# Overview

## **Purpose**

The Model Observation Protocol is provided as a resource and suggested framework for the pre-observation, observation, and post-observation process for each announced and unannounced CAP observation. Sponsoring organizations may choose to adopt or adapt the protocol to meet their needs or use another protocol that better suits their organization.

Program supervisors and supervising practitioners will use this protocol, or another protocol provided by the sponsoring organization, and the CAP Observation Form to successfully complete each observation.

## **Steps**

The Model Observation Protocol guides program supervisors and supervising practitioners through each step of the observation and feedback cycle, including:

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| **Before the Observation** | **During the Observation** | **After the Observation** |
| [Preparing for the pre-conference](#_Preparing_for_the)  [Conducting the pre-conference](#_Conducting_the_Pre-Conference) | [Actively collecting evidence](#_Actively_Collecting_Evidence_1) | [Analyzing the evidence](#_Analyzing_and_Categorizing)  [Identifying areas of strength and areas for growth](#_Identifying_Areas_of)  [Preparing for the post-conference](#_Preparing_for_the_1)  [Conducting the post-conference](#_Conducting_the_Post-Conference) |

The implementation of each step will vary depending on the type of observation (announced vs. unannounced) and whether one or both field supervisors are participating.

# Before the Observation

Before each announced observation, the candidate and supervisor(s) meet for a pre-conference. The pre-conference is an important opportunity to build rapport with the candidate, establish a coaching relationship, and begin to collect evidence for the upcoming observation.

### **Preparing for the Pre-Conference**

If the observation will be conducted jointly between the program supervisor and supervising practitioner, the preparation should also be coordinated to ensure that the two observers have a unified focus and set of expectations for the observation.

Begin by gathering and reviewing evidence, including:

* Lesson plan
* Lesson materials (e.g., assessment, handouts etc.)
* Prior observation notes and feedback provided to candidate

Use the [Pre-Conference Planning Form](#_Pre-Conference_Planning_Form) to review the lesson plan and associated materials for evidence of the focus elements.

Then generate a set of questions to guide the pre-conference discussion. These questions should aim to:

* Clarify aspects of the planned lesson based on a review of the lesson plan and materials
* Prompt the candidate to reflect on and refine the planned lesson
* Confirm focus areas for the observation based on candidate goals and areas for growth
* Gather initial evidence relative to the focus elements

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| **Sample Pre-Conference Questions** |
| **I-A-1 Subject Matter Knowledge**   * Which subject-specific knowledge, skills, and vocabulary will students acquire or apply during the lesson? * How does your lesson align with the content and practices of the Curriculum Framework(s)? * How will you help your students make connections between this lesson, their prior learning, and their long-term learning goals? * How will you help your students make connections between subject matter knowledge and real-world issues? * What social and academic language will you use to support English learners? |
| **I-B-2 Adjustments to Practice**   * How will you check for student understanding throughout the lesson? What adjustments can you make based on those checks for understanding? * What student misunderstandings do you anticipate and how can you prepare to mitigate them? * How will you assess student learning at the end of the lesson? How will you use that data to inform your next steps? |
| **II-E-1 High Expectations and Support**   * What evidence-based pedagogical practices will you be using in your lesson? * What scaffolds and supports will you set up for your students? * How will you communicate your criteria for success? * What are some ways that you will be reinforcing students’ perseverance and effort? |
| **II-A-3 Inclusive Instruction**   * How will you support individual differences in students’ learning needs, abilities, interests, and levels of readiness, including students with disabilities, English learners and former English learners, academically advanced students, and students who have been historically marginalized? * How will you use appropriate inclusive practices, such as tiered supports, educational and assistive technologies, scaffolded instruction, and leveraging students’ native language and linguistic resources to make grade-level content accessible and affirming for all students? * How will you provide students with multiple ways to learn and demonstrate understanding? |
| **II-B-1 Safe Learning Environment**   * Which routines and procedures will you use during this lesson? * How will you respond to or prevent any challenging student behaviors in ways that support their accountability for the impact of their actions? * How will you encourage students to take academic risks and share ideas freely? * How will you model and reinforce respect and affirmation for your own and others’ differences? * How will you seek feedback from students on their experience of the classroom? |
| **III-C-1 Collaboration on Student Learning and Well-Being**   * How will you leverage families’ cultural and linguistic knowledge and expertise? * How will you engage with families about what students are learning? * How will you collaborate with families to identify strategies and resources for supporting student learning and growth? |
| **IV-A-1 Reflective Practice**   * How are you working to eliminate learning inequities across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability and ability, and other aspects of student identities? * Tell me about any challenges or specific areas of the rubric that you are currently working to strengthen. * In addition to the focus elements, are there other areas of your practice on which you would like feedback? |

## **Conducting the Pre-Conference**

Ideally, the pre-conference occurs one to two days prior to the observation and lasts between 15-20 minutes. A pre-conference should include an introduction, a discussion based on the review of lesson materials, and a summary of the next steps.

**Pre-Conference Introduction** **(2 min)**

The introduction helps to set the tone and purpose of the pre-conference. While it may appear overly formal, it can be valuable in establishing routines that help to keep the conversation focused and brief.

Below is an example of one approach to the introduction of a pre-conference:

* Greeting: *“Thanks for taking the time to meet. I’m looking forward to the observation on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”*
* Time: “*This discussion should take us about 20 minutes”*
* Set Purpose: *“The purpose of our conversation is for you to help me to understand what I can expect to see during the observation and for you to know what things I am specifically looking for.”*

**Discussion of the Lesson** **(15 min)**

Following the brief introduction, the supervisor(s) should transition into a discussion of the candidate’s goals and plans for the lesson being observed. It is most productive when the supervisor(s) has reviewed the lesson plan prior to this conversation and can ask specific, probing questions about the lesson and expected student learning. The candidate should do the majority of the talking during this portion of the pre-conference. The supervisor(s) should be capturing notes on the conversation.

Below is an example of one approach to the discussion:

* Reference review of materials: “*I reviewed the materials you sent and think I have a clear sense of the lesson but was hoping you could elaborate on a few points to be sure I understand your plan.”*
* Ask questions: See pre-conference preparation section for examples.

**Pre-Conference Closure** **(3 min)**

Supervisors should leave time at the end of the pre-conference to summarize any takeaways from the conversation as well as align expectations for the upcoming observation.

Below is an example of one approach to pre-conference closure:

* Revisit prior feedback: *“After our second observation we agreed that you would work to \_\_\_\_ so I will be looking for evidence of that in the upcoming observation.”*
* Review the focus elements: *“I will be collecting evidence on the three required focus elements: Subject Matter Knowledge, High Expectations and Support, and Safe Learning Environment and \_\_\_\_”*
* Summarize takeaways from the conversation: *“Based on what you shared with me during our conversation, it sounds like you are also looking for feedback on \_\_\_\_\_ so I will be sure to make note of those as well.”*

# During the Observation

## **Actively Collecting Evidence**

The supervisor’s primary goal during the observation is to actively collect evidence. Active evidence collection should capture both candidate’s and students’ behaviors and actions.

During the observation, the supervisor should not make inferences or judgments; this occurs after when the supervisor is analyzing and synthesizing the evidence. Instead, the evidence collected at this point should reflect exactly what happens in the classroom, including direct quotes when possible.

The [CAP Observation Form](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/teachers-guide/cap-observation-form.docx) has an Active Evidence Collection box where observers can take written notes. DESE will not evaluate these notes in any way. The box is there for the convenience of the supervisor. There are also other tools that supervisors may use to collect evidence during the lesson. These could include videotaping, audio-recording, or using commercially available applications that aid in observing specific classroom interactions.

The full body of evidence collected during the observation should be used to aid the supervisors in identifying trends and selecting illustrative examples of aspects of performance. This evidence is not designed to be shared directly with the candidate nor is it collected by DESE. Individual sponsoring organizations may, however, decide to collect this information from supervisors for training or documentation purposes.

# After the Observation

After the observation, the field supervisor(s) review evidence collected, analyze it as a measure of candidate performance, and strategically plan for the post-conference to share targeted feedback.

Sponsoring organizations may also consider having the candidate complete [Self-Reflection Form](#_Candidate_Self-Reflection_Form) and share it with the supervisor(s) prior to the post-conference. If adding this step, supervisor(s) should plan to complete their analysis prior to reviewing the candidate self-reflection.

## **Analyzing and Categorizing Evidence**

Following the observation, the supervisor(s) review all evidence collected during the lesson and begin to organize it by Essential Element in the evidence chart in the [CAP Observation Form](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/teachers-guide/cap-observation-form.docx). When categorizing evidence, supervisors should consider the following:

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| **Considerations for Categorizing Evidence** |
| * Not every piece of evidence from the observation needs to be sorted into the evidence table in the CAP Observation Form. * While supervisors should consult the CAP Rubric when categorizing evidence, statements should not simply restate performance descriptors. Instead, they should explain what happened in the observation that shows or does not show that a skill has been demonstrated. * Evidence may demonstrate that one or more of the dimensions (quality, consistency, or scope) of an element are being met OR that performance is not yet at the expected threshold. Supervisors might consider “tagging” evidence that gets included by dimension so that it can easily be referred to when makingsummative judgments. |

For observations that are conducted jointly, the program supervisor and supervising practitioner should calibrate on the categorization of evidence on the [CAP Observation Form](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/teachers-guide/cap-observation-form.docx) as well as the identification of areas of strength and areas for growth. This must be done prior to meeting with the candidate to ensure that they receive consistent, calibrated feedback about performance.

## **Identifying Areas of Strength and Areas for Growth**

In reflecting on the analysis of the evidence, supervisors should select one to two areas of strength and one to two areas for growth. Supervisors are asked to identify these areas for the candidate. However, this does not preclude the candidate from self-identifying areas, as well.

Areas of strength and areas for growth should be tied directly to the Essential Elements in the CAP Rubric. Supervisors are encouraged to select the areas that are most likely to improve candidate practice and have a positive impact on student learning:

* **Areas of Strength:** Identify the instructional strengths in a way that encourages the continuation of effective practices in the future. The areas of strength should be deeply rooted in evidence that demonstrates positive impacts on student learning.
* **Areas for Growth:** Identify the instructional gaps that are most likely to improve overall practice and student learning if addressed. Areas of growth should be accompanied by specific supports that supervisors are able to provide.

The areas of strength and areas for growth can focus on the quality, consistency, or scope dimension of an Element. However, supervisors should not set goals around consistency or scope until the candidate has successfully met the quality threshold.

Once supervisors have identified the areas of strength and areas for growth, they should be added to the bottom of the [CAP Observation Form](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/guidelines-advisories/teachers-guide/cap-observation-form.docx).

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| **Considerations for Identifying Areas of Strength and Areas for Growth** |
| Choose areas of strength and growth for which there is sufficient and specific evidence from the lesson.  **Areas of Strength**   * Make sure that the area of strength is not directly related to the area for growth. It is important that candidates see these as separate. * Areas of strength should stand alone. Do not hedge them with qualifying statements such as “it could have been even better if,” or “next time you could also…” This will help candidates to crystalize and build on what is already working well.   **Areas for Growth**   * Understand the candidate’s capacity when identifying areas for growth. Where does the candidate currently have the most potential for growth? * Prioritize areas for growth based on which have the greatest potential to impact student learning. * Select areas for growth for which you are prepared to provide specific support. It is most helpful to tell a candidate they need to alter their practice *and* provide specific examples, resources, or guidance for how this can be done. |

## **Preparing for the Post-Conference**

The primary purpose of the post-conference is to provide candidates with feedback about their performance during the observation.

To prepare for the post-conference, supervisors will gather and review available evidence, including:

* Lesson plan and materials
* Pre-Conference Planning Form and notes
* CAP Observation Form with categorized evidence
* Candidate Self-Reflection Form (if required)
* Candidate Artifacts (if collected)
* Evidence of student learning (e.g. assessment data, exit tickets, student work)

Supervisors can use the [Post-Conference Planning Form](#_Post-Conference_Planning_Form) to organize their feedback on areas of strength and areas for growth, prepare guiding questions, and plan targeted supports for the candidate.

## **Conducting the Post-Conference**

Ideally, the post-conference occurs one to two days after the observation and lasts between 20-30 minutes. Post-conferences should not occur immediately after the lesson as this does not allow for sufficient time for the supervisor(s) to synthesize and calibrate on evidence and feedback or for the candidate to adequately reflect.

The post-conference should include an introduction, discussion of areas of strength and areas for growth, and a summary of the next steps.

**Post-Conference Introduction (5 min)**

The introduction helps to set the tone and purpose of the post-conference. While it may appear overly formal it can be valuable in establishing routines that help to keep the conversation focused and brief.

Below is an example of one approach to the introduction of a post-conference:

* Greeting: *“Thanks for taking the time to meet with me. I’m really looking forward to our discussion on the lesson I was able to see in action.”*
* Time: “*This discussion should take us about 30 minutes”*
* Set Purpose: *“The purpose of our conversation is for us to identify both current strengths and areas for growth in your practice”*
* Probe for self-reflection: *“What are your thoughts about how the students responded to the lesson?”* OR if the candidate already completed the self-reflection form, “*I saw from your reflection that \_\_\_”*

**Discussion of Areas of Strength and Areas for Growth Improvement (20 min)**

The discussion about strengths and areas for growth should begin by outlining the strengths and then transitioning to the areas for growth. Throughout, the supervisor should provide specific examples from the observation as evidence.

Below is an example of one approach to the discussion:

* Share areas of strength:
  + Provide evidence from observation: “*There were several instances throughout the lesson where you asked a variety of questions to check for student understanding. For example, after showing the pictograph you…”*
  + State impact on students: *“In doing so, students were required to justify their thinking, and it allowed you to quickly identify misconceptions in students understanding.”*
  + Provide recommended action: “*Continue to…”*
* Share areas for growth:
  + Ask self-reflection question: Ask a specific question to prompt the teacher to talk about what you want him or her to improve. Utilize a question that includes specific language from the rubric, which can lead the teacher to reflect on the element you have identified as his/her area for growth as it relates to the lesson. For example: “*When developing lessons, how do you decide on the pacing so sufficient time is allocated for each segment?”*
  + Share evidence from observation: “*You mentioned that you wanted students to be able to work in groups and then report their findings. However, there was not sufficient time for this to occur during the lesson. According to the observation log, the first 6 minutes were spent organizing materials and transitioning students; the next 23 minutes were spent with you modeling the objective with some built-in question-and-answer time.”*
  + Provide concrete suggestions for how to improve: “*As you modeled how to analyze a pictograph, students could have worked with their group to answer your questions prior to you providing the answer, then they could have reported their findings to the class. This would have still allowed you to model but would have also allowed students to work together to analyze the pictograph. Students who may not have needed this review could have worked independently in a group to analyze their own pictograph while the rest of the class participated in your modeling. This would have also allowed you to differentiate the pacing of the lesson. Another option could be to segment into two different lessons.”*
  + Provide recommended action: “*Moving forward…*”
  + Share resource/support: *“As you work to refine this skill, I think it might be helpful if you go and observe Ms. Eunice in 3rd grade who is very skilled in this area. I’ve already spoken with her, and she has agreed to an observation and debrief next week.”*

**Post-Conference Closure** (5 min)

Supervisors should leave time at the end of the conference to summarize any takeaways from the conversation.

Below is an example of one approach to post-conference closure:

* Share CAP Observation Form: *“I’ve categorized the evidence from the observation as well as recorded the areas of strength and areas for growth and action steps here…”*
* Leave time for questions: *“Do you have any other questions?”*
* Confirm next steps in process: “*The next formal observation will be unannounced and conducted by your supervising practitioner. Because it is the second observation, she will be focusing evidence collection on the areas of growth that we discussed today in addition to the three required focus elements”*

# Appendix

The following pages include three template forms that may be adopted or adapted to support the Model Observation Protocol.

* [Pre-Conference Planning Form](#_Pre-Conference_Planning_Form)
* [Post-Conference Planning Form](#_Post-Conference_Planning_Form)
* [Candidate Observation Self-Reflection Form](#_Candidate_Self-Reflection_Form)

# Pre-Conference Planning Form

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| **Observation Details** | |
| Candidate Name |  |
| Observation Date and Time |  |
| Leson Objective |  |
| Format | *Whole group, small group, one-on-one, other* |
| Type of Observation | *Announced, unannounced* |
| Observer(s) | *Supervising practitioner, program supervisor* |

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| **Areas for Growth Previously Identified** |
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| **Questions to ask in Pre-Conference** |
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| **Element** | **Evidence from Lesson Plan and Materials** |
| I-A-1 Subject Matter Knowledge |  |
| II-A-1 High Expectations and Support |  |
| II-A-3 Inclusive Instruction |  |
| II-B-2 Safe Learning Environment |  |
| I-C-2 Adjustments to Practice |  |
| III-C-1 Collaboration on Student Learning and Well-Being |  |
| IV-A-1 Reflective Practice |  |

# Post-Conference Planning Form

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| **Observation Details** | |
| Candidate Name |  |
| Observation Date and Time |  |
| Leson Objective |  |
| Format | *Whole group, small group, one-on-one, other* |
| Type of Observation | *Announced, unannounced* |
| Observer(s) | *Supervising practitioner, program supervisor* |

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| **Area of Strength #1** | |
| **Required Focus Elements Optional Elements**  □ I-A-1 Subject Matter Knowledge □ II-B-2 Safe Learning Environment  □ II-A-1 High Expectations and Support □ I.C.2 Adjustments to Practice  □ II-A-3 Inclusive Instruction □ III-C-1 Collaboration on Student Learning and Well-Being  □ IV-A-1 Reflective Practice | |
| Evidence from Observation |  |
| Reflection Questions for Candidate |  |
| Recommended Action(s) |  |
| Potential Resources and Supports to Elevate Practice |  |

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| **Area of Strength #2** | |
| **Required Focus Elements Optional Elements**  □ I-A-1 Subject Matter Knowledge □ II-B-2 Safe Learning Environment  □ II-A-1 High Expectations and Support □ I.C.2 Adjustments to Practice  □ II-A-3 Inclusive Instruction □ III-C-1 Collaboration on Student Learning and Well-Being  □ IV-A-1 Reflective Practice | |
| Evidence from Observation |  |
| Reflection Questions for Candidate |  |
| Recommended Action(s) |  |
| Potential Resources and Supports to Elevate Practice |  |

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| **Area for Growth #1** | |
| **Required Focus Elements Optional Elements**  □ I-A-1 Subject Matter Knowledge □ II-B-2 Safe Learning Environment  □ II-A-1 High Expectations and Support □ I.C.2 Adjustments to Practice  □ II-A-3 Inclusive Instruction □ III-C-1 Collaboration on Student Learning and Well-Being  □ IV-A-1 Reflective Practice | |
| Evidence from Observation |  |
| Reflection Questions for Candidate |  |
| Recommended Action(s) |  |
| Potential Resources and Supports to Improve Practice |  |

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| **Area for Growth #2** | |
| **Required Focus Elements Optional Elements**  □ I-A-1 Subject Matter Knowledge □ II-B-2 Safe Learning Environment  □ II-A-1 High Expectations and Support □ I.C.2 Adjustments to Practice  □ II-A-3 Inclusive Instruction □ III-C-1 Collaboration on Student Learning and Well-Being  □ IV-A-1 Reflective Practice | |
| Evidence from Observation |  |
| Reflection Questions for Candidate |  |
| Recommended Action(s) |  |
| Potential Resources and Supports to Improve Practice |  |

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| **Upcoming Steps in the CAP Process** |
| * Next Observation Date, Type, and Focus: * Next Three-Way Meeting Date and Focus: * Other Notes: |

# Candidate Observation Self-Reflection Form

Please use the form below to reflect on your lesson following each announced or an unannounced observation. Submit the form to your program supervisor and supervising practitioner within 24 hours of the observation.

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| **Observation Details** | |
| Candidate Name |  |
| Observation Date and Time |  |
| Leson Objective |  |
| Format | *Whole group, small group, one-on-one, other* |
| Type of Observation | *Announced, unannounced* |
| Observer(s) | *Supervising practitioner, program supervisor* |

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| **What do you think went particularly well? How did this strength positively impact your students’ learning?** |
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| **If you could teach this lesson again, is there anything you would do differently? How may this have impacted students’ learning?** |
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Where possible, provide one piece of evidence that you believe demonstrates your performance relative to the quality, consistency or scope of each Essential Element.

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| **Element** | **Evidence** |
| I-A-1 Subject Matter Knowledge |  |
| II-A-1 High Expectations and Support |  |
| II-A-3 Inclusive Instruction |  |
| II-B-2 Safe Learning Environment |  |
| I-C-2 Adjustments to Practice |  |
| III-C-1 Collaboration on Student Learning and Well-Being |  |
| IV-A-1 Reflective Practice |  |