

## ***Film and discuss your lesson***

This manual is a do-it-yourself guide for teachers who want to engage in peer coaching with video. It specifies step by step what you need to do to prepare for filming lessons, to conduct the filming itself and edit the resulting footage, to share video clips, to analyse and discuss them with colleagues and to use the conclusions for planning new lessons.

### *Preparing for peer coaching with video*

- A1. Consult with school management to determine which privacy policy the school has regarding filming in classrooms and follow this policy at all times.
- A2. For filming in classrooms, seek consent from parents and guardians.

When lessons are filmed, the portrait rights of all people involved – first of all pupils and teachers – must be respected, as detailed in the section *Privacy* in Chapter 7. This can only be ensured when the school informs parents and guardians in advance of filming. A feasible policy is for the school to include a general statement in the school guide informing parents and guardians that lessons can be filmed and that this will serve purposes of teacher development only. However, when filming is actually undertaken, it is still necessary to inform parents and guardians in advance of each specific instance and to offer them the possibility of an opt-out. For this purpose, Box 9.4 contains a template letter including an opt-out form (see *Box 9.4 Template letter and opt-out form for filming in classrooms*).

- A3. Choose the class and the lesson(s) in which you want to film. Inform your pupils in advance what is the purpose of filming – you want to make teaching more effective in collaboration with colleagues.
- A4. Determine which aspect(s) of teaching you want to examine. Use structured viewing guides for this purpose (see Box 9.3).
- A5. If you have not filmed in classrooms before, practice this in advance (see the section *Capture* in Chapter 7).
- A6. Find a colleague or a student teacher who will film the lesson(s) chosen. Plan with the camera person in which classroom(s) she or he will do the filming.
- A7. On the day of filming, make sure that the necessary equipment is ready on time.

### *Filming in classrooms*

- B1. If possible, record the whole lesson, i.e. from when the pupils enter the classroom until they have left, so that the complete course of the lesson can be reconstructed.
- B2. To obtain usable video recordings, record the main events in the instructional triangle. These events include:
  - the teacher's instruction, so that the intent behind the lesson becomes clear,
  - the main learning activities, to make clear what pupils do and practice, and
  - feedback activities such as debriefing after making assignments, to make clear what pupils are

learning  
(see the section *What to film* in Chapter 7).

- B3. Ask the camera person – before filming – to focus on the viewing points you selected.
- B4. Ensure the best possible camera position(s).  
- If no camera person is available, place the camera in a corner of the room providing the widest possible angle – as a “fly on the wall”.  
- If any pupil(s) cannot be filmed, place the camera before them.  
- Avoid moving outside the camera range.  
- Avoid filming the teacher and pupils in ways they might find uncomfortable, especially when they are within five metres from the camera.  
(see the section *How to film* in Chapter 7).
- B5. To achieve sufficient video and audio quality,  
- film with your back to the daylight,  
- make sure that the teacher’s and pupils’ faces are visible,  
- use a lightweight, movable tripod and  
- keep camera movements calm, so zoom and pan gradually  
(see the section *How to film* in Chapter 7).
- B6. If pupils have not been filmed during lessons before, let them get used to it. Often, they will first wave and grimace to the camera. Allow them this opportunity, but make clear – if necessary – that once is enough. Being filmed usually becomes a routine quickly, but should any pupils object seriously, place them behind the camera.
- B7. Once pupils are used to a camera in the lesson, it becomes easier to choose situations to film close-up. For example, in case of group work, it is very informative during viewing to be able to see which learning activities pupils carry out and to hear what they say and ask, what they find unclear or difficult etcetera. To capture such events, the camera person needs to move closer to pupils and stay there for a while. If necessary, agree with pupils beforehand that this may or will happen.

#### *Sharing classroom video with colleagues*

- C1. When saving and storing video files, act responsibly (see the section *Data protection* above).
- C2. When a clip is longer than five minutes, use time markers and/or captions to make it navigable for viewers (cf. the sections *Editing* in Chapter 7 and *Video as a medium for instruction* in Chapter 8).
- C3. Depending on how familiar or unfamiliar your audience is with the context of the lesson, provide necessary context information and relevant perspectives for viewing (see the section *Framing* in Chapter 7).

#### *Analysing and discussing video clips*

Analysing and changing instruction is most effective when it is undertaken in dialogue with colleagues. Such dialogue can take place in personal meetings, in blended learning environments and/or online consultation. See the section *Collegial collaboration* below for more detail.

To make collegial consultation constructive and productive, I developed in an earlier project the sequencing shown in Figure 9.1 (see *Figure 9.1 Moderating collegial dialogue*) (Brouwer, 2002, p. 120).

When a group of teachers discusses video recordings of each other's lessons, it is advisable to appoint a chairperson who moderates the conversation. The middle column in Figure 9.1, derived from the ALACT reflection model (Korthagen & Wubbels, 2001, p. 43), shows the four phases through which collegial dialogue should move. The right-hand column shows questions the moderator can use to introduce each phase. The left-hand column gives suggestions for written notes that participants may prepare. The following suggestions are meant to shape the collegial dialogue about lesson recordings more concretely.

- D1. Prepare the conversation by viewing each other's video clips, preferably using selected viewing points.
- D2. First describe as objectively as possible the events in the lesson.
- D3. Then, analyse how and why the events took place as they did, by developing interpretations and searching for causes and explanations.
- D4. Finally, formulate together possible alternatives for instructional action.

In each phase, different opening and probing questions can guide the conversation. Both the participants and the moderator can use these questions. Suggestions for how to formulate them are given in *Box 9.5 Opening and probing questions during collegial dialogue* (Brouwer, 2002, p. 125; Korthagen & Wubbels, 2001, p. 214-216).

### *Planning new lessons*

Once you have analysed your video clips together with colleagues and have received their advice, it is time to judge and decide if and how to change your instruction.

- E1. When planning new lessons, you can use the following questions.
  - Which comments did my colleagues make about the video fragments discussed?
  - Which alternatives for instructional action did they suggest?
  - How do I assess those suggestions?
  - Which alternatives shall I try out?
  - Which new knowledge, skills and/or attitudes do I need to develop?