

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.



Figure 4.4 Fixed interval sampling instructions
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