Developing a Consistency Protocol

Purpose:
To develop your own protocol for making consistent judgements on student work against the Standards.

Protocols
A protocol is simply a documented and formally structured routine to step a group through a diplomatic process so that all feel included in the making of valid and consistent judgements. Everyone should feel emotionally safe as the steps are followed systematically. The steps often have timing associated with them so that the protocol does not drag out. You can make up your own Consistency Protocol.

What you need:
• people grouped in planning or teaching teams of 3-6 teachers
• 1 copy of pages 1 to 6 (back-to-back & stapled) for each pair of teachers
• a separate copy of page 7 per pair - as it is to be cut up
• scissors and sticky tape
• a blank A3 sheet of paper per group.

Step 1:
• DECIDE if you want to have a common, whole school approach to making consistent judgements, or whether protocols might vary from one teaching team to another.
If you're happy with a variety then you have a choice of three Options.
If you want consistency in your approach to consistency, then you need to first agree on which Option you will all try - and work on it together.
The three Options are:
Option 1: Use the Assessment Planning Decisions cycle on page 2 to DEVELOP a protocol (a formal routine) that you will use to build consistency.
Option 2: Look at and ADAPT one, or both, of the protocols on pages 3 & 4 to develop a protocol (a formal routine) that you will use to build consistency.
Option 3: Look at the example protocols on pages 3 & 4 and then use the material on pages 5-7 to CREATE your very own, original protocol (formal routine) that you will use to build consistency. Page 7 is for you to cut up and consider which aspects you want in your protocol, and in what order. Similarly, the question types on page 5 are ones you might use. You could call it your Consistency Circle Protocol - or some other name that works in your context.

Step 2:
• USE the blank form on page 6 to RECORD your protocol once you have agreed on the steps, actions and timing.

Step 3:
• TRIAL and REFINE your Consistency Protocol.
Collaboration through Assessment Planning

One key strategy for making valid and consistent judgements is for teachers to collaborate and make decisions by consensus all the way through the Assessment Planning process. In answering the big assessment questions (Why? When? What? Who? How?) together, you will find that your assessment practices are more aligned both with the Standards and with each other’s practices. While different purposes lead to different assessment pathways, (and multiple pathways given a specific purpose, such as assessment FOR learning), the joint planning and negotiation processes that occur build in a greater chance of content, construct, consequential, equity and predictive validity, and also inter-rater, intra-rater, and task/criteria reliability - and maybe even learner reliability. In other words, collaborative decisions throughout the whole assessment cycle can minimise threats to validity and consistency. You will have common understandings at each step in the process.

1. **WHY** is this assessment being done? What is its main PURPOSE?

2. **WHEN** is the best time to conduct this assessment? (e.g. before, during, after learning; timing? frequency?)

3. **WHAT** learning goals and/or Standards (strands, domains or dimensions) am I assessing?

4. **WHO** is the assessor? (self, peer, teacher, other?) and WHO else is a stakeholder?

5. **HOW** should I design the assessment? What processes or tools? Formal or informal?

6. **HOW** do I make consistent judgements? (e.g. moderation? rubrics?)

7. **HOW** do I communicate the judgements? To whom? When? What?

8. **HOW** can I use this information to improve students’ learning?

Office of Learning and Teaching, DE&T
The Tuning Protocol

This fine-tuning protocol was developed by David Allen and Joe McDonald from the Coalition for Essential Schools in the USA. It is widely used and was reported in a paper by Kathleen Cushman.

“The Tuning Protocol: A Process for Reflection on Teacher and Student Work

... I. Introduction [10 minutes]. Facilitator briefly introduces protocol goals, norms and agenda. Participants briefly introduce themselves.
II. Teacher Presentation [20 minutes]. Presenter describes the context for student work (its vision, coaching, scoring rubric, etc) and presents samples of student work (such as photocopied pieces of written work or video clips of an exhibition).
III. Clarifying Questions [5 minutes maximum]. Facilitator judges if questions more properly belong as warm or cool feedback than as clarifiers.
IV. Pause to reflect on warm or cool feedback [2-3 minutes maximum]. Participants make note of “warm”, supportive feedback and “cool”, more distanced comments (generally no more than one of each).
V. Warm and Cool Feedback [15 minutes]. Participants among them selves share responses to the work and its context: teacher-presenter is silent. Facilitator may lend focus by reminding participants of an area of emphasis supplied by teacher-presenter.
VI. Reflection/Response [15 minutes]. Teacher-presenter reflects on and responds to those comments or questions he or she chooses to. Participants are silent. Facilitator may clarify or lend focus.
VII. Debrief [10 minutes]. Beginning with the teacher-presenter (“how did the protocol experience compare with what you expected?”), the group discusses any frustrations, misunderstandings, or positive reactions participants have experienced. More general discussion of the tuning protocol may develop.”

(Cushman 2005, page 9-10)

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The above was extracted from:

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Other versions of the Tuning Protocol have much shorter times for each step. You may find such shorter times more manageable. The times in one version were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuning Protocol</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Presentation</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Clarifying questions</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reflection</td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Warm and Cool Feedback</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Response and Open conversation</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Debrief process</td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collaborative Assessment Conference Protocol

This protocol was developed by Steve Seidel from Harvard’s Project Zero team. It will take between 45 minutes to one and a quarter hours.

1. **Getting started** - The group chooses a facilitator to keep it focussed. Then the presenting teacher gives out copies of the selected work or displays it so all can see it. At this point she says nothing about the work, its context, or the student. The participants read or observe the work in silence, making notes if they like.

2. **Describing the work.** The facilitator asks, “What do you see?” Participants respond without making judgements about the quality of the work or their personal preferences. If judgements emerge, the facilitator asks the speaker to describe the evidence on which the judgement is based.

3. **Raising questions.** The facilitator asks, “What questions does this work raise for you?” Group members ask any questions about the work, the child, the assignment, the circumstances of the work, and so forth that have come up for them during the previous steps of the conference. The presenting teacher makes notes, but does not yet respond.

4. **Speculating about what the student is working on.** The facilitator asks, “What do you think the child is working on?” Based on their reading or observations of the work, participants offer their ideas.

5. **Hearing from the presenting teacher.** At the facilitator’s invitation, the presenting teacher provides her perspective on the work and what she sees in it, responding to the questions raised and adding any other relevant information. She also comments on any unexpected things that she heard in the group’s responses and questions.

6. **Discussing implications for teaching and learning.** The group and the presenting teacher together discuss their thoughts about their own teaching, children’s learning, or ways to support this student.

7. **Reflecting on the conference.** Putting the student work aside, the group reflects together on how they experienced the conference itself.”

   (Cushman 2005, page 9-10)

Extract from.

Office of Learning and Teaching, DE&T
Questions Types for your Consistency Protocol

The following types of questions can be used productively in a Consistency Protocol situation.

- Open ended

- Focusing questions:
  Which parts of the student’s work show evidence for the rubric’s second criteria?

- Clarifying questions: (seek more information for the asker)
  What were the students’ reactions when you first gave them this assessment?

- Opinion-seeking questions:
  What seemed to work best from the students’ perspective?

- Feedback questions:
  How much input into the criteria did your students have?
  What if your students’ peer assessed this work using the rubric?

- Inquiry questions:
  How can we help our students be more metacognitive learners?

- Probing questions: (makes the answerer think)
  When do you think your students will be ready to prepare their own peer assessment interview questions?

- Reflective questions:
  Do we have a clearer idea of the Level 4 Personal Learning standard now?
Consistency Protocol

School: ............................................

Team: ............................................

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step and Title</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Facets & Steps you could include in your Protocol

You could copy this page, cut these ‘cards’ out, and include what you want in your Protocol, in your preferred order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilitator Role</th>
<th>Teacher Presenter Role</th>
<th>Participant’s Role</th>
<th>Visitor? Critical friend?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presenter explains context of student work</td>
<td>The Standards Access to them? Judge using them?</td>
<td>External samples (VCAA assessment maps)</td>
<td>Inquiry questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool feedback - constructively raises questions &amp; ideas to improve</td>
<td>Focusing questions</td>
<td>Sharing student samples</td>
<td>Quiet analysis of student sample(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm feedback - constructive positive - explicit, identifies strengths</td>
<td>Clarifying Questions on the sample (need more info)</td>
<td>Privacy issues &amp; confidentiality</td>
<td>Internal samples (other classes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubric use (interpretation)</td>
<td>Rubric design</td>
<td>Probing questions - make the presenter think</td>
<td>Feedback Questions on the samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment design</td>
<td>Assessment in use</td>
<td>Assessment products and performances</td>
<td>Remove names from student samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms of the group: no put downs, questions not solutions...</td>
<td>Comparing samples to Standards</td>
<td>Opinion-seeking questions</td>
<td>Invite a critical friend? Who? Regular or varying?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy enough samples for all to have a copy</td>
<td>Rotate who has facilitator role</td>
<td>Selection of samples What basis? Spread?</td>
<td>Optimal group size? 3-8?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective questions - how did the protocol work?</td>
<td>Rotate who is presenter of student work</td>
<td>Willing to suspend making a judgement -for now</td>
<td>Active listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observing The student work</td>
<td>Consensus decision-making?</td>
<td>All come prepared - pen, highlighter, etc.</td>
<td>Who attends? Students? Parents? Other level Ts?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describing the student work</td>
<td>Future implications</td>
<td>Making a judgement</td>
<td>Reaching agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location?</td>
<td>Furniture lay-out? (circle?)</td>
<td>Timing of each step?</td>
<td>???</td>
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