Guidelines for Medical Faculty Implementation of OSTE

2025

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1. Purpose and Objectives

- **Purpose**: The OSTE is designed to enhance teaching effectiveness and provide structured feedback to faculty members in medical education.
- **Objectives**:
  - Evaluate and improve teaching skills, including communication, feedback delivery, and learner engagement.
  - Provide faculty members with constructive feedback to foster professional development.
  - Create a standardized approach to assess and improve teaching practices.

2. Key Competencies to Assess

- **Communication Skills**: Ability to explain complex medical concepts clearly and concisely.
- **Feedback and Coaching**: Skills in delivering constructive, actionable feedback to students.
- **Adaptability**: Handling difficult questions or situations with different learner types.
- **Professionalism**: Demonstrating empathy, respect, and professionalism while teaching.
- **Engagement**: Engaging learners, promoting critical thinking, and fostering a supportive learning environment.

3. Designing OSTE Scenarios

- **Develop Realistic Teaching Scenarios**:
  - Based on real-life situations in medical education (e.g., explaining complex clinical cases, giving feedback on clinical performance).
  - Scenarios should be structured to assess specific teaching skills, with a clear objective for each.
  - Each scenario should have time limits (e.g., 10-15 minutes per encounter).
- **Use of Standardized Learners**:
  - Use trained actors or students to simulate the role of medical learners.
  - Standardized learners should be briefed on the role they need to play (e.g., an underperforming student who needs feedback or a high-achieving student who seeks more in-depth knowledge).

4. Logistics and Administration

- **Faculty Selection**: Faculty members who participate in OSTE should be selected based on the need for professional development or part of a regular faculty assessment cycle.
- **Scheduling**: Set aside specific times in the academic year for OSTE sessions, ensuring faculty have enough time to prepare.
- **Facilities and Equipment**: Reserve rooms that simulate a real classroom or clinical setting and ensure audiovisual recording for feedback purposes.

5. Training of Standardized Learners and Evaluators

- **Standardized Learners**: Provide detailed training for actors/students on how to play their role consistently across different faculty encounters. They should also be trained to provide feedback if applicable.
- **Evaluators**:
    - Select experienced educators or clinical instructors to serve as evaluators.
    - Train them on how to assess teaching skills using a structured rubric (see below).
    - Ensure that evaluators understand how to provide balanced, constructive feedback.

6. Assessment Rubric

Develop a standardized rubric to evaluate teaching skills during OSTE. Key areas to assess:

- **Communication** (clarity, structure of explanation)
- **Learner Engagement** (how the faculty encourages participation, manages questions)
- **Feedback Quality** (specificity, constructiveness, and tone)
- **Adaptability** (response to learner confusion or challenges)
- **Professionalism** (demeanor, respectfulness)

7. Feedback and Reflection

- **Immediate Feedback**: After each OSTE session, evaluators should provide immediate feedback based on the assessment rubric.
- **Structured Reflection**:
    - Faculty members should complete a self-reflection exercise after receiving feedback, discussing their strengths and areas for improvement.
    - Use written feedback forms or discussion sessions for deeper reflection.

8. Follow-Up and Continuous Improvement

- **Development Plans**: Based on OSTE results, faculty should create personal development plans to address identified areas for growth.
- **Repeat Encounters**: OSTE should be a recurring process, allowing faculty to demonstrate improvement in follow-up sessions.
- **Workshops and Resources**: Offer faculty development workshops to support the skills identified during OSTE, such as advanced communication techniques or feedback methodologies.

9. Evaluation of the OSTE Program

- **Faculty Satisfaction**: Survey participants to assess their experience with the OSTE process and its impact on their teaching.

- **Impact on Teaching Quality**: Gather data on whether teaching improvements are observed in real classroom or clinical settings post-OSTE.
- **Continuous Review**: Regularly update the OSTE scenarios and rubrics to reflect changes in medical education trends and needs.

10. Ethical Considerations

- **Confidentiality**: Maintain the confidentiality of the feedback and evaluations provided during the OSTE to ensure a non-threatening learning environment for faculty.
- **Fairness**: Ensure that all faculty members are treated equally during the assessment process and that standardized learners act consistently.

By following these guidelines, the medical faculty can successfully implement a structured, fair, and beneficial OSTE process that contributes to the professional growth of educators and improves the overall quality of teaching in the institution.

OSTE Assessment Rubric

1. Communication Skills

- **Objective**: Assess how well the educator communicates complex information in an understandable and organized manner.

Criterion	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
Clarity of Instruction	Concepts are clearly explained with appropriate detail and examples.	Concepts are mostly clear, though a few points need further elaboration.	Concepts are somewhat clear, but some areas cause confusion.	Concepts are unclear; key points are hard to follow.	Explanation is disorganized, vague, and lacks clarity.
Use of Language	Uses precise and professional language, adapted to learner level.	Uses professional language, with occasional adjustments for learners.	Language is mostly appropriate, though a bit too technical or simple.	Language is often too technical or overly simplified.	Uses jargon or inappropriate language frequently.
Engagement in Discussion	Encourages active participation and incorporates	Encourages participation but may miss some learner cues.	Occasionally invites participation but lacks consistency.	Rarely encourages engagement from learners.	No attempts to engage learners or involve them in the discussion.

Criterion	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
	learner input seamlessly.				

2. Learner Engagement

- **Objective**: Assess the educator's ability to actively involve learners in the teaching process and adjust based on learner needs.

Criterion	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
Involvement of Learners	Actively involves all learners, asks probing questions, and ensures participation.	Engages most learners effectively but misses a few opportunities to involve quieter participants.	Involves some learners but does not maintain engagement throughout.	Minimal involvement of learners; relies on lecture format.	No meaningful engagement with learners is attempted.
Responding to Learner Cues	Adapts teaching style based on verbal and non-verbal cues from learners.	Occasionally adapts teaching in response to learner cues.	Some effort is made to adjust to learners but not consistently.	Rarely adjusts based on learner feedback or behavior.	Completely ignores learner feedback or confusion cues.
Use of Interactive Methods	Incorporates a wide range of interactive teaching methods (questions, activities).	Uses some interactive methods but could add more variety.	Occasionally uses interactive techniques, but they lack depth.	Limited or ineffective use of interactive techniques.	No interactive methods used; completely passive delivery.

3. Feedback Delivery

- **Objective**: Evaluate the educator's ability to provide constructive and actionable feedback to learners.

Criterion	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
Specificity of Feedback	Provides highly specific, detailed, and actionable feedback.	Feedback is specific but could offer more detail or examples.	Feedback is general but somewhat useful for learners.	Feedback lacks specificity and is too broad to be actionable.	Feedback is vague and offers no clear guidance.
Constructiveness	Feedback is always constructive, focusing on improvement in a positive manner.	Mostly constructive, though occasional feedback may seem critical.	Feedback is balanced but lacks consistent positivity.	Feedback can be overly critical or not helpful.	Feedback is harsh or negative, with little focus on improvement.
Timeliness of Feedback	Delivers feedback promptly and at appropriate moments during the session.	Feedback is mostly timely but may miss key opportunities for immediacy.	Feedback is given, but some delays are noticeable.	Feedback is delayed or poorly timed in relation to learner performance.	Feedback is not given in a timely manner, or key moments are missed.

4. Adaptability

- **Objective**: Assess the educator's ability to adapt to unexpected questions, challenges, or learner needs.

Criterion	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
Handling Learner Confusion	Quickly recognizes and responds to confusion, adjusting the explanation effectively.	Responds to confusion but may miss subtle signs.	Notices some confusion but may not fully address it.	Struggles to recognize learner confusion or respond adequately.	Fails to address learner confusion, or worsens it.
Flexibility in Teaching Approach	Can smoothly shift teaching methods to meet the needs of different learners.	Makes some adjustments but sticks mainly to a	Occasionally adjusts, but tends to follow the same routine.	Rarely adjusts methods even when needed.	Rigidly sticks to one method, regardless of learner needs.

Criterion	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
		single teaching style.			
Managing Unexpected Situations	Handles unexpected questions or disruptions with ease and professionalism.	Handles most unexpected challenges well but may struggle occasionally.	Manages some unexpected situations, but performance is uneven.	Struggles with unexpected questions or learner issues.	Completely loses control or cannot handle unexpected challenges.

5. Professionalism

- **Objective**: Evaluate the educator's demeanor, respectfulness, and ability to maintain a professional environment.

Criterion	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
Respectful Communication	Always speaks to learners with respect, even in challenging situations.	Usually respectful, with occasional lapses in tone or language.	Generally respectful, but could improve in difficult situations.	Sometimes speaks in a disrespectful or condescending tone.	Frequently disrespectful or unprofessional in tone.
Empathy and Sensitivity	Demonstrates high levels of empathy, especially in providing feedback.	Shows empathy in most situations but may miss subtle emotional cues.	Occasionally shows empathy but can be inconsistent.	Lacks empathy or sensitivity in challenging situations.	Shows no empathy or sensitivity to learners' needs.
Professional Conduct	Maintains professionalism in all interactions and throughout the session.	Conduct is mostly professional but may slip in high-pressure moments.	Generally professional but with occasional lapses.	Frequently unprofessional in demeanor or approach.	Consistently unprofessional in interactions with learners.

6. Overall Teaching Effectiveness

- **Objective**: Provide an overall assessment of the educator's teaching performance, taking into account all criteria.

Criterion	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)
Overall Performance	Highly effective in all teaching areas, provides an exemplary learning experience.	Effective in most areas, with a few minor areas for improvement.	Adequate performance, though room for growth is evident.	Performance is weak in several key areas, needs improvement.	Performance is poor, ineffective as an educator.

Scoring Guidelines:

- **Excellent (5)**: Demonstrates mastery of the teaching skill; consistently effective.
- **Good (4)**: Competent, with minor areas for improvement.
- **Satisfactory (3)**: Adequate performance but requires improvement in several areas.
- **Needs Improvement (2)**: Significant room for improvement; key areas of concern.
- **Unsatisfactory (1)**: Inadequate performance; serious issues that require immediate attention.

Final Scoring and Feedback

- Provide an overall score based on the rubric and suggest areas for improvement.
- Summarize strengths and areas to develop.
- Offer specific recommendations for targeted improvement.

This detailed rubric provides a comprehensive, structured way to assess teaching performance during an OSTE, ensuring that feedback is clear, objective, and actionable.

Follow-Up and Continuous Improvement: Detailed Guidelines

1. Post-OSTE Debriefing Session

- **Immediate Feedback Discussion**: Schedule a one-on-one debriefing session with the faculty member immediately after their OSTE. This discussion should:
  - Review their performance in each rubric category.

- o Highlight specific strengths and areas where improvement is needed.
- o Provide examples from their OSTE session to illustrate key points (e.g., how they handled a specific teaching challenge or feedback delivery).
- o Allow the faculty member to ask clarifying questions about their evaluation.

2. Self-Reflection and Action Plan

- **Self-Reflection Exercise**: Encourage the faculty member to complete a structured self-reflection form that prompts them to think critically about their performance. The form can include questions like:
    - o What aspects of my teaching did I feel most confident about?
    - o What surprised me during the OSTE?
    - o How did I respond to feedback, and what could I do differently in the future?
    - o What teaching strategies do I want to develop further?
- **Personal Action Plan**: Based on the self-reflection and evaluator feedback, guide the faculty member to create a **personal action plan**. The plan should:
    - o Identify **three specific teaching skills** to improve (e.g., "Deliver more specific and actionable feedback to learners").
    - o Outline **measurable goals** for improvement (e.g., "Incorporate more open-ended questions in the next two teaching sessions to promote student engagement").
    - o Set a **timeline** for reassessment (e.g., "Review progress in three months with a follow-up OSTE or classroom observation").
    - o Include **resources** or steps for professional development (e.g., "Attend a workshop on feedback techniques").

3. Development Workshops and Training Opportunities

- **Targeted Workshops**: Organize faculty development workshops based on common areas of improvement identified in the OSTE assessments. For example:
    - o **Communication and Presentation Skills**: Workshops on structuring content, using visual aids, and simplifying complex medical concepts.
    - o **Interactive Teaching Methods**: Sessions on active learning strategies, such as case-based discussions, problem-based learning, and group activities.
    - o **Feedback Delivery**: Training on how to give clear, constructive feedback that is specific, actionable, and balanced.
    - o **Managing Learner Engagement**: Sessions on creating inclusive learning environments, engaging quiet learners, and handling disruptions.
    - o **Adaptability**: Workshops focusing on handling unexpected learner questions, maintaining flexibility in teaching approaches, and managing challenging learners.
- **Online Learning Modules**: Offer access to e-learning modules that faculty can complete at their own pace. These can focus on topics such as **teaching in clinical environments**, **communicating with diverse learners**, or **implementing technology in teaching**.

4. Mentorship and Peer Observation

- **Pairing with a Mentor**: Faculty members can be paired with experienced educators who serve as mentors. This allows for continuous guidance, shadowing opportunities, and regular check-ins. Mentorship activities can include:
  - **Co-teaching or shadowing**: The faculty member observes the mentor teaching, followed by discussions on teaching techniques.
  - **Collaborative Feedback**: Mentors can review lesson plans, provide feedback on teaching methods, and offer advice on handling specific challenges.
  - **Goal setting**: Mentors help the faculty member set realistic teaching goals and monitor progress over time.
- **Peer Observation and Feedback**:
  - Encourage peer observation, where faculty observe each other's teaching sessions. Observers can use a simplified version of the OSTE rubric to provide structured feedback.
  - Establish a system where feedback is **non-judgmental** and focused on development.
  - Peer observations help faculty see different teaching styles and approaches in action, offering new perspectives on their own methods.

5. Re-Assessment through Follow-Up OSTE

- **Scheduling a Follow-Up OSTE**: After a set period (e.g., 3-6 months), schedule a follow-up OSTE session to assess improvement. Ensure that the follow-up includes:
  - Similar scenarios but with new challenges that test the skills they are working to improve.
  - Consistency in the evaluators, if possible, to allow for a fair comparison of progress.
- **Review Progress**: After the follow-up OSTE:
  - Compare performance with the initial assessment, highlighting areas of improvement and any continuing challenges.
  - Discuss the effectiveness of the personal action plan and adjust it based on the results of the follow-up session.
- **Celebrate Progress**: Acknowledge and celebrate noticeable improvements to reinforce positive development and motivate further growth.

6. Long-Term Professional Development Plan

- **Annual Review**: Incorporate OSTE results into the faculty member's **annual performance review**. This ensures that teaching development is part of their overall professional growth and evaluation.
- **Long-Term Development Goals**: Set long-term teaching goals as part of the faculty member's overall career trajectory. For example:
  - "Become a lead trainer in peer feedback workshops for new faculty members."
  - "Develop a teaching portfolio that includes evidence of improved learner engagement and feedback delivery over the next year."

- **Continuing Education**: Encourage faculty to seek additional qualifications or certifications in medical education (e.g., obtaining a fellowship in teaching and learning, attending conferences or symposiums on medical education).

7. Creating a Collaborative Learning Culture

- **Teaching Reflection Groups**: Form small groups of faculty who meet regularly to discuss teaching challenges and share best practices. These groups can:
  - Discuss personal OSTE experiences and strategies for improvement.
  - Offer a supportive environment for discussing difficult teaching situations.
  - Share resources, such as articles or teaching tools, that help enhance their skills.
- **Faculty Learning Communities**: Create **Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs)** that focus on specific teaching themes, such as:
  - Technology in education (e.g., using simulations or digital tools to teach complex medical procedures).
  - Teaching culturally diverse learners.
  - Innovations in clinical teaching.

8. Tracking and Measuring Improvement

- **Data Collection**: Track improvement by collecting data from:
  - **Learner feedback** (e.g., surveys from students or residents on faculty teaching effectiveness).
  - **Classroom observation scores** (if applicable, from peer observers or mentors).
  - **Self-assessment** and reflection logs (faculty should keep track of their own perceptions of improvement).
- **Measure Success**: Define success based on:
  - **Achievement of personal action plan goals**.
  - **Improved performance in follow-up OSTE assessments**.
  - **Positive changes in learner evaluations**.
- **Reporting and Documentation**: Encourage faculty to document their journey of improvement by maintaining a **teaching portfolio** that includes:
  - Feedback from OSTE sessions.
  - Examples of lesson plans, teaching materials, and innovative teaching strategies they have developed.
  - Reflection logs on teaching experiences and feedback.

Sample Long-Term Continuous Improvement Plan

Month 1-2:

- Attend a workshop on feedback techniques.
- Work with a mentor to revise lesson plans based on feedback.

- Implement new interactive teaching methods in two upcoming sessions.

Month 3-4:

- Schedule a peer observation session with a colleague.
- Complete an online course on engaging diverse learners.
- Begin using more specific feedback with learners, focusing on actionable points.

Month 5-6:

- Participate in a follow-up OSTE.
- Review results with mentor and refine the personal action plan.
- Document progress in teaching portfolio for annual review.

Month 7-12:

- Continue peer observation cycles and mentor meetings.
- Present at a faculty development session about lessons learned from OSTE.
- Set new long-term goals based on progress.

By following this detailed **Follow-Up and Continuous Improvement** plan, medical faculty can create a sustainable, long-term strategy for developing their teaching skills, ensuring continuous growth and enhanced learning experiences for their students.