

Why equality, diversity and inclusion are important

Insight helps to move the agenda forward

Often, our journey around equality, diversity and inclusion is a reaction to some kind of behaviour, inappropriate use of language or a number of complaints from staff or learners about inequalities taking place.

Our behaviour in relation to equality and diversity has been about the 'now'; we often fail to consider the impact that history, policies, procedures and legislation have made on this complex agenda.

What we really need to do as leaders, managers and staff is to develop our organisational infrastructure to create a culture of awareness, knowledge, skills, acceptance and understanding around the issues of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Inequality is a serious problem

Often, managers and staff are aware that in their organisation there are issues around homophobic sexist and racist language, behaviour and attitudes. In some areas of the organisation these types of behaviours are minimal, but in others they are rife and many learners have discriminatory attitudes. Intimidation and harassment of learners and staff are also issues which are well known but seldom tackled because of preconceived ideas that this is the way young people speak, behave or act.

The serious issue is that we are preparing young people for work and for a society in which they will live and earn. If we continue to excuse inappropriate language, behaviour and attitudes we are failing our learners and colluding with acts of discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying.

Putting things right

Doing the right thing

This toolkit looks at the issues expressed above and provides support for teachers to work in collaboration with managers to embed equality, diversity and inclusion into the curriculum. (Noting that the curriculum is not just what is taught but also the way the organisation operates, its functions both hidden and visible).

Each organisation has to develop an infrastructure to promote equality, tackle discrimination and to foster healthy relationships between different groups.

A significant part of the infrastructure is staff development, training and support for all teaching and non-teaching staff to ensure that everyone knows how to promote equality, tackle discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation, and effectively build good relationships between different groups. The end goal is to empower both staff and learners to challenge all forms of discrimination.

Extending the curriculum

A critical success factor for promoting equality, tackling discrimination of all types and fostering healthy relationships is to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion issues are embedded throughout the breadth of the curriculum.

This approach ensures that equality, diversity and inclusion are not bolted-on, one-off activities or 'sticking plasters' on serious problems. Inclusion and the eradication of prejudice have to be rooted within the organisation's systems, procedures, infrastructure and the curriculum.

Another critical success factor in addressing issues of inequality is the development of reporting structures. Racist, sexist, homophobic and other discriminatory behaviour should be reported, recorded and acted upon. A simple but highly effective action is to enhance the organisation's behaviour referral forms to include references to racist, sexist, homophobic and disability related language and behaviour. This would enable all staff to identify, record and report discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying as they arise.

The benefits

A significant outcome of leadership and management in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion within an organisation is that both staff and learners feel confident to be themselves. They feel valued as individuals; they are able to be honest about their sexuality without fear of reprisals or harassment; they are not stereotyped because of where they live, what they look like or how they speak or dress.

Building equality, diversity and inclusion into the curriculum has major benefits for learning providers. Overall, the organisation's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion will be much more cohesive and inclusive and issues of discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying will decrease significantly if not disappear.

Both staff and learners will gain better awareness and understanding of the importance of planning, designing and building equality, diversity and inclusion into the everyday curriculum and begin to change their attitudes, language and behaviour, whilst at the same time the organisation's culture will change to become more accepting and inclusive.

Critical success factors for building equality and diversity into the curriculum include:

- senior managers providing strong leadership in ensuring the organisation is inclusive
- named people/post holders that work to promote and embed effective equality, diversity and inclusion into learning strategies and manage discriminatory behaviour
- featuring the organisation's commitment to equality and diversity in its strategic priorities
- implementing and establishing mechanisms for developing an inclusive organisational culture that has an impact on learners and staff
- seeing equality and diversity not as a bolt on but as a foundation on which to build
- being proactive rather than reactive – you don't have to identify large-scale issues to react to before you advance equality and diversity within the organisation
- communicating to staff that equality, diversity and inclusion is a journey and not a destination – the journey towards being an outstanding organisation in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion practice is never-ending, but there is a need for a planned approach to achieve your goals
- establishing a comprehensive equality and diversity monitoring framework and acting swiftly when issues are identified

1 Threading equality and diversity through the curriculum



This Module looks at the external factors that influence how we prioritise equality, diversity and inclusion in the curriculum and offers good practice checklists on how the organisation as a whole can respond.

1	Threading equality and diversity through the curriculum	
	Why is equality and diversity so important	2
	The Equality Act 2010, equality and diversity	2
	Who is protected?	3
	What behaviour is unlawful?	4
	What is the public sector equality duty?	5
	What is not covered?	5
	Inspection and equality and diversity	6
	What will inspectors be judging	7
	What might inspectors be looking for	8
	Embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in the organisation	10
	Information, advice and guidance	11
	Management of equality, diversity and inclusion	12
	Data analysis of protected groups	13
	Incident reporting	14
	Fostering good relations	15
	Listening to learner voices	16
	Pastoral support	17
	Additional learning support (ALS)	18
	Counselling services	19
	Multi-faith provision	20
	Lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB) support for learners	21
	Black Minority ethnic support	22
	Transgender support	23

2016

Module 2: Top tips for meeting inspection and legal requirements

This Module aims to give practical support to practitioners in embedding equality and diversity in the development, design and delivery of the curriculum. There are 10 top tips which draw on the latest information, advice and guidance from Ofsted, Local Authorities, as well as new on line resources, from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.



2 Top tips for meeting inspection and legal requirements



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2	Top tips for meeting inspection and legal requirements	
	Our 10 top tips	2
	1. The Equality Act 2010: Getting it right	3
	2. Eliminate discrimination	5
	3. Plan for inclusive learning	7
	4. Manage the learning environment	9
	5. Take a close look at your learning resources	10
	6. Make your teaching methods and delivery inclusive	12
	7. Consider Individual learners	14
	8. Be aware of diversity and difference amongst learners	16
	9. Raise awareness of stereotyping, prejudice and bullying	18
	10. Challenge discriminatory behaviour	20
	Useful resources	22
	Inspection	22
	Equality Act guidance	22
	Teaching resources	23

2016

Module 3: Top tips for planning teaching and learning

Effective and inclusive learning experiences can only be achieved by sufficient planning and preparation. This Module will enable you understand the principles of effective planning and how they can empower you to provide positive and inclusive learning experiences each time you deliver. The following sections are all areas that observers are looking for in making a judgement of good teaching and learning.



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Remember good planning will always underpin good teaching and learning.

Contents

3	Top tips for planning teaching and learning	
	Identifying, documenting and tracking learner needs	2
	What does information about previous learners tell you?	2
	What is already known about your learners' needs?	2
	Encouraging disclosure	4
	Using learner profiles	5
	Responding to learner needs as they change	6
	Identifying and tracking additional needs	9
	Top tips for planning	11
	Top tips for planning accessible assessments and examinations	19
	Ongoing assessment	18
	Examinations	19
	Top tips for planning staff training	23
	Useful links	27
	Bullying	27
	Inclusive teaching and learning	27
	Disabilities and medical conditions	28
	Information and support	28

2016

Module 4: Top tips for delivering teaching and learning

Although planning is important, effective and inclusive learning experiences can only be achieved if you have the knowledge and skills to behave and respond flexibly and inclusively to a range of situations and challenges as they occur. This section will help you to hone your knowledge and skills so that these responses become a natural and instinctive part of your delivery.



4 Top tips for delivering teaching and learning



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Contents

4	Top tips for delivering teaching and learning	
	Preparing yourself for inclusive delivery	2
	Developing professional competence	2
	Building personal awareness	3
	Building professional awareness	4
	Avoiding common pitfalls	5
	Top tips for inclusive induction	10
	Top tips for engaging all learners	12
	Inclusive presentation skills	13
	Interacting with learners	18
	Inclusive group work	20
	Top tips for challenging discriminatory behaviour	22
	Approaches to dealing with bullying and harassment	22
	Challenging discriminatory behaviour	27

2016

Module 5: Top tips for creating accessible learning materials and environments

Although you can never plan for every eventuality that may arise in your lessons, and sometimes you will have no choice but to think on your feet and 'wing it', you do at least have control over the learning materials you choose to use and to some extent the physical environment you operate in. There are many things you can do to make these easy to use, appropriate for and inclusive of all learners.



5 Top tips for creating accessible learning materials and environments



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Contents

5	Top tips for creating accessible learning materials and environments	
	Top tips for improving the readability of your materials	2
	Top tips for using PowerPoint and interactive whiteboards	5
	Top tips for producing accessible hand-outs	9
	Top tips for creating accessible physical environments	12

2016

Module 6: Good practice in building equality and diversity into subject areas

This Module suggests possible themes within different subject areas which lend themselves to exploring and raising awareness of equality and diversity issues. It is by no means an exhaustive list, as there are endless possibilities for exploring equality and diversity across subject disciplines, but is intended to get you started. The ideas can be developed in formal or informal contexts with learners across the age spectrum.



6 Good practice in building equality and diversity into subject areas



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Contents

6	Good practice in building equality and diversity into subject areas	
	Subject area: Art	3
	Subject area: Business and marketing	5
	Subject area: Catering and hospitality	6
	Subject area: Childcare	8
	Subject area: Citizenship	9
	Subject area: Construction	10
	Subject area: Design and technology	12
	Subject area: Engineering	13
	Subject area: English	13
	Subject area: Geography	14
	Subject area: Hairdressing and beauty	15
	Subject area: Health and social care	16
	Subject area: History	18
	Subject area: ICT	20
	Subject area: Leisure and tourism	21

Subject area: Maths	22
Subject area: Media	23
Subject area: Modern foreign languages	24
Subject area: Motor vehicle	25
Subject area: Music	26
Subject area: Performing arts	27
Subject area: Personal, social, health & economic education (PSHEE)	29
Subject area: Psychology	30
Subject area: Public services	31
Subject area: Religious education	32
Subject area: Science	33
Subject area: Sociology	34
Subject area: Sport	35
Subject area: Any	36

2016

Module 7: Providing evidence of your good practice

This Module explains the types of evidence that observers are looking for in making a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning.



7 Providing evidence of your good practice



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Contents

7	Providing evidence of your good practice	
	Learner-centred observations	2
	What Ofsted observers are looking for	2
	The role of the observer	3
	Preparing for an observation	4
	How observers judge lessons	5
	What makes a good lesson?	5
	How is 'good' lifted to 'outstanding'?	7
	When would an assessment of 'some improvement needed' be made?	9
	When would an assessment of 'significant improvement needed' be made?	11
	Evidence of your good practice	12
	Written evidence	12
	Providing evidence of your good practice to observers	14
	Examples	18

2016

Module 8: Practitioner's Toolkit

This Module contains a range of checklists and activities that you can use and adapt for auditing your performance and personal development.



8 Practitioner's toolkit



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Contents

8	Practitioner's toolkit	
	Does the law protect them?	2
	What do you expect of your learners?	6
	Understanding your heritage	7
	Course planning checklist	9
	Raising your equality and diversity awareness	11
	Challenging in a non-confrontational way	14
	Equality, diversity and inclusion health check	16
	Availability and use of learner data audit	20
	Team practice assessment	22
	Personal practice review	24
	Self-assessment tool	27
	Avoid the stereotype	34
	Physical environment checklist	35
	Booking external venues accessibility checklist	37
	Observation checklist	41
	Case studies	44
	Appropriate and sensitive language	46