an engaging way to start. I noticed that it sparked curiosity and attention from the students, and it created a natural bridge into the journaling prompt about their own journeys to class. The prompts you gave — encouraging students to reflect on what they saw along the way and how they felt physically and emotionally — felt particularly generative given that their broader project asks them to consider green spaces in London. It felt like a thoughtful way of grounding the learning in lived experience.

When you asked the students whether they were familiar with the park you had mentioned passing through, it also seemed like a nice attempt to bring them into the narrative. I wondered whether there might be potential to extend this moment slightly — perhaps beginning with a short group conversation about the green spaces students encounter in their daily lives before moving into the individual writing exercise. It could potentially generate shared references and discussion early in the session.

Accessibility and task clarity
I noticed that you invited students to record their journey using different methods (writing, drawing, etc.), which felt like a really positive and inclusive approach. However, when the next step of uploading their entries to Padlet was introduced, quite a lot of practical information was layered into the explanation. Because the journaling exercise itself was relatively short, it might help to display the instructions and the Padlet upload process on the screen or board so students can refer back to

them. This could reduce the cognitive load of having to remember several steps at once.

At times it felt like there were several mini prompts or calls to action within the overarching task, which may have made the process slightly harder to follow.

Tangents and valuable side-notes
Something I noticed throughout the session was that you often shared useful practical insights — for example around digital tools, digital space management, or terminology used in project management. These felt like genuinely valuable pieces of knowledge for students.

At the same time, these moments sometimes appeared spontaneously and slightly shifted the focus away from the main exercise being undertaken. For example:

- Discussing whether students knew how to use Padlet and spending time reflecting on digital tool ownership within the group
- Talking about the importance of managing digital spaces
- Introducing terminology such as product owner roles or the RACI matrix
- Exploring digital literacy in the group

All of these are useful areas of knowledge, but because they appeared mid-exercise it sometimes became harder to track what the main goal of the class was at that moment.

One possible way to hold onto these valuable teaching moments without losing the thread of the session might be to note them down on the board as emerging concepts or terms and return to them later in the class (or in a future workshop). This could allow the ideas to remain visible without interrupting the flow of the task.

Closure and reflection within tasks
Another small observation was that the journaling task didn't seem to come to a shared moment of reflection before moving on. Students wrote and uploaded their entries, but there wasn't time to read or discuss any of them together. I wondered whether briefly inviting students to share or reflect on what emerged from the exercise might help give the activity a stronger sense of purpose and closure.

Learning objectives and structure
I wondered whether having the learning objectives or aims for the session clearly visible (for example on the screen or whiteboard) might help anchor the class.
You mentioned three concepts that you were exploring during the session:

- Space and time
- Location within that space
- Tools

These felt like strong conceptual anchors for the class, and it might be helpful for students to see them visually so they can refer back to them throughout the session

— particularly for students who may process spoken information more slowly or who are translating in real time.

At moments the session felt quite spontaneous and conversational, which gives your teaching style a relaxed and accessible quality. At the same time, it occasionally made it harder to understand how each exercise connected to the broader aims of the unit. Making the “why” behind each task slightly more explicit might help students situate their learning more clearly.

Dialogue and participation
During the observation there were relatively few moments where students were invited into dialogue with each other or with the wider group. The dynamic sometimes felt closer to a lecture format.

Around forty minutes into the session you invited students to ask questions or share thoughts, which was a nice opening. I wondered whether students might respond more readily to specific prompts or smaller discussion groups before sharing with the class. In my own experience, students sometimes find it easier to speak when they have first discussed ideas in pairs or small groups.

Playful exercises
The drawing activity where students worked in pairs to quickly draw each other and label the artist and subject felt playful and engaging. You mentioned that it was a continuation of an exercise from a previous class. It seemed to energise the room, although the wider purpose of the exercise within the context of the project wasn’t entirely clear to me as an observer.

Making the intention behind the exercise explicit might help students recognise what skills or perspectives the activity is meant to develop.

Inclusive practices
There were also several inclusive practices that stood out positively:

Offering to send a follow-up email with information from the session
Encouraging students to develop their manifesto and report iteratively over time rather than leaving it all until the deadline
Suggesting that they document their process by taking photos as they build their work

These approaches feel supportive of different working styles and may help reduce the pressure students feel as the submission approaches.

Final reflections
Overall, what came through strongly in the session was your generous and exploratory teaching style. The atmosphere you create feels relaxed, open, and conversational, which can be very supportive for students.

My main reflection would simply be that bringing a little more visible structure to the session — for example through clearly stated learning objectives, visual prompts for tasks, and moments of reflection between activities — might help students more easily follow the thread of the class and understand how each exercise contributes to the wider aims of the unit.

Thank you again for inviting me to observe your teaching. It was a pleasure to witness your approach and the thoughtful ways you engage students in thinking about design and their everyday environments.

Part Three

Reviewee to reflect on the reviewer's comments and describe how they will act on the feedback exchanged. Reviewee should return this to the reviewer once complete.

The comments and feedback from Sabrina are very insightful and helpful.

I have been experimenting with showing highly structured agendas and timetables for some sessions. The session that Sabrina saw was a bit less explicit in terms of stating cleaer learning objectives. It is instructive to hear that Sabrina observed a possible need for more structure and a more clear thread.

Moving foward I will split the difference. I will put clear learning objectives on the relevant slides as we go through the session. Rather than showing all the objectives or agenda a the the beginning, I will try to space the information out during the session both verbally and visually.

This might have made it clear to the observer that the purpose of the face drawing exercise, for example, was part of the larger aim of the unit to consider how we empathise with all stakeholders; even the non-human.

I also really appreciate the mention of doing more peer-to-peer activities, and in smaller groups to have conversations. This is an effective practice that I employ a lot, and will continue to do so. The time Sabrina spent with me was so useful, because it is particularly the "lecture" formats that I am trying to improve. Perhaps I need to let go if this approach altogether, and ask students to listen to me speak only for 10 minutes. Then, I will ask them to consider some material, and consider the meaning, and in small groups create presentations to share back with the whole group. I will try facilitating more group discussions, rather than presenting information or materials. That is, I will make the session mostly EXPERIENTIAL.