

Girls' Access to Education Girls' Education Challenge

Sierra Leone



Learning Assistant School Experience Record

Name of Learning Assistant _____

School _____



The Open
University



Girls'
Education
Challenge



Girls' Access to Education—Girls' Education Challenge (GATE-GEC) is a consortium project in Sierra Leone, led by Plan International UK and implemented in partnership with Handicap International, ActionAid, Forum for African Women Educationalists and The Open University, UK.

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For more information about the Open University's international development work see www.open.ac.uk/ido



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About this programme

Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), Plan International, ActionAid, Handicap International and the UK Open University are implementing Girls' Access to Education–Girls' Education Challenge (GATE-GEC) in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST).

GATE-GEC supports marginalised girls and children with disabilities, identified as GATE-GEC 'beneficiaries', in 5 districts in Sierra Leone – Kailahun, Kono, Kenema, Port Loko and Moyamba.

The vision is to help beneficiaries reach their learning potential in primary school so they can transition into junior secondary school and beyond.

Recruiting more women into teaching is important for improving and sustaining the school participation of marginalised girls and children with disabilities, particularly in rural areas of Sierra Leone. But few women have the required qualifications, experience or confidence to apply to teacher training programmes. To address this challenge the Open University, with FAWE, designed a unique access programme which is a component of GATE-GEC Sierra Leone, to prepare young women for application to formal primary teacher training. Women who are selected for this access programme are known as Learning Assistants.

Learning Assistants in GATE-GEC

Learning Assistants follow a one-year combined practice-study programme of

- practical experience in a primary school and
- a distance learning component in English and Maths and preparation for Teachers College entrance examination.

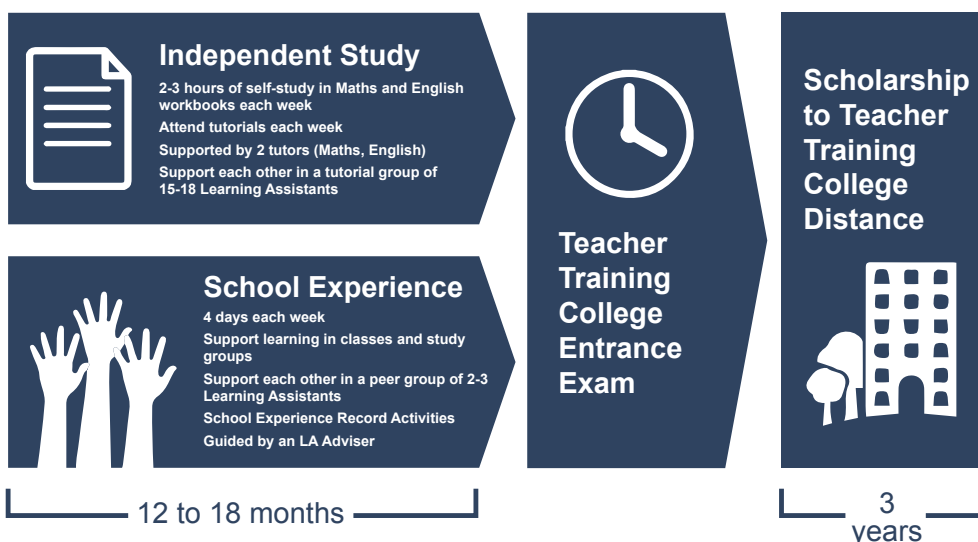
In the primary school, Learning Assistants (LAs) help teachers and pupils in the classroom. LAs are placed in classrooms where there are GATE-GEC beneficiaries. LAs learn about teaching and education, and they act as role models for all pupils. They keep evidence of their work in the school in this **School Experience Record**.

Learning Assistants work under the supervision and guidance of the Class Teacher and the Head Teacher. They are supported by an LA Adviser who is the Head Teacher or a teacher in the school.

For academic distance study, Learning Assistants are organised into groups of 15–18. Each group is allocated two tutors with specialisms in English and Maths. Tutors are local secondary school teachers. They meet with the Learning Assistants each week for 2–3 hours at a school or other appropriate venue. Learning Assistants sit three marked assignments in Maths and three marked assignments in English at regular intervals through the year.

At the end of the year, FAWE helps Learning Assistants prepare to sit the Teachers College entrance exam. Learning Assistants who enter Teachers College become Student Teachers.

The Learning Assistant Programme



Your LA role and activities

You have been selected as a Learning Assistant in the GATE-GEC Sierra Leone project because you have undertaken some study at secondary school and you would like to gain qualifications as a teacher.

In your school placement as a Learning Assistant you will act as a strong role model for younger pupils and support pupils' learning. This is an important role which will help you gain skills and qualifications.

Each week you will spend 4 days in a primary school. You will cooperate with the class teacher to support pupil learning. You will have an LA Adviser to guide you and help you complete the activities in this School Experience Record. You will meet your Adviser regularly and you will have time during the school day to complete your School Experience Record.

In your School Experience Record:

- You have four activities to complete each term. The activities include short readings and practical tasks. These will help you learn more about the work of a teacher and how pupils best learn.
- You have two assessments each term (six assessments in total).
- You record your support for GATE-GEC beneficiaries in Study Group sessions led by the Programme Volunteer (PV). This is an extension of the work you will do in the classroom.

At the same time, you will be studying to improve your Maths and English and prepare for the Teachers College entrance exam. You will be given study materials for each subject. You should plan to spend at least 3 hours each week studying each subject. You will have a tutor for Maths and a tutor for English. Each week you will meet with your tutors for group tutorial sessions. FAWE will tell you where to go for your tutorials.

This programme is the first step to becoming a teaching professional. To be successful you will need to be organised and committed. You will need to talk to your family about making time to study. But there are lots of people to help you – your Adviser, your tutors and FAWE, as well as other people in your community.

We hope you enjoy your role as a Learning Assistant and find it rewarding and beneficial.

Good luck!

Feedback from current Learning Assistants

Maria:

Everyone says my life has changed... we have a space in the community now.... They call us teachers, they encourage us to be part of it.

Hawa:

You will have respect in the community... I never dreamed that. I was thinking that my life was in the market every day selling, selling, I was not thinking about any teaching or going to school.

Fatmata:

This programme makes me to be smart in my school.... Because I want to learn.



A Learning Assistant supporting a Maths lesson.

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Key people

Here, record the details of people in the GATE-GEC programme you can contact for support. These details will be given to you at your School Experience induction and your first tutorials.

Person	Name	Contact Number
Learning Assistant Adviser		
Head Teacher		
Other LAs in my school		
Tutor (Maths)		
Tutor (English)		
FAWE Social Worker		
FAWE District Supervisor		
Programme Manager		
National Coordinator		

Your School Experience Record

This is your School Experience Record. Keep it safe. You will need to show your School Experience Record to External Assessors at the end of the year.

For each term you will complete

- Four activities: short readings and practical tasks
- Two assessments: these are confirmed by your Adviser, Class Teacher and Head Teacher
- A record of your help for beneficiaries in Study Group sessions with the Programme Volunteer

Your School Experience Record goes hand-in-hand with your Maths and English studies.

Together, these resources help Learning Assistants prepare for application to Teachers College.

Reading tips as you work through your School Experience Record

- Each Activity has different components. Read through all of the Activity before you begin so you can use your time well. Ask your Adviser to help you plan the tasks and the readings.
- Underline words you don't understand.
- Use a dictionary. Ask your Class Teacher, Head Teacher, or Adviser/ Programme Volunteer (PV) to explain.
- Read aloud with other LAs to help each other.
- Do activities with other LAs to learn together.

Term 1



A Learning Assistant in Blama.

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Activity 1

Code of Conduct for Teachers and Education Workers

Sierra Leone has a Code of Conduct for teachers and other education workers. The Code is a set of rules on how teachers and other people in schools must behave and treat all pupils.

As a Learning Assistant, you are developing yourself as an education worker and a future teacher, so the Code of Conduct applies to you. The Code sets out how to behave professionally and ethically in your work with pupils and others in the school. Now read the Code of Conduct and become familiar with it. Answer the questions that follow.



Save the Children



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



SIERRA LEONE
TEACHERS UNION

THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TEACHERS AND OTHER EDUCATION PERSONNEL IN SIERRA LEONE

TEACHERS AND OTHER EDUCATION WORKERS **MUST ALWAYS:**



Be professional; come to class
on time and be well prepared



Dress in decent way at all times and
be a role model



Have a positive attitude towards
Children and the school



Recognise the rights of all children and their
careers and help them to promote their
children's education

REPORTING ON VIOLATIONS OF COC

All learners, teachers, parents and other stakeholders
should report immediately either verbally or in
writing if any violation of the CoC is suspected
or noticed.

Depending on the nature of the violation and the
Involved parties, the report can be made to:

School Management Committees (SMCs),
Community/Teachers' Association (CTAs),
Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)

Guidance Counselor/Class Teacher

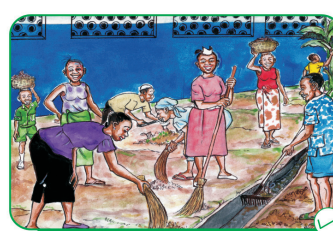
Sierra Leone Teachers' Union (SLTU)
School Representative

Complaints Committee/Head of School

District Education Office/Local Council/District
Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Children's Affairs

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST)

Teaching Service Commission



Respect Communities and encourage them
to participate in the development
of the school

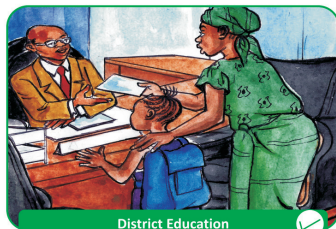


Manage and use the school's resources for
the right thing and for the benefit
of the children



Work together with other's in a
Team for the success of the school

Report to



District Education
Office/Local Council/District
Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and
Children's Affairs (MSWGCA)



School Management Committees (SMCs),
Community/Teachers' Association (CTAs),
Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)



Save the Children



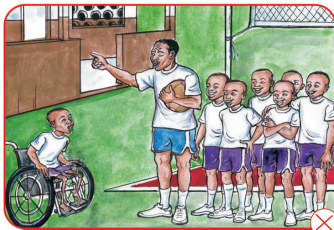
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



SIERRA LEONE
TEACHERS UNION

THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TEACHERS AND OTHER EDUCATION PERSONNEL IN SIERRA LEONE

TEACHERS AND OTHER EDUCATION WORKERS MUST NEVER:



Treat children differently because of their gender, Physical abilities, ethnic group religion, economic situation color or background

REPORTING ON VIOLATIONS OF COC

All learners, teachers, parents and other stakeholders should report immediately either verbally or in writing if any violation of the CoC is suspected or noticed.

Depending on the nature of the violation and the Involved parties, the report can be made to:

School Management Committees (SMCs),
Community/Teachers' Association (CTAs),
Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)

Guidance Counselor/Class Teacher

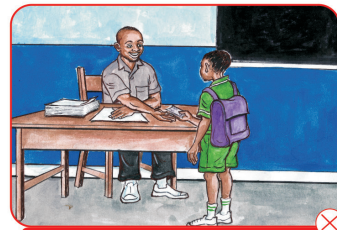
Sierra Leone Teachers' Union (SLTU)
School Representative

Complaints Committee/Head of School

District Education Office/Local Council/District
Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Children's Affairs

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST)

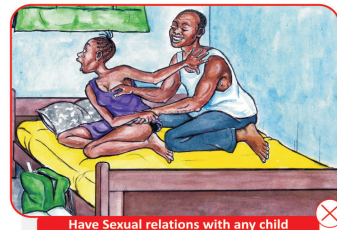
Teaching Service Commission



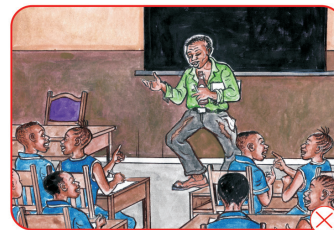
Take bribes or other gifts from children or their parents in return for improving a child's grades or promotion



Exploit or abuse children in any way



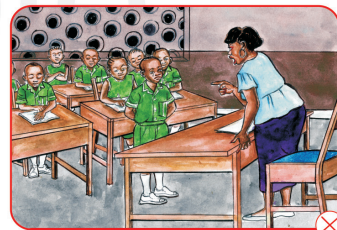
Have Sexual relations with any child under 18 years



Drink or Smoke in the Premises of the school

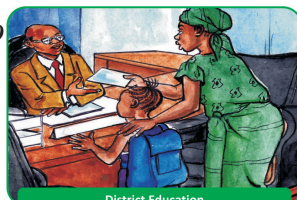


Beat, threaten or in other ways harm or humiliate children, physically or mentally



Behave Inappropriately towards children, Parents or other colleagues

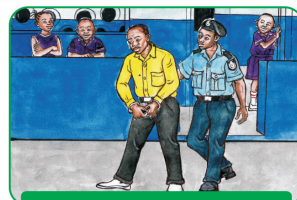
Report to



District Education
Office/Local Council/District
Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and
Children's Affairs (MSWGCA)



School Management Committees (SMCs),
Community/Teachers' Association (CTAs),
Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)



Perpetrators will be punished

Design and Printed by: DOXA PRINT LIMITED 07569480

Source: Code of Conduct <http://www.ungei.org/resources/5760.htm>

Know who to report to in your school if you have a concern, for example:

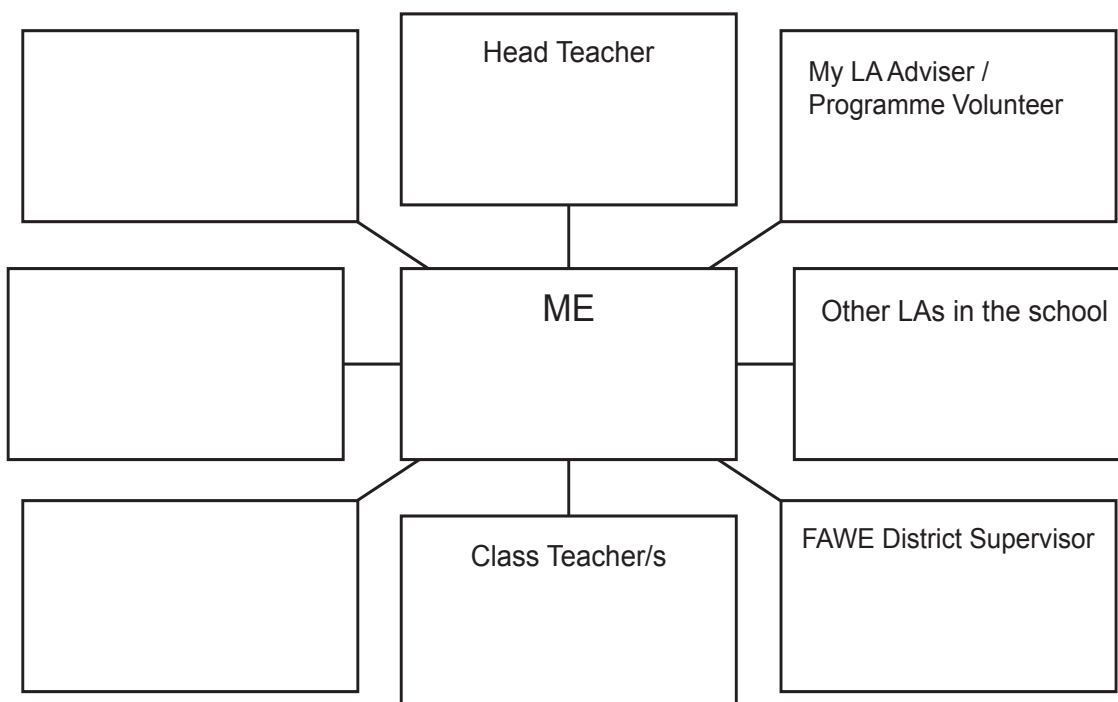
- School Management Committee (SMC)
- Child Welfare Committee (CWC)
- Sierra Leone Teachers' Union representative (SLTU)
- Community Teachers Association (CTA)
- District Inclusive Education Officer (DIEO)

Know the programme and your support network

Who are the Girls' Access to Education—Girls' Education Challenge (GATE-GEC) beneficiaries in your school? You are helping these beneficiaries in Study Group sessions.

Find out who the beneficiaries are in your school. You are helping them in the Study Group sessions:

Now fill in the diagram. List the people in the school, in the community and at home, who are helping you as a Learning Assistant. You can add more boxes and names to your diagram.



Date you completed this activity _____

Activity 2

What Learning Assistants do

Reading

Learning Assistants start by observing and helping the Class Teacher.

As Learning Assistants gain experience, they may teach part of a lesson, under the teacher's supervision. They may teach a small group or an individual pupil, under the teacher's supervision. When they are very experienced, LAs may teach the whole class under the supervision of the class teacher.

Learning Assistants support programme beneficiaries in Study Group sessions, led by the Programme Volunteer (PV).

Learning Assistants should be punctual and positive, ready to listen, learn and help.

Learning Assistants are role models for education, showing pupils the value of learning.

Tick the activities as you do them regularly. Return to this tick list as you gain more experience and write in other activities as you do them. For example, when you have more experience you could invigilate examinations and prepare report cards.

- ☐ Prepare and tidy the classroom
- ☐ Distribute books, papers, pencils and other equipment
- ☐ Encourage pupils to learn
- ☐ Help pupils who are having difficulties with learning activities
- ☐ Support pupils with disabilities
- ☐ Prepare (draw or copy) teaching and learning materials such as word lists, games, diagrams, pictures
- ☐ Mark pupils' work using the teacher's mark guide
- ☐ Help pupils with revision sessions or remedial sessions
- ☐ Write in the sick book, punishment book or the progress book

- ☐ Make simple repairs to teaching and learning resources e.g. torn books covers
- ☐ Make simple displays for subject corners
- ☐ Monitor group work
- ☐ Read aloud to a pupil or to a group of pupils
- ☐ Listen to individual pupils read, and check their comprehension
- ☐ Monitor play or sport sessions
- ☐ Help organise assemblies
- ☐ Support extracurricular activities
- ☐ Call the names on the register
- ☐ Support study group sessions
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Date you completed this activity _____

Assessment 1

Learning Assistant self-evaluation

Choose two lessons you observed, supported or taught under supervision.

List what you learned from these lessons.

Lesson 1 topic and date _____

Subject knowledge for teaching (e.g. teaching multiplication)	Teaching skills (e.g. how to organise pupils or ways to support specific pupils)	Practical skills (e.g. taking the register)	Other (anything else you would like to mention e.g. how the school works, the curriculum, or classroom environment)

Lesson 2 topic and date _____

Subject knowledge for teaching	Teaching skills	Practical skills	Other

List other activities in the school you have done, so far:

How I feel about how I have performed as an LA (circle one):



LA Adviser comment (required):

Comment and endorsement on the Learning Assistant's performance: (e.g. LA punctuality, attendance, willingness to learn and participate, skills developed, and what the LA has done so far)

Adviser grade for the LA Assessment (circle one):

G: Good

You have given detailed responses which show growing understanding of supporting pupils' learning.

S: Satisfactory

Your responses show some understanding of supporting pupils' learning.

U: Unsatisfactory

Your responses show very little awareness of supporting pupils' learning.

Actions points for the LA :

LA Adviser name, signature and date (required):

Class Teacher comment (optional):

Class Teacher name, signature and date (required):

Head Teacher comment or endorsement (optional):

Head Teacher name, signature and date (required):

Activity 3

The Child Rights Act of Sierra Leone

Classrooms should be a child-friendly place where children can learn in a safe, inclusive and positive environment.

Learning Assistants can help make the classroom more child-friendly. Every girl and boy has the right to be in school and to learn. Child protection is the responsibility of every adult in school.

Learning Assistants are adults pupils may turn to for help and guidance. This is important for all pupils, regardless of gender or ability. Girl children may feel more comfortable with a female adult in the school.

Reading

A child-friendly school is safe and protective of children. It creates safe spaces and a healthy environment for girls and boys to effectively learn.

It also includes school-based health and nutrition programmes and safe sanitation facilities. A school should be a welcoming place that girls and boys would always want to come back to, every day.

The responsibility of making a school a safe and healthy place is the responsibility of everyone. If everyone takes their part in making their school safe, protective and health promoting, the school will be a warm and welcoming environment, where every child would want to go.

From 'Child-friendly Schools' (UNICEF 2009)

The Sierra Leone Child Rights Act states that every child has the right to dignity, respect, education and protection. Every school is required to have a copy of The Sierra Leone Child Rights Act of 2007.

Ask your Head Teacher or your Adviser to see it. The front cover looks like this:



List the 12 important rights from The Child Rights Act. You will find these on pages 7 to 17 of the document. You can do this activity with other Learning Assistants. We have done the first one for you.

ALL CHILDREN HAVE THE RIGHT...

1. *to life and to grow and develop*

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

Date you completed this activity _____

Activity 4

Thinking about disability

Reading

“Each of us is, in fact, disabled in one way or another. Some cannot walk, some cannot hear and some cannot see, but others are unable to lift a heavy load, or read and write or drive an automobile. And the most able among us can be transformed in an instant into a disabled person through accidents and disease. So the line between “abled” and “disabled” is thin and frail, and should never be allowed to define a human being or his or her opportunities in society.”

Statement by his Excellency the President Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah on the launching of the Seminar on law on disability. Office of the President, The Republic of Sierra Leone, April 8 2005.

Reading

1. States Parties shall take all necessary measures to ensure the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.
2. In all actions concerning children with disabilities, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.
3. States Parties shall ensure that children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them, their views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity, on an equal basis with other children, and to be provided with disability and age-appropriate assistance to realize that right.

From the United Nations Rights of Children with Disabilities (2006):

In the GATE-GEC programme, the team and schools are working hard to ensure that children with disabilities are fully included in class and able to learn.

Disabilities which affect children's learning are

- Physical: for example, visual or hearing impairment, or using a wheelchair or crutches
- Mental: thinking or memory impairment which makes learning much slower
- Emotional: problems at home or in school, such as violence, bullying or bereavement, which stops children concentrating or participating.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring all children, including those with disabilities are able to fully participate in class, through adapting activities, using different materials and working with the child and parent to develop learning strategies.

Learning Assistants can support pupils with disabilities and teachers.

For instance:

- make large writing for a pupil with visual impairment and ensure they sit at the front of the class
- give one-to-one help to a pupil who is finding it difficult to engage in a learning activity
- offer sympathy and guidance to a pupil who is distressed (and if a child is very distressed, know who to ask for help).

Now look around your classroom and the school. Can you identify pupils who have different types of disabilities? Ask your Class Teacher, Head Teacher or Adviser/PV if you are not sure.

List the types of disabilities you can identify. You should not name any pupils here.

Date you completed this activity _____

Assessment 2

Learning Assistant self-evaluation

Choose two lessons you observed, supported or taught under supervision.

List what you learned from these lessons.

Lesson 1 topic and date _____

Subject knowledge for teaching (e.g. teaching multiplication)	Teaching skills (e.g. how to organise pupils or ways to support specific pupils)	Practical skills (e.g. taking the register)	Other (anything else you would like to mention e.g. how the school works, the curriculum, or classroom environment)

Lesson 2 topic and date _____

Subject knowledge for teaching	Teaching skills	Practical skills	Other

Return to the Activity 2 tick list and add to it. List other activities in the school you have done, so far:

How I feel about how I have performed as an LA (circle one):



LA Adviser comment (required):

Comment and endorsement on the Learning Assistant's performance: (e.g. LA punctuality, attendance, willingness to learn and participate, skills developed, and what the LA has done so far)

Adviser grade for the LA Assessment (circle one):

G: Good

You have given detailed responses which show growing understanding of supporting pupils' learning.

S: Satisfactory

Your responses show some understanding of supporting pupils' learning.

U: Unsatisfactory

Your responses show very little awareness of supporting pupils' learning.

Actions points for the LA :

LA Adviser name, signature and date (required):

Class Teacher comment (optional):

Class Teacher name, signature and date (required):

Head Teacher comment or endorsement (optional):

Head Teacher name, signature and date (required):

Term 2



A Learning Assistant marking children's work in Blama.
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Activity 5

Additional support for pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties

Learning Assistants work in school with sensitivity and care for the feelings of others. This is part of ethical practice as an education worker and future teacher.

In the table, list the pupils with disabilities in the classroom or in the school. If you are not sure, talk to your Head Teacher, Class Teacher or your Adviser.

List any additional support these pupils have, from you or from other staff. List any resources provided for these pupils (this might be equipment such as a wheelchair or hearing aid or resources linked more specifically to the pupil's learning needs).

You should not identify pupils by writing their names here. Just use their initials.

Pupil gender and age	Disability	Additional support and who gives it	Additional resources for the pupil

Reading

A major barrier to learning is low self-esteem. Low self-esteem reduces children's motivation to learn and can have damaging effects on their academic and social development.

Self-esteem can be improved by appropriate praise and by encouraging cooperation and friendship, where children know that they are cared for, and where they will be supported when learning.

Adapted from UNESCO 2004 page78 Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for creating inclusive, learning-friendly environments

Have you noticed pupils who might benefit from more praise and encouragement? Think about how you provide this at appropriate times.

Date you completed this activity _____

Activity 6

Child study

Educators do a 'child study' to find out more about how a pupil learns and behaves. When Learning Assistants know individual pupils well, they can support pupils' learning more effectively.

It can be useful to observe an individual pupil who is not always successful in school. For example, if a pupil cannot work out a Maths exercise, you could watch her carefully in Maths lessons to see whether she understands what the teacher is saying. You may find that she needs extra practice and more encouragement.

With the guidance of your Class Teacher, Head Teacher or Adviser, choose a pupil who has special needs and observe this pupil for two or three days. Observe the pupil in lessons for different subjects. As you watch and listen, try to answer these questions for yourself:

- Where does the pupil sit in the classroom?
- Does the pupil show interest in the lessons? How can you tell?
- Does the pupil understand the language of instruction?
- Does the pupil watch the teacher, listen, respond to the teacher, and know what to do in lessons?
- Is the pupil able to understand the lessons?
- Does the pupil enjoy some subjects more than others? Why do you think this is?

Did you find out anything that surprised you?

In the space on the next page, write a short report of your observations of the pupil. Do not use the child's name. Use your observations to suggest one or two ways to improve the pupil's learning.

Child Study Observation Notes

Remember:

When you get to know an individual pupil and support her, you may find out personal or private issues. A pupil might share information with you, but might not want to share it with the teacher or other adults. A pupil might ask you for help or advice. In these cases, if you feel able to help, you could offer advice accordingly. However, you might not be able to help her, so remember that there are other people in the school or the community who can provide help and counsel.

If a pupil tells you something that makes you worried, or if you think a pupil is in danger, you must tell your Head Teacher. Do not keep it a secret. Child Protection is the most important role of adults in the school.

Date you completed this activity _____

Assessment 3

Here write one paragraph about what you have learned about pupils with disabilities and supporting these pupils. Use the information you collected from Activities 4, 5 and 6.

Return to the Activity 2 tick list and add to it. List other activities in the school you have done, so far:

How I feel about how I have performed as an LA (circle one):



LA Adviser comment (required):

Comment and endorsement on the Learning Assistant's performance: (e.g. LA punctuality, attendance, willingness to learn and participate, skills developed, and what the LA has done so far)

Adviser grade for the LA Assessment (circle one):

G: Good

You have given detailed responses which show growing understanding of supporting pupils' learning.

S: Satisfactory

Your responses show some understanding of supporting pupils' learning.

U: Unsatisfactory

Your responses show very little awareness of supporting pupils' learning.

Actions points for the LA :

LA Adviser name, signature and date (required):

Class Teacher comment (optional):

Class Teacher name, signature and date (required):

Head Teacher comment or endorsement (optional):

Head Teacher name, signature and date (required):

Activity 7

Teaching methods

What kinds of teaching methods do you see in the classroom and in the school?

What kinds of teaching methods are you learning to do?

Tick the methods that you observe or that you do:

- ☐ Instruction or demonstration
- ☐ Writing on the board
- ☐ Question and answer
- ☐ Choral reading or responding
- ☐ Copying from the board or a book
- ☐ Reproduction from memory (e.g. key spellings and definitions)
- ☐ Problem solving or practical work
- ☐ Individual pupil writing
- ☐ Individual pupil reading
- ☐ Outside activity
- ☐ Singing or 'energizer'
- ☐ Pupils talking with a partner
- ☐ Pupils working in a group
- ☐ Observing or listening to pupils
- ☐ Use of learning materials such as word lists, games, diagrams, pictures
- ☐ Use of story-books or story-telling
- ☐ Any other methods – list these:

Reading

Children learn in different ways because of their experiences, personalities and needs. Teachers need to use a variety of teaching methods and activities to meet the different learning needs of our children.

Many Learning Assistants and Teachers are working in large classrooms. You may wonder, “How can I use different teaching methods to suit individual children when I have over 50 different children in my classroom?”

Actually, this is one of the reasons why some teachers use “rote learning.” We simply repeat information over and over, and have the children repeat it to us over and over again, hoping that they will remember it.

While this may be an easy method for managing many children, it can be boring for our children and for teachers too. Sooner or later, there is no enjoyment or challenge in teaching and definitely no enjoyment or challenge in learning for children.

To change this situation, we need to learn new ways of teaching and use these regularly with ALL of our children. They will then enjoy the different ways that they can learn, and ALL of the children will be able to learn. Some teachers are already using a variety of different methods, and they are finding teaching to be more rewarding for them as well.

Adapted from UNESCO 2004: Tool 4.1 Learning about learners and learning

Reading

- All children can learn, but they learn in different ways and at different rates.
- As teachers, we need to provide a variety of learning opportunities and experiences for children.
- Children learn by linking new information with what they already know. They are active builders of knowledge.
- We must also help parents and other caregivers to support children’s learning, so children know how to link what they learn in class to their home life, and how to link what they learn at home with what they are learning in class.
- Talking and questioning together (collaboration) strengthens learning, which is why pair and small group work, if well organised, is very important.

Adapted from UNESCO 2004 page78

Activity 8

Subject knowledge

Learning Assistants are upgrading their subject knowledge in all areas of the curriculum. LAs are undertaking formal study in Maths and English but also learning other subjects through their work in schools.










How confident are you?

Fill out the table on the next page. Think about:

How confident are you in these subjects, for yourself?

How confident are you in these subjects for teaching pupils?

What area or topic of these subjects do you need to improve, for yourself and for teaching?

Subject	My own knowledge of this subject (circle one)	Areas I need to improve for myself	Areas I need to improve for teaching pupils
Maths	  		
English	  		
Science	  		

Date you completed this activity _____

Assessment 4

Here write one paragraph about the school subjects you enjoy teaching or supporting, and the subjects you do not enjoy so much.

- a) Give reasons for your enjoyment for some subjects.
- b) Give reasons why you find some subjects more challenging.
- c) Write two ways in which you think you can improve your ability and confidence in the challenging areas you have identified. What support will you require and from who?

List other activities in the school you have done:

How I feel about how I have performed as an LA (circle one):



LA Adviser comment (required):

Comment and endorsement on the Learning Assistant's performance: (e.g. LA punctuality, attendance, willingness to learn and participate, skills developed, and what the LA has done so far)

Adviser grade for the LA Assessment (circle one):

G: Good

You have given detailed responses which show growing understanding of supporting pupils' learning.

S: Satisfactory

Your responses show some understanding of supporting pupils' learning.

U: Unsatisfactory

Your responses show very little awareness of supporting pupils' learning.

Actions points for the LA :

LA Adviser name, signature and date (required):

Class Teacher comment (optional):

Class Teacher name, signature and date (required):

Head Teacher comment or endorsement (optional):

Head Teacher name, signature and date (required):

Term 3



A Learning Assistant attending Maths tutorial in the Largo district of Kenema. Copyright Martin Crisp, The Open University, October 2016

Activity 9

Inclusive practices

Learning Assistants help to make all learners feel included in the classroom, so that all pupils can participate.

Every child is unique and special. All children have a right to an education that helps them to develop to their best. Children love to learn. These ideas are at the heart of learner-centred education.

Reading

A “learning-friendly” environment is “child-friendly” and also “teacher-friendly.”

A learning-friendly environment is where students and teachers work together as a learning community. It places children at the centre of learning and encourages their active participation in learning. It also fulfils our needs and interests as teachers, so that we are capable of giving children the best education possible.

In a learning-friendly classroom, you must play different roles. In the past, the teacher’s role has been that of an “information giver.” But in order to help our children learn to their fullest, we must expand our role to that of facilitator, manager, observer, and learner. What are these roles?

Facilitator. We need to provide opportunities for children to learn and encourage them to freely present ideas and talk about important issues in a constructive manner.

Manager. To be a successful facilitator, we must plan well and carefully guide the discussions, giving every child a chance to express their views.

Observer. Observation of the children as they work in a group, in pairs, or alone will help us to understand the children and to plan even more meaningful learning activities. For instance, can an activity that a pair of children does well be expanded into a group activity? Can the two children be the group’s leaders?

Learner. We become learners when we reflect on our lessons and how well the children have been learning. We can then develop ways to make what is being learned even more meaningful. For instance, was an activity effective in helping children to understand a difficult topic or concept? Can this activity be applied to other topics and concepts?

UNESCO 2004: page 4 and page 52

Helping to make an inclusive classroom

What do you do to make the classroom more inclusive?

Give examples of actions you took in lessons or at other times in the school where you were

- Facilitating

- Managing

- Observing

- Learning

Date you completed this activity _____

Activity 10

Make a teaching resource

Make a resource for your classroom. Talk to your Class Teacher, Head Teacher or Adviser for ideas.

It could be a resource for the whole class, such as poster.

It could be a resource for an individual pupil who has special needs, or for a group of pupils.

It can be for any topic.

You can do this activity with other Learning Assistants, and start to create a 'bank' of resources for teaching and learning.

On this page, describe your resource and draw a picture of it. Say who is using it and how it is helping learning.

Date you completed this activity _____

Assessment 5

For this assessment, ask another Learning Assistant to comment on your performance. This is called 'peer assessment'. You will give feedback to the LA who gives feedback on you. Ask your fellow LA to write one or two short sentences to answer the questions below. Then you do the same for her, in her School Experience Record.

1. What I think she does well:

2. One idea I have about how she could do even better:

Name and signature of peer reviewer

List other activities in the school you have done:

How I feel about how I have performed as an LA (circle one):



LA Adviser comment (required):

Comment and endorsement on the Learning Assistant's performance: (e.g. LA punctuality, attendance, willingness to learn and participate, skills developed, and what the LA has done so far)

Adviser grade for the LA Assessment (circle one):

G: Good

You have given detailed responses which show growing understanding of supporting pupils' learning.

S: Satisfactory

Your responses show some understanding of supporting pupils' learning.

U: Unsatisfactory

Your responses show very little awareness of supporting pupils' learning.

Actions points for the LA :

LA Adviser name, signature and date (required):

Class Teacher comment (optional):

Class Teacher name, signature and date (required):

Head Teacher comment or endorsement (optional):

Head Teacher name, signature and date (required):

Activity 11

Planning, teaching and self-evaluation

In the busy classroom, it is easy to forget self-evaluation. There are always so many things to do. But if you take some moments for self-evaluation, you will not end up making the same mistakes over and over again. And you will find that just a few minutes of thinking can help you discover things you would have noticed.

Self-evaluation requires you to think back on the lesson and try to answer questions like these:

1. What went well in this lesson? Why?
2. What problems did I experience? Why?
3. Did the pupils make progress in their learning? What is your evidence?
4. What could I have done differently?
5. What did I learn from this experience that will help me in the future?

Evaluate a lesson you have planned and taught under supervision.

Lesson topic and date:

1. What went well in this lesson? Why?
2. What problems did I experience? Why?

3. Were pupils attentive and involved in learning? Did they enjoy the lesson? Why or why not?

4. What could I have done differently? What could I change for the next time?

Self-evaluation is a powerful tool that will help you become a better teacher in the future.

Date you completed this activity _____

Activity 12

Pair work

With your Class Teacher's agreement and supervision, you will plan a pair work activity for a lesson.

Read everything in this activity before you plan.

Managing pair work

Pair work is about involving all and planning well. Pairs must be managed so that everyone knows what they have to do, what they are learning and what your expectations are.

- Manage the pairs that the students work in. Sometimes pupils will work in friendship pairs; sometimes they will not. Make sure they understand that you will decide the pairs to help them maximise their learning.
- You can pair pupils of the same ability levels. To create more of a challenge, you could pair pupils of mixed abilities so that they can help each other.
- Explain the benefits of pair work to pupils, using examples from the family and the community where people talk together to work things out.
- Keep pair work tasks brief and clear.
- Monitor pairs to make sure that they are working as you want.
- Give pupils responsibilities in their pair, such as two characters from a story, or simple labels such as '1' and '2', or 'As' and 'Bs'. Do this before they turn to face each other so that they listen.
- Make sure pupils can turn or move easily to sit where they can face each other.
- Tell pupils how much time they have and give regular time checks.
- Praise pairs who help each other and stay on task. Give pairs time to settle and find their own solutions.
- As you move around the class observing and listening, be alert to anyone who is not included.
- At the end of the task, select some pairs to show their work. Pupils feel a sense of achievement when working together. You don't need to get every pair to report back – that would take too much time. Try to give opportunity to pupils who are shy about contributing, so you can build their confidence.

Planning your activity

Thinking about the points above, plan your pair work activity. Use one of these ideas:

- **Problem solving:** Pupils work in pairs to solve a problem. This could be used for spelling, mathematical calculations, putting things

in categories or in order, giving different viewpoints, or resolving a moral problem.

- **Sharing information:** Half the class are given information on one aspect of a topic; the other half are given information on a different aspect of the topic. They then work in pairs to share their information in order to solve a problem or come to a decision.
- **Practising skills such as listening:** One pupil could read a story and the other ask questions; one pupil could read a passage in English, while the other tries to write it down; one pupil could describe a picture or diagram while the other pupil tries to draw it based on the description.
- **Following instructions:** One pupil could read instructions for the other pupil to complete a task.
- **Language arts and creative arts:** Pupils could work in pairs to create a story, a poem, a song, a dance or a dialogue.

Evaluate your activity

Pair work can give variety to lessons. Even in very crowded classrooms, pupils can turn to face each other for a short discussion or task. Successful pair work comes from clear instructions and good time management – this all takes practice.

Use the following questions to evaluate your pair work activity.

Lesson topic and date:
Pair work activity:
What went well in this pair work activity? Why?
What problems did I experience? Why?
Were pupils attentive and involved? Did they enjoy the pair work? Why or why not?
What could I have done differently? What could I change for the next time?

Date you completed this activity _____

Assessment 6

For this final assessment, write answers to these questions:

1. What have you enjoyed about being a Learning Assistant?
2. What have you found most challenging?
3. What do you think is your best achievement?
4. What do you think you need to improve?
5. What will you do, to make this improvement?

How I feel about how I
have performed (circle one):



LA Adviser comment (required):

Comment and endorsement on the Learning Assistant's performance:
(e.g. LA punctuality, attendance, willingness to learn and participate,
skills developed, and what the LA has done so far)

Adviser grade for the LA Assessment (circle one):

G: Good

*You have given detailed
responses which show
growing understanding of
supporting pupils' learning.*

S: Satisfactory

*Your responses show
some understanding
of supporting pupils'
learning.*

U: Unsatisfactory

*Your responses show
very little awareness
of supporting pupils'
learning.*

Actions points for the LA :

LA Adviser name, signature and date (required):

Class Teacher comment (optional):

Class Teacher name, signature and date (required):

Head Teacher comment or endorsement (optional):

Head Teacher name, signature and date (required):

Study Group sessions record

These pages are for you to keep a record of your learning while supporting beneficiaries in the Study Group sessions, led by the Programme Volunteer.

Complete the following each time you support a study group:

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

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PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Date and timing of the study group session:

Topic and activities of the session:

What I learned:

Learning Assistant signature: _____

PV comment (optional):

PV name, signature and date (required):

Learning Assistant Programme Milestones

Please record the date you complete each activity

Learning Assistant name: _____

School: _____

Maths Tutor: _____

English Tutor: _____

	Date of completion
Induction	_____
Maths Unit 1	_____
English Unit 1	_____
Marked Assignments	_____
School Experience Assessment 1	_____
School Experience Assessment 2	_____
Maths Unit 2	_____
English Unit 2	_____
School Experience Assessment 3	_____
School Experience Assessment 4	_____
Marked Assignment 2	_____
Maths Unit 3	_____
English Unit 3	_____
School Experience Assessment 5	_____
School Experience Assessment 6	_____
Marked Assignment 3	_____
Revision camp	_____
TTC entrance exam	_____

References

UNESCO, (2004 Printed/2015 Electronic version)

Embracing Diversity: Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments

ISBN 92-9223-032-8 (Electronic version)

6 booklets