

# OBSERVATION TO SHADOW COACHING

Māori students enjoying and achieving success as Māori

85% NCEA Level 2 & qualifications for tertiary education

## The process

Observation to Shadow Coaching is a process designed to collect evidence of practice that then informs a follow-up ako: critical learning conversation with the teacher.

Throughout this conversation, pedagogy is unpacked and a shadow coaching plan is put in place which will enable the teacher to continue to develop their understanding of culturally responsive and relational pedagogy. This process provides an opportunity for both the teacher and the observer to learn and reflect alongside each other.

The teacher gets the opportunity to unpack their pedagogy using their own prior knowledge and experience. Together, critical, reflective and probing questions are asked. It is very much a teacher-led conversation, a chance to reflect and come up with new approaches within their classroom.

The observation and shadow coaching plan are framed and understood within the ako: critical learning conversation. This critical learning conversation enables a seamless transition from collecting and understanding the evidence (*conscientisation*), identifying the unlearning and new learning needed (*resistance*) and then planning for the application of new practice (potential for *transformative praxis*).

## The growth tool

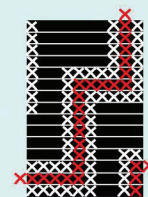
The culturally responsive and relational pedagogy observation tool is the growth tool within the Kia Eke Panuku set of SMART tools.

The classroom observation tool is used to help the teacher to develop their understandings around what culturally responsive and relational pedagogy can look like and sound like in their classroom.

## Learning to use the tool

For people who are familiar with classroom observations such as Rongohia te Hau, or for those who have an understanding of culturally responsive and relational pedagogy, the observation tool is relatively straightforward to use and does not need a lot of additional training. This is hugely beneficial when it is our goal to spread the use of it within schools.

With some initial support, members of the strategic change leadership team can use the tool. Heads of Departments can also learn to use the tool to support the teachers within their department to embed culturally responsive and relational pedagogy in their day-to-day practice.



**Kia Eke Panuku**  
building on success

## Observation

The observer uses the observation tool to take a 20-minute 'slice of time'.

They record evidence of the learning environment and context such as how the lesson outline, learning intentions and/or success criteria are shared; what tasks students are engaged in; how the class is arranged; where the Māori students are located, how many there are and who is engaged; what is on the walls; whose language and icons are being used etc.

They also record evidence of what the teacher and students are actually doing and saying - what the observer actually sees and hears - not by interpreting or summarising what they think is happening.

A number of Māori students are asked what they thought of the lesson, was it challenging learning? How much work did they get done? This evidence adds to the picture of the lesson that is then discussed in a learning conversation with the teacher.

In a sense, the observer acts as a metaphorical video camera in the classroom. Observers are encouraged to record as much as practical of what they hear and see during the 20 minutes. The more the evidence records exactly what is said and done, the richer the learning conversation.

## To...

Between the observation and the follow-up shadow coaching conversation with the teacher, the observer begins to make the links between the teacher's behaviours (what they said and did) that have been recorded and the elements of culturally responsive and relational pedagogy.

## Shadow coaching

Shadow coaching needs to happen shortly after the observation so that both the observer and the teacher are able to recall the lesson in greater detail.

The observed teacher and the observer reflect together about what happened in that lesson; what worked well and why; and how to further embed culturally responsive and relational pedagogies to accelerate learning for Māori students.

Then they ask the big questions - so what might need to change? And how can we support that to happen?

Based on the evidence, the teacher and the observer construct the next steps that are linked to culturally responsive and relational pedagogy. They agree to what support is needed to help the teacher implement these next steps into their day-to-day practice, how that support can best be provided, and by whom.

Often this process in schools requires some unlearning. Some teachers hesitate around the learning conversation because they feel they should already know everything there is to know about pedagogy. They also know most about their specialist curriculum area and all they want to do is to 'teach the stuff'.

This 'expert' approach can lead to 'I know it all and I will fill you up with my knowledge' rather than being able to learn from each other. When they understand this, they realise it is equally true for teachers as it is for students.

## Ako - learning alongside and with

Through this process of making links between practice (what was observed) and theory (what we understand about this in terms of effective pedagogy) both the teacher and observer are able to deepen their own understandings about culturally responsive and relational pedagogy.

**Ako - learning  
alongside and with  
cont'd**

We stress the magic of learning alongside and with each other in a non-judgmental space, which leads to greater benefits for all involved.

The observation to shadow coaching process supports teachers (whether they are the observer or being observed) to think critically about their day-to-day classroom practice and how this might be promoting learning for their Māori students or not. The evidence of their practice provides a platform for an ako: critical learning conversation that can involve unlearning, perhaps relearning and hopefully new learning that is more effective.