

Teacher Education for Inclusive Schooling:

The Case of the Inclusive Practice Project in Scotland

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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Teacher Education for Inclusive Schooling: The Inclusive Practice Project

Some key questions

- What is the background to and context for reforming teacher education internationally?
 - Why is reforming teacher education for inclusive schooling difficult?
 - What did we try to achieve at Aberdeen?
 - What was done?
 - What did we find?
 - What next for universities?
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Teacher Education for Inclusion: the wider context of teacher education

- The nature, purpose and location of initial teacher education is being questioned
 - Many countries are trying to reform teacher education
 - Overloaded initial teacher education courses
 - Many courses on additional support/SEN are optional
 - Uncertainty about teacher status, roles, responsibilities and identities
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Context:

diversity, social justice and inclusion

- Schools are increasingly diverse
 - Research suggests many teachers claim that are not well prepared to meet the diversity of children's needs
 - The majority of children with special needs are in mainstream schools and classes
 - Growing acceptance that the SEN task is the responsibility of all teachers
 - All teachers need to be better prepared
 - In Scotland, major concern about under-achievement and lack of meaningful participation for certain groups (OECD, 2007)
 - Two routes to QTS in Scotland
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Why is reform difficult?

- Professional identities are hard to change
 - Certain 'special education' practices
 - Territorial disputes between professionals (teachers and teacher educators)
 - Existing institutional and professional structures
 - Institutional inertia in many universities/teacher education institutions
 - Teacher educators tend to prepare student teachers to work in the way they themselves taught
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Some questions about ITE and inclusion

- What do all beginning teachers need to know and be able to do?
 - What stops them from doing it when they know what to do?
 - What are the tensions between what they learn in the university and what they learn in schools?
 - How might these tensions be resolved?
 - What did we do at Aberdeen in the IPP?
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Inclusive Practice Project

Aims to develop new approaches to training ALL teachers:

- have a greater awareness and understanding of the educational and social problems/issues that can affect children's learning;
 - have developed strategies they can use to support and deal with such difficulties.
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Three Key Assumptions

- difference must be accounted for as an essential aspect of human development in any conceptualisation of learning;
 - teachers can be convinced that they are competent to teach all children;
 - learn new strategies for working with others
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Professional Graduate Diploma in Education

- Thirty-six week course - integrated elements
 - 18 weeks in school experience placements
 - 18 weeks of university based learning
 - Programme reforms
 - School staff, local authority and classroom teachers, recent course graduates
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Professional Graduate Diploma in Education

Core content – professional studies

3 core themes – linked to key concepts of inclusive pedagogy

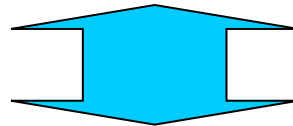
- Understanding Learning
 - Study of theoretical views of learning
 - Replaces 'bell-curve' thinking with the notion of 'transformability'
 - Understanding Social Justice
 - Considers dilemmas of access and equity in education
 - Examines role of 'additional support'
 - Becoming an Active Professional
 - The development of autonomy and resourcefulness, practical and ethical responsibility
 - Emphasises teacher responsibility to constantly look for new ways of working by working with and through others
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PGDE Programme Architecture

A vision of the Inclusive Practitioner - The 4 elements of inclusion integrated with the 7 design principles of 'Curriculum for Excellence'

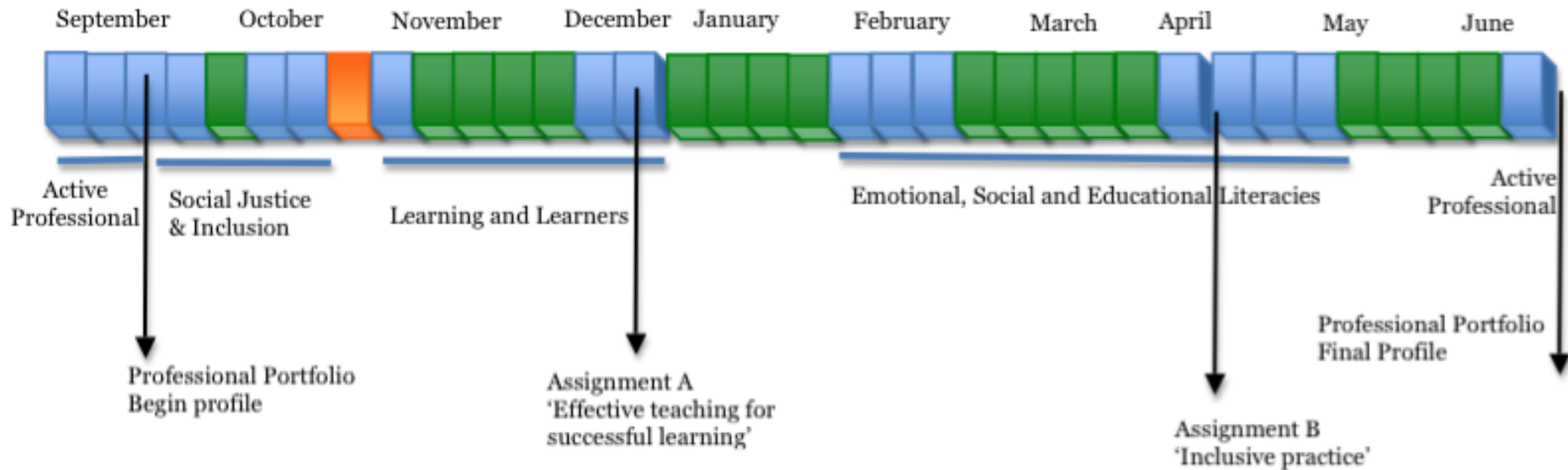
Both aim to improve opportunities for learning, recognise the importance of learning and working together, value diversity and a wider interpretation of achievement.

Four elements of Inclusion: Framework for Participation - access, diversity, collaboration and achievement....enabling “increasing participation and decreasing exclusion from the culture, curricula and community of mainstream schools”



Aims of 'Curriculum for Excellence' - “The purpose of the programme is to improve the learning, attainment and achievement of children and young people in Scotland. It is also about ensuring that pupils achieve on a broad front, not just in terms of examinations. It is important to ensure that children and young people are acquiring the full range of skills and abilities relevant to growing, living and working in the contemporary world. Curriculum for Excellence aims to ensure that they will enjoy greater choice and opportunity to help realise their individual talents.”

PGDE Professional Studies course overview



University-based tuition



School Experience (assessed observation)



Reading Week

The relationship between the principles of inclusive pedagogy and the PGDE core themes

Principles/ Underlying Assumptions	Associated Concepts/Actions	Key Challenges*	PGDE Course Themes	Outcome (programme graduates)
1. Difference must be accounted for as an essential aspect of human development in any conceptualisation of learning	Replacing deterministic views of ability with a concept of transformability	'Bell-curve thinking and notions of fixed ability still underpin the structure of schooling	Understanding Learning	Rejects deterministic views of ability Accepts that differences are part of human condition Rejects idea that the presence of some will hold back the progress of others Believes that all children can make progress (<i>if conditions are right</i>)
2. Teachers must believe (can be convinced) they are qualified/capable of teaching all children	Demonstrating how the difficulties students experience in learning can be considered dilemmas for teaching rather than problems within students	The identification of difficulties in learning and the associated focus on what the learner <i>cannot</i> do often puts a ceiling on learning and achievement. Teachers must be disabused of the notion that some children are not their responsibility	Understanding Social Justice	Commitment to the support of all learners. Belief in own capacity to promote learning for all children
3. The profession must continually develop creative new ways of working with others	Modelling (creative new) ways of working with and through others	Changing the way we think about inclusion (from 'most' and 'some' to everybody)	Becoming an Active Professional	Willingness to work (creatively) with and through others

Key findings

- Students maintain positive attitudes
 - Course reforms are embedded
content and delivery
still some contradictions/tensions
 - Teacher educators may feel uncomfortable being asked to train teachers in
ways they themselves did not work
 - Programme graduates are using an inclusive pedagogical approach in their
practice
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Lessons learned

- Theoretical developments have helped to make useful distinctions between inclusive education, practice and pedagogy.
 - Teacher education has an important role to play in ensuring that mainstream class teachers are prepared to deal with human differences in ways that include rather than exclude from the culture curricula and community of mainstream schools.
 - Professional development for teacher educators is also needed.
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Lessons learned

- The enhanced clarity with which we have been able to articulate the notion of inclusive pedagogy has strengthened the involvement of staff with the School of Education, opening up new possibilities for working collaboratively with colleagues in primary and secondary education.
 - By building on and making links with practices in school, ITE can fulfill its obligation to work in partnership with schools in ways that respect and challenge the status quo.
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A national framework for inclusion

- Embed issues of inclusion and diversity across all courses, for all teachers, across all phases in all 7 Scottish universities
 - Focus on social justice, learning and teaching, legislation/policy and inclusion
 - Implications for all teachers and all teacher educators; not just SEN and inclusion specialists
 - The Framework is linked to SITE and SFR
 - Professional values and personal commitment
 - Professional knowledge and understanding
 - Professional skills and abilities
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PRINCIPLES AND CONTEXTS

Social Justice	Inclusion	Legislation/policy/initiatives	Learning and teaching issues
Human rights Right to education Rights in education Participation and diversity A learning environment free of discrimination	Given that all learners at some point may have additional support needs, under what circumstances might the following children be vulnerable? What are the issues of language, ethnicity, social class and poverty, specific learning difficulties, more able children, Scottish travelling communities and looked after children (LAC)? What are the issues of participation and access to inclusion (mainstream classroom, common curriculum framework, assessment, extra curricular activities)? What are the roles, responsibilities and professional identities of a beginning teacher? What are the opportunities and challenges of working with and through others?	Quality and Equity of Schooling in Scotland, OECD, 2007 Getting it Right for Every Child: Implementation Plan, Scottish Executive, June 2006 Children (Scotland) Act 1995 The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, Supporting Children's Learning: code of practice (2005) SQA (Framework for National Qualifications) Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 (as amended 2005) Disability Equality Duty, 2006 Inclusion and the Additional Support for Learning Act: a paper for professional reflection, 2006 Curriculum for Excellence Happy, Safe and Achieving Their Potential: Guidance review 2004 UN and European Conventions Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act, 2000	Promoting learning of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Raising awareness of the importance of the social and emotional climate for learning. Raising awareness of a variety of appropriate teaching, learning and assessment approaches. Encouraging the appreciation of the range of interests, experiences and needs within and beyond the classroom and the ability to address these by focusing on what the child already knows and can do. Increasing opportunities and removing barriers to learning and participation. Providing learning opportunities for students to think about their teaching and develop their understanding of different aspects of inclusion.

SITE	Student Teachers	SFR	Teachers	Advanced Professionals
VALUES AND BELIEFS				
Value and demonstrate a commitment to social justice, inclusion and protecting and caring for children.	Students explore their assumptions about children and young people, schools and social justice by considering the following types of question: • What is it to be human? • To what do we make of difference? • To what extent are all learners valued? • How does schooling reinforce inequality? • To what extent can schools help overcome inequality and challenge discrimination? • Who are the learners at risk of marginalisation?	Show in day-to-day practice a commitment to social justice, inclusion and caring for and protecting children.	Teachers should continue to explore their own assumptions in the light of their own experiences in schools and classrooms, by considering the following types of question: • Why do some learners experience difficulties in learning and participation? • To what extent do teacher attitudes, school and classroom factors contribute to these difficulties? • To what extent are some of these factors attributable to learners or wider social factors e.g. parents, community? • How do these two sets of factors interact? • What are the barriers to learning and participation within schools and classrooms? (curriculum, systems of assessment, reward systems, setting, streaming?)	Teachers should critically examine their assumptions and the assumptions of others in the light of evidence and their own experiences in schools and classrooms, by considering the following types of question: • Who are the learners who are perceived as having difficulties in learning? • To what extent do assumptions, expectations, values and beliefs contribute to learners having difficulties in learning? • To what extent are various assumptions, values and beliefs apparent in policies and practices at the national, local and school level?
PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING				
Draw on relevant principles, perspectives and theories to inform professional values and practices. Acquire an understanding of research and its contribution to education.	Students should acquire a knowledge and understanding of current policy, practice and provision. • What are the policies that influence the development of practice and provision in the area of inclusion? • What legislation supports the promotion of equality and the elimination of discrimination? • What are the different forms of support? • How helpful are these forms of support? • What are the implications for working with and through other adults (e.g. parents and other agencies)? Students should acquire a knowledge and understanding of learning theories and pedagogical practices. • What are the conditions which promote children's development? • What forms of pedagogy promote children and young people's learning? • How does theory help us understand why?	Have a broad, critical understanding of the principal features of the education system, educational policy and practice, and of their part in it. Attitude professional values and practices and relate them to theories, principles and perspectives. Have research based knowledge relating to learning and teaching and a critical appreciation of the contribution of research to education in general.	Teachers should develop a knowledge and understanding of current policy, practice and provision, in the light of their own experiences in schools and classrooms by considering the following types of question: • What are the limitations of legislation? • What is helpful about that legislation? • What are the features of effective planning for learning for classes, groups and individuals? • What issues must be addressed when working with and through other adults (e.g. parents and other agencies)?	Teachers should critically explore knowledge, research and literature relating to current policy, practice and provision and relate it to their own experiences in schools and classrooms. The following questions might be considered: • What is the intent of current legislation? • What are the contradictions that exist in current policy and legislation? • What are the features of effective teaching and learning for classes, groups and individuals? • In what ways does working with and through other adults effectively support learning, teaching and participation? • What are the resources that are available to support learning and equal participation within the classroom and school? • How are these resources deployed and how effective are they? • Who else can assist with issues of equity, access, inclusion and achievement e.g. parents, voluntary organisations, faith groups and other professionals? Teachers should develop appropriate and relevant knowledge and understanding of specific specialist areas of additional support needs. Teachers should critically examine the research evidence and pedagogical practices associated with the specific specialist area. • What would be the features of an inclusive pedagogy? • What would be the features of an anti-discriminatory pedagogy?
PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND ABILITIES				
Plan coherent, progressive, teaching programmes which match their pupils' needs and abilities, and justify what they teach. Set expectations and a pace of work which make appropriate demands on all pupils.	Students should acquire skills and abilities to recognise and build upon previous experiences and learning of pupils, groups and classes. • What are the resources for learning in the classroom? Do these assist inclusion and diversity? • How can we develop opportunities for participation and collaboration (learning together)? • What is meant by ability? • To what extent is it possible to know a learner's ability? • What do we mean by achievement? • What forms of achievement are valued (academic, literacy, social and emotional, creative, physical, health and well being, other)? • Whose achievement is of value? • How do we know learners are achieving? • How do we ensure learners are achieving?	Plan coherent, progressive and stimulating teaching programmes which match pupils' needs and abilities, and can justify what they teach. Use a range of teaching strategies and resources which they can evaluate and justify in terms of curriculum requirements and of the needs and abilities of pupils. Set and maintain expectations and pace of work for all pupils.	Teachers should identify evidence of the following indicators within their practice: • Are some forms of achievement more valued than others? • Are some learners' achievements more valued than others? • Are learning and teaching approaches being used to improve the achievement of all? • Are the approaches being used effective? • Are there any inherent disadvantages to the learner of these approaches?	Teachers should develop research skills and abilities in order to extend understanding of why some children experience difficulties in learning and participation. Teachers should collect and analyse evidence to report on small scale investigations designed to improve learning and participation.

Some further questions

- ☐ How helpful is a national framework for teacher education for inclusive schooling?
 - ☐ What might it look like?
 - ☐ Should there be scope for variation between the universities?
 - ☐ What are the particular challenges for secondary teacher education?
 - ☐ How do we convince our mainstream colleagues that preparing *all* teachers for inclusion is in their interest?
 - ☐ Who should be responsible?
 - ☐ What would a profile of an inclusive teacher look like?
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