# Record of Observation or Review of Teaching Practice

Session/artefact to be observed/reviewed:

13th Feb – 45 minute Handling Session for Graphic Design Communication, 3rd Year students.

Size of student group: 6-12

Observer: Kalpesh Lathigra

Observee: Lucy Parker

##### 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 OneObservee to complete in brief and send to observer prior to the observation or review:

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

*Tutor arranged a special session for students [BA Graphic Design Communication] so they can familiarise themselves with the resources accessible to them through Special Collections and Archives. This is a supplementary session arranged during 'Activities Week'. Students were self-selecting. This is not always the case, it depends on the session.*

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

*0 - this is a one off session. But we have delivered many other sessions across design courses before*

What are the intended or expected learning outcomes?

* *Become familiar with collections of the Archives and Special Collections Centre that might be relevant to their research.*
* *Become confident to physically handle archival material*
* *Students feel equipped to book an appointment with us and follow up with us if they have questions.*
* *Know where to gain further skills through ASO and Libguides pages*

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

* *Optional - to book in with the ASCC to undertake further research*
* *Optional - to book into our Academic Support Sessions to learn new skills*

Are there potential difficulties or specific areas of concern?

* *Ensuring students feel confident to handle the material*
* *Ensuring students feel confident to ask questions*

How will students be informed of the observation/review?

* *Email in advance and in person on the day*

What would you particularly like feedback on?

* *Is my delivery clear? Is there anything that may be difficult to understand, especially mindful of students with English as a second language*
* *Any other feedback is helpful*

How will feedback be exchanged?

* *[In written form, over email. And when exchanged, shared on our blogs]*

## Part Two

### Observer to note down observations, suggestions and questions:

General Observations

*You set out a wonderful environment for the students. Using the space and having a focus of attention with the artefacts and archives on a central table allowing the students to form a group that felt a communual experience.*

*This I feel made them feel engaged and interested to be there.*

*Your warm relaxed welcome helped immensely, I think sometimes whilst archives are precious they seem almost that it can discourage interaction. I felt that you gave permission to be involved actively by setting some parmeters but at the same time showing by example how to look and handle the artfects.*

*You explained cleary the terminology of archives and their role in society and education.*

*Relating the history of the inst*itution and its defining role for example in the Kubrick archive in a concise delivery allowed for drawing upon “popular culture”. It made me think of how to grasp and hold attention using popular culture as a hook and then allowing the students to make connections, a leap of imagination of the importance of archival practice.

*What I felt worked really well was relaying the opportunities for the students in accessing the archives. You empasised the accessibility of online resources with clarity especially the workshops available to them , the booking procedures and opening times.*

*I liked that you had printed sheets that had all the information for them to take away in a physical form rather than just digital delivery,*

*Academic support again was a vital point you conveyed, this allowed for the students to feel that they can return with questions and help was there for them.*

***Teaching and Supporting Learning***

*I love that you encouraged everyone to interact with the archives. The questions you promted with students , I am sure you knew would be asked but it allowed them permission to ask and also formulate opinions around archives and I felt that this encouraged them to understand how an archive can ineract with their practices. Within this you showed examples that directly related to the variety of courses that use the archive.*

*The variety of resources from historial to contemporary that you introduced was fascinating.*

*It opened up discussions of what is an archive – the physical objects are a point in question.*

*To use your terminology of “object reading” – “ explore an object is closely, in different ways, through themes, material qualities, and emotional responses, or different critical lenses”*

*This for me was an essential facet in your teaching – it askes the questions of the audience and makes them really think beyond their expectations or knowledge base. In turn this then impacts on their learning experience to allow for critical thinking .*

***Designing & Planning for Learning***

*If time allows , a tour of the actual archival offices would be great introduction. I think accessiblity in terms of “ here is the space the magic happens”. Its like the students come into the darkroom – there is an initial fear but once they start to use and access it becomes second nature. I however also understand practically this may not be possible due to space and critical safety and the very nature of archival spaces as keeping sometimes fragile objects.*

*Setting a couple of exercises that can start them thinking about archives in a practical way from the start as part of the welcome to the archive unit.*

*Maybe asking each student to chose an artefact and talk briefly about how they envisage they could incorporate in to their practice.*

*An exercise to start with maybe using their phones in either creating an immediate archive. For example making a series of portraits or still lives in the space. As photographs are usually the common currency of personal archives – this may make for a good introduction and facilitate an activity that gets them involved as a group.*

In sum:

*Thank You Lucy ! It was an absolute privilege to observe you introducing students to both what the archive unit does and what it can offer the students.Its was wonderful to see you interacting with the students and making then feel at ease.*

## Part Three

### Observee to reflect on the observer’s comments and describe how they will act on the feedback exchanged:

*Thanks Kal!*

*I’m glad the variety of resources prompted students to think beyond their expectations, encouraging critical thinking and a deeper learning experience. Often, the first encounter with an archival object sparks curiosity—students ask, "What am I looking at?" and "Why is this here?" We actively encourage these types of questions in our sessions.*

*We offer a range of session formats. Occasionally, we can provide an archive tour, which, I agree, captures the “magic” of behind-the-scenes exploration. However, it does depend on practical factors such as student numbers, staff capacity, and the availability of the archive space. For instance, if researchers are using the archive, we may not be able to accommodate a tour. We sometimes ask tutors to book an alternative space due to the small capacity of the search room (5-8 students). In larger rooms, we limit the number to 15-20 students during handling sessions to ensure access to materials, and to preserve them. I’m glad you found the central table effective! Itt’s partly for practical reasons, so I can keep everything in view, but it does help to have everyone gathered around as well!*

*For larger cohorts, we often hold multiple 30-minute back-to-back sessions for 15-20 students each. The challenge is to balance conveying practical information on accessing archives with engaging students’ curiosity. The hand-outs are useful, I think, but I would like to improve them a bit with QR codes so that they can also be taken directly to more resources and our catalogues.*

*We do also tailor some sessions to specific course needs. For example, we work with tutors to integrate use of archival objects into a project brief, encouraging students to engage with materials. Exploring digital phone photography as an archive is a great idea. In terms of engaging students with pop culture, I agree that is also useful – I can’t quite remember what I said in the session you came to! Whilst Kubrick’s films are popular, many younger students who may not have seen his films, so I often reference the "Barbie" movie, which references 2001: A Space Odyssey in the opening scene. Last year ran some extra-curricular film screenings a little while back as another engagement activity.*

*Additionally, we run participatory sessions focused on specific objects or lines of enquiry, through academic support workshops. These are self-selective, but students seem to get a lot out of them. The handling sessions you observed are designed as a basic first intro to our collections, after which students may return to us for workshops, personal research, or within future courses. We also flag to students we are open to the public so they can still come back to use us after they graduate.*

*Cheers!*