

Discuss issues of equality

[Profession](#), [Teacher](#)



“ Entitlement, equality, inclusivity, diversity and differentiation. Basically, all of these are about acknowledging and respecting the individual needs of your learners, helping and supporting where appropriate. ” (Gravells, A, 2008). Before any discussion it is essential for everyone to understand the terms Equality and Diversity. “ Diversity is defined as valuing the differences in people whether they stem from race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability. Equality is offering each person equal rights and opportunities despite any differences”. Gravells, A, 2008). So Equality is about the rights of learners to attend and participate regardless of their gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation or age. And Diversity is about valuing the differences that people have and appreciating their individual characteristics. Above all it is important as a teacher, keeping equality and diversity in mind, to find ways to promote inclusion of all learners, yet through differentiation by using difference approaches and resources, to find ways to meet the needs of individuals within the group. Differentiation is one of the tools that teachers can use to promote equality and diversity. It is the accommodation of differences between learners to allow each individual the best chance of learning. ” (Petty, 2004). This could be done by adapting teaching styles or resources so that all learners receive equal opportunities. Referring back to the teacher / training cycle, preparation and planning will enable us to best promote inclusion for all learners, and enable us to access other points of referral if necessary.

During the planning process, all learners should have an initial assessment for suitability and to diagnose strengths and weaknesses. The need to potentially access other points of referral could appropriately be picked up in

this initial assessment. Learners will be diverse on the basis of many different backgrounds and needs. These may include learning needs such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, Asperger's syndrome, socio economic status, health- both mental and physical, age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religious beliefs and size to name but a few.

Differentiation will enable the teacher to meet the needs of these individuals yet value their diversity. The main ways to differentiate are by Task, Outcome, Resource and Support. Different tasks can be set for different people but with the same aim in mind allowing for their different needs and diversity. The same task can be set but a different outcome is expected from individual learners. Different resources and different support can be provided for learners allowing for the individual needs of the whole class to be met.

Group work and buddying up can be used so that peers can support one another. Students with a learning disability will benefit from a scaffold to their work and the environment can be adapted to help, by for example integrating learning support into classes. There may be a point at which it is assessed that a learner's needs cannot be met adequately within the specific learning environment due to some of the above diversities. Here, it is appropriate to refer the learner so that their needs can be met.

College counsellors, welfare officers and connexions advisors may be appropriate where it is deemed that the learner's needs are not being met. To conclude my discussion, I will follow the words of Malcolm Knowles. ' As a learning organisation there is a need to understand the needs of our students. The major problems of our age deal with human relations; the solutions can only be found in education. Skill in human relations is a skill

that must be learned: it is learned in the home, in the school, in the church, on the job and wherever people gather together in small groups'. (Malcolm Knowles, 1950,: 13)