Fixed Interval Sampling – Instructions

Purpose

- FIS is used to quantify the duration and frequency of predominant behaviours (ADHD or non-ADHD) shown by the target student over the total number of observation periods.
- It involves observation of a target student only.
- It can be used for any length of lesson, if necessary using more than one recording sheet (35 minutes per sheet, i.e. $35 \times 4 = 140$ observations).

Description of instrument

- The recording section on the schedule consists of seven rows each containing five-minute periods which are subdivided into 20 cells. Each cell represents a 15-second period of observation.
- The analysis section consists of three columns for summaries of total recordings for behaviour categories (‘No ADHD’, ‘Inattention’ and ‘Hyperactive–Impulsive’ behaviours).
- DSM-IV criteria for ADHD are listed.

Procedure

- Familiarise yourself with DSM-IV criteria for ADHD.
- Remain as unobtrusive as possible and ideally take no part in the lesson.
- Record at the top of the sheet: the name of the target student; the date and time; the number in the group (e.g. class group, whole school, etc); if there is just a teacher or whether any support is given (e.g. TA offering general support or SSA supporting one particular child); and brief details regarding context and setting.
- Using a watch with a second hand, preferably attached to a clipboard, observe and record in the relevant cell the predominant behaviour displayed during fixed interval periods of 15 seconds. Refer to the list of DSM-IV ADHD behaviours numbered 1–18. If none of these are displayed, record as 0.
- In practice if necessary, observe for about 10–12 seconds and use 3–5 seconds to make the recording.
- In some cases a decision has to be made as to the predominant behaviour. If it is not possible to ascertain the exact behaviour, aim to identify whether the behaviour comes in one of the main categories, i.e. ‘No ADHD’, ‘Inattention’ or ‘Hyperactivity/Impulsivity’ (these last two are grouped together for analysis purposes).
- Recordings are summarised at a later date in the analysis section. Percentages of the total numbers of recordings are calculated for each of the three behaviour categories.