



Professional Development Assignment (PDA)

This version of the Professional Development Assignment includes integrated guidance notes in shaded boxes after each section of the assignment.

Introduction

The focus of this assignment is development and extension of the candidate's teaching skills. It includes:

Part A: Reflection and Action – 2,000-2,500 words

Part B: Experimental Practice – 2,000-2,500 words plus lesson plan

- Reflection and Action includes a series of tasks and activities which candidates work on throughout the Delta course.
- Experimental practice involves exploration into a specific lesson approach/procedure/technique with which the candidate is unfamiliar.

Part A: Reflection and Action

Assignment outline and summary of stages

Stage 1 Diagnostic observation (There is no written submission for Stage 1.)

- At the beginning of the course the candidate plans and teaches a lesson or part of a lesson (minimum 45 and maximum 60 minutes).

The diagnostic observation should be as soon after the beginning of the course as possible to ensure candidates have sufficient time to complete Stages 1 and 2 before the first assessed lessons. Candidates may (but are not required to) include the lesson plan and any other relevant materials in the appendix to Stage 2.

- The lesson is observed by an approved Delta tutor.
- A post-lesson discussion is held between the candidate and the tutor (and, if appropriate/relevant, includes feedback from colleagues and/or peers).
- During the discussion full oral and written feedback is given by the tutor and included in the candidate's coursework portfolio as an appendix to the PDA.
- The lesson is not formally assessed or graded and does not contribute to the grade received by the candidate in this module.

See below for an outline of the stages and how they relate to other assignments in Module Two.

Stage 2 (maximum 1,000 words)

Suggested weighting would be approximately;

- Reflection and comment on beliefs and practices, strengths and weaknesses, and possible reasons (500 words)
- Action plan, approaches/methods/documents, etc (500 words)

After the diagnostic observation, candidates:

- reflect and comment on their beliefs and practices as a teacher

Candidates' comments should be related to beliefs and practices that are generally true of their teaching rather than exclusive to the diagnostic lesson itself. However, candidates can refer to specific instances from the lesson where these exemplify wider observations about their teaching practices. Candidates may refer to any beliefs questionnaires they may have completed.

- identify key strengths and weaknesses in their teaching and comment on the positive and negative effects of these on their learners

Candidates can refer to the following in their comments:

- previous feedback on their teaching (e.g. from their institution, learners, colleagues)
- their own awareness of previous strengths and weaknesses
- previous teacher training courses and in-service teacher training (INSETT)
- observations made by their tutor, their own observations, and the learners' performance and responses during and/or after the diagnostic lesson.

identify the possible reasons for these key strengths and weaknesses

Candidates can refer to the following:

- their preferred teaching styles, techniques and procedures
- their beliefs about learning and teaching
- a pervading view of teaching present in their context that may or may not be best suited to all learners within that context
- the needs and teaching preferences of institutions they have worked for
- over application of 'favourite' techniques and procedures
- coursebook methodologies (not) suited to specific contexts
- (in)ability to adapt their methods, techniques and procedures to specific contexts
- lack of knowledge in particular linguistic or methodological areas
- lack of confidence in carrying out particular methods, techniques and procedures
- any initial teacher training and developmental training they have experienced in their teaching career.

produce an action plan for the development of their teaching in response to the significant weaknesses they have identified

Candidates should:

- specify which of the weaknesses they intend to focus on for developmental purposes in their assessed assignments
- prioritise those weaknesses that most affect their students' ability to learn and their own practices as a teacher.

The action plan should:

- include 3-5 points to work on
- indicate the time frame in which the candidate will work on each point
- outline clearly how each point is to be addressed
- suggest ways of evaluating whether progress has been made for each point

The action plan may take the form of a chart, but sufficient explanation is required in prose form.

- select approaches, procedures, techniques or materials that will allow them to develop their teaching skills and enhance their learners' learning experiences

Candidates should refer specifically to the weakness(es) they have previously chosen to focus on for developmental purposes in their assessed assignments. If necessary, candidates should seek tutor guidance when identifying and selecting these approaches, methods etc.

- select and/or design methods and/or documents for gathering data that will allow them to focus specifically on their performance in their assessed assignments during the Delta course, and briefly explain the reasons for choice(s). Candidates may also refer to any other lessons they are teaching during the Delta course.

Methods and/or documents must include observation tasks (for use with their own and other teachers' lessons). Other methods/documents could be video evidence, questionnaires, interviews, tests etc. Any examples should be included as appendices and are not included in the word count for Stage 2 of the assignment.

Stage 3 (maximum 750 words)

Suggested weighting would be approximately;

- Reflection on developments in practices, evaluation of steps taken (300 words)
- Current weaknesses (150 words)
- Future action (300 words)

Candidates complete the first two of their Language Systems/Skills Assignments after which, with reference to their action plan from Stage 2, they:

- identify and comment on any key development(s) they have made in their teaching practices since the diagnostic observation

Candidates can comment on the developments they have made in any lessons they have given during their Delta course as well as in their assessed assignments.

Candidates can refer to the following in their comments:

- their Post-lesson evaluations
- evidence gathered from the methods and/or documents they designed in Stage 2
- other observations they and their tutor/observer/learners have made.

Comments should be related to practices that are generally true of their teaching rather than exclusive to the assessed assignments or other specific lessons. However, candidates can refer to specific instances from lessons where these exemplify wider observations about their teaching practices.

- reflect on the effectiveness of the approaches, methods, techniques and materials they selected in Stage 2 in terms of how these have helped their development as teachers

Candidates should refer to the approaches, procedures, techniques or materials they identified in Stage 2 as a means for developing their teaching practices.

identify and comment on the most significant current weaknesses in their teaching practices

Candidates should prioritise those weaknesses that most affect their students' ability to learn and their own practices as a teacher. Weaknesses may include areas previously identified in Stage 2 and/or those which have arisen as a result of the lessons they have taught in their Delta course so far.

- select approaches, procedures, techniques or materials that will allow them to develop their teaching skills and enhance their learners' learning experiences

Candidates should:

- refer specifically to the weakness(es) they have chosen to focus on for developmental purposes in their subsequent assignments
 - modify, where appropriate and relevant, the selection of approaches, procedures, techniques or materials they identified in Stage 2.
- select and/or design methods and/or documents for gathering data that will allow them to focus specifically on their performance in their remaining assignments and briefly explain the reasons for choice(s)

Candidates can select from the methods and/or documents identified in Stage 2 of this assignment and/or modify/add to the selection.

Stage 4 (maximum 750 words)

Suggested weighting would be approximately;

- Reflection on developments in beliefs and practices (300 words)
- Evaluation of steps taken (200 words)
- Future action (250 words)

When all internal assignments have been completed, candidates:

- identify and comment on how their beliefs about teaching and learning and their classroom practices have changed as a result of this assignment

Candidates should refer specifically to:

- the beliefs they identified in Stage 2 of this assignment
 - evidence gathered in Language Systems/Skills Assignments and the Experimental Practice Assignment.
- identify and critically evaluate the most effective procedures and/or methods and/or documents for reflection and observation they have used for their own professional development in this assignment

Candidates should:

- refer to the procedures/methods/documents they have designed themselves or selected from published or other sources
- focus specifically on the procedures/methods/documents that have been most useful in their development (not attempt to discuss all procedures/methods/techniques previously identified)
- give reasons for choosing specific procedures/methods/documents for comment.

- outline how they will continue to use these as part of their own continuing professional development

Candidates should:

- ensure that the outline they give is practical and convincing for the reader
- give reasons for their choice of ways in which to use specific procedures/methods/documents in their CPD
- state when and how these procedures/methods/techniques could be modified.

Part B: Specifications for Part B Experimental Practice

Length 2,000-2,500 words (excluding the lesson plan but including the post-lesson evaluation)

Candidates:

- describe the background to the chosen area in terms of theory and practice

- Candidates should choose an area (teaching/learning procedure/technique) that is new for them, i.e. they have never used it in the classroom before.
- The chosen area need not be something that is widely considered innovative but may be something that is already used widely in TESOL (although never used by the candidate before).
- The background description should include the theory underpinning the procedure/technique and the effects/benefits for learners.

- explain their professional interest in this area in terms of experience, personal teaching preferences, and their own professional development

Candidates may (but are not required to) refer to the action plan they have devised for Part A (Reflection and Action) of the Professional Development Assignment.

- identify objectives from the learners' and teacher's point of view for the experiment

- Candidates may (but are not required to) refer to the action plan they have devised for Part A (Reflection and Action A) of the Professional Development Assignment.
- Objectives from the learners' point of view may be expressed as learning outcomes.
- Objectives from the teacher's point of view may be expressed as outcomes in terms of professional interest, personal teaching preferences and the candidate's own professional development.

- identify ways of finding out how far these objectives have been met

- Candidates may (but are not required to) refer to procedures, methods and documents for observation and reflection they have identified in Part A (Reflection and action) of the Professional Development Assignment.
- Candidates should identify, select and/or develop methods, procedures and/or documents to evaluate the effectiveness of the experiment.
- Candidates should include explicit reference to, and give examples of, procedures, methods and documents for observation and reflection.

- plan and teach a lesson using the experimental lesson approach, teaching procedure/technique

- Candidates should provide a full lesson plan and accompanying material as part of this assignment.
- The lesson should be a minimum of 45 and a maximum of 60 minutes in length.

- retrospectively:
 - evaluate the lesson in terms of identified learning and teaching objectives

Candidates may (but are not required to) have a colleague peer-observe this lesson.

- identify ways in which this area may be adapted for inclusion in future work (or consider and explain why this area is not worth further extension or adaptation).

Candidates may (but are not required to):

- refer to the action plan they have devised for Reflection and Action.
- devise an action plan for future professional development.