

# Antecedent Behaviour Consequence Observation | FACT SHEET

## Purpose

Antecedent Behaviour Consequence (ABC) is usually included in the initial, direct observations to gain a general picture of the behaviour, the contexts in which it occurs and the function of the behaviour. It is a useful method of direct observation when the behaviours have a high impact upon the student or others. Along with other information gathered, it assists in the development of the Behaviour Support Plan.

## When to use

An ABC form is used to record data based on observations of the student at specified periods, on multiple occasions, during the school day. It is often done when a member of the school's staff, other than the class teacher, is available to observe the student and record information around the student's positive (appropriate) and negative (challenging) behaviours.

## How to use

The person observing the student notes the:

- **Context for the observation:**

This captures the contextual factors that may or may not contribute to a build-up of stress and anxiety that can result in the challenging behaviour:

- things people did or said
- an emotional state (tiredness, frustration, anxiety)
- the environment (hot, noisy, smelly brightness)

Describe the activity and location of where the observation is taking place, for example, classroom, assembly, chapel, playground, canteen etc.

The type of lesson is also noted, for example, the subject, literacy, maths, history.

The nature of the work is also included, for example, independent work, group work, circle time, unstructured time.

- **Antecedent event:**

This is the event, activity, or words spoken *immediately* prior to the problem or appropriate behaviour occurring. Antecedents can include an instruction given to the student, correction given, being alone, being with peers, transition to non-preferred activity, request denied, change in activity, or removal of a preferred activity.

- **Behaviour:**

Captures what the student does and must be described in clear and observable terms. The behaviour needs to be seen and can be counted.

- **Consequence:**

States what occurs immediately after the behaviour occurs, for example responses from others in the environment, actions taken by the student or others.

These are described in an objective manner. Examples include:

- adult / peer attention provided
- verbal redirection

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- behaviour ignored
- gains / avoids activity or task
- gains / avoids sensory input

Just as behaviour is described in observable terms, consequences should also be described using clear, objective language. It is important to avoid the use of emotive words such as “spoken to angrily”, or “walked off in a huff”. By being objective, the clarity needed to assist in understanding the function of the student’s behaviour can be determined.

The data should be collected over several days and across a range of contexts. The goal is to obtain as much information as needed to ensure the function of the behaviours of concern can be determined and develop the summary statement that will form the basis of the Behaviour Support Plan.

## ABC Observation Form Antecedent-Behaviour-Consequence

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Observer completing ABC Form: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Day / Time</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Antecedent:</b> <i>What happened prior to the behaviour?</i>	<b>Behaviour:</b> <i>What did the student do?</i>	<b>Consequence:</b> <i>What happened immediately after the behaviour?</i>