

Additional Learning Needs & Inclusive Practice

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Introduction

In regards to teaching and inclusive practice in the PCET classroom, the Equality Act 2010 (*Discrimination and your rights, Equality Act 2010, Citizens Advice*), needs to be addressed and followed. In this act, there are 8 characterises that protect anyone against discrimination for their own rights within the classroom, these include: age, gender reassignment, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and pregnancy and maternity. This protects anyone from unwanted discrimination in the workplace, education, public transport etc. It essentially includes all of the various anti-discrimination laws under one umbrella. Applying these inclusive laws in the classroom is crucial as it respects all students for their individual status, but most importantly they have rights as human beings.

ALN, Legislations, Acts and Inclusivity

Equality and inclusivity in the classroom is extremely important as it ensures reassurance and attentiveness to all students - treating each individual with fairness. Under the Equality Act 2010 there are 3 key main aims, these are: “advance equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and to foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities”, (*Equality Act 2010 Guidance*, gov.uk). This eliminates any unlawful discrimination against any student for a reason, but additionally the aims are to promote inclusivity.

Another act that came into place, was the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014. Under this act, there is a section which depicts the ‘heart’ of this, which is well-being. On *Principles Resource Guide, Social Care.Wales*, it discusses the physical, emotional and mental health aspects of individuals, protection against any abuse, domestic relationships, living in a suitable accommodation and in education. Any local authority must prove positive well-being for people who require their needs or support, and so this is important within the PCET classroom due to the students well-being. As a tutor, you must have a regard to their views, wishes and especially feelings, whilst also respecting their dignity.

Lastly, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), covers protection of any individual with an impairment or disability from discrimination. It ensures that they are respected, treated equally and fairly to others regardless of their disability through their human rights, *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Australian Human Rights Commission*. The acts listed above all cover the standard procedures of inclusivity, respect and treated others with fairness. When applying it to the classroom PCET setting, these must be used with every individual due to hidden impairments, visual disabilities, mental health and wellbeing, or simply respect.

(professional standards, AK2.2, AK6.1, BK3.2, BK5.2)

ALN also known as Additional Learning Needs refers to individuals, preferably children or young people who have a trouble with their learning through either physical or sensory. They find it difficult to engage, adapt and learn through education. This term has replaced two previous systems that were used in the past; Special Education Needs (SEN) and Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LDD). Young individuals with ALN may often need support and help with their reading, writing, group work, numeracy, processing information, communication or behaviour at times. It may be that they need assistance with their medical or physical impairments. Throughout the classroom, there are ways in which teachers/tutors can assist with their students needs; encouragement with their creativity or independence, give

access to student services or any external help through the university. (DSA), positive reinforcement, creating routines or patterns, providing structure, creating one-to-one tutorials to communicate with the student on their needs or possibly signposting. UWTSD offers a large amount of external support for students with disabilities, hidden impairments or services to assist with their mental health and well-being.

Abraham Maslow's theory *Hierarchy of Needs* can situate itself within the classroom setting as he believes that before students can go to their full potential with their learning, they need to have their basic needs met first and to feel comfortable and satisfied; physiological, safety, belonging, esteem etc. Students need a backbone provided by the tutor so they're able to feel secure and understood, thus then the rapport can be built to further their educational learning, *Applying Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in Our Classrooms*, *ChangeKidsLives.org*.

Within the ALN sector, there is a plan that is advised to assist students with their learning that will set out targets and strategies, this is called an Individual Education Plan, (IEP). This plan conducts a stage by stage process that will be tailored to the individual's needs and will entail what resources and assistance they may require. This is often implemented if said student has an additional learning need or disability that challenges them from

developing with their academia - attempting to create success and achievement.

Throughout UWTSD, there are a lot of resources and services available for students, whether it would be for a disability of their mental health. The services range from counselling, to requiring assistance from an individual. The university makes sure to cover all aspects of support for their students from all campuses so they're able to succeed and flourish within their studies. Online through Professional Services entails a range of services for disabled students. Specific learning difficulties, mentoring, a needs assessment, learning support and study support. Using these tools for students can ensure they're having the best possible encouragement within their academia, *Services for Disabled Students, University of Wales Trinity Saint David.*

(professional standards, AK2.2, AK6.1, BK1.3, BK2.2, BK3.2, BK3.3, BK5.1, BK5.2, EK1.2, EK1.3)

Conclusion

Creating a safe and respected environment ensures a student's well being and gives them the ability to thrive. Being inclusive, treating impaired individuals with equality and equity and meeting their specific needs is vital to their learning and growth as a person. It is important to be welcoming and reassuring with those who have challenges or difficulty with participating. Providing these plans, structures and following the legislation acts informs students that they're being understood and listened to. They're not to be discriminated no matter their disability, gender, impairments, religion or beliefs - everyone is entitled to be treated equally and fairly.

Megan

In preparation for Megan to study on the Photography in the Arts course at UWTSD, I'd need to make sure that she is comfortable, reassured and content with the resources and service. Megan has declared that she has suffered with her mental health and being, along with having struggles with confidence and potential anxiety issues, but that past tutors have mentioned about the possibility of dyslexia. The course itself will require occasional presentations, engagement with other students and external peers, and so offering Megan a range of support will help with her academic study and well being. Within UWTSD, there is a great vast of resources to assist students with help and learning. Emailing or attempting to make contact with Megan in advance and listing what the university has to offer will provide guidance, but additionally will give her comfort (*professional standards, AK5.1*).

UWTSD offers student services, services for disabled students includes; learning support for her suspected dyslexia. Learning support provides help with DSA applications, one-to-one tutoring and additional support for assessments and their academia. Exam revisions, assessments, organisation skills and an initial screening will help Megan to further recognise her difficulties, (*professional standards, BK5.2*). Providing Megan with other additional support such as counselling and well being services may be useful if she requires it. The counselling service at UWTSD entails; wellbeing

advice, specialist mental health mentoring and support and access to external services. Megan will benefit from using these if she wishes, but also as a tutor, making sure that she feels relaxed and has attentiveness will help with her as a student and in her studies, (*professional standards, BK5.1*).

According to the British Dyslexia Association it says, 'dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling', Rose, (2009). Providing Megan with additional services for her suspected disability will assist her with not just her academics, but as an individual.

Along with the services being offered prior to the academic year, it'll be useful to ask if there are any requests that may be useful to her learning.

Furthermore, I believe that requesting an open day for Megan at the department can give her familiarity and more confidence before her studies commence. This gives her an opportunity to learn about the course, meet staff and discuss any other requests or needs before she starts. Giving Megan all of the resources, services, and additional help before her academic year, will ensure she is reassured and content throughout her learning.

Occasional tutorials from myself to the student will be useful to keep up-to-date with any requests or struggles she has, but to mainly communicate with how she is. Accommodating Megans needs before the course starts is vital,

but continuing it throughout her studies will ensure that she has the additional help she may require or need. Inclusive practice is important for Megan's well being and academia, and also implementing the Disability Discrimination Act, (2010).

Dafydd

Dafydd has applied to study Photography in the Arts for the next academic year, and states that he suffers with a few impairments/disabilities that can restrict him from learning. He says that he has cerebral palsy and thinks he's partially sighted but aims to be very independent although he can get tired quickly. He's able to walk with the use of crutches and utilises his computer for note taking within the classroom, but his left arm can be a struggle to use at times. Dafydd wants to maintain his independence through the course but wants to know if there is any support for him so he's able to succeed.

At UWTSD, there are a range of options to assist Dafydd with his learning such as; one-to-one tutorials and a needs assessment for students to have a specialised assessor. If Dafydd wishes to have any support stated, I'd guide him into contacting the Disability Advisor through the university so he can discuss his needs. It may be worth conducting a risk assessment as he has a physical impairment which can be dangerous if not taken steps to rectify it.

The Dyenvor campus has a lift, but unfortunately to only the main departments. As part of the Photography course, Dafydd would need to use the darkroom or film developing rooms to create work. However, accessing these will be a challenge as it only has stairs - this would fall under the social model due to a lack of inclusivity and mobility for students with a disability. It

would be worth requiring additional help such as a person for Dafydd, to ensure safety when using these routes - social mobility and justice is important. Although Dafydd has stated that he wants to maintain his independence, it may be worthwhile to mention a notetaker for him throughout his sessions if he requires it so he doesn't miss out on any research/information, (*professional standards, AK5.1*). Having someone to act in assistance for Dafydd can help with his development and academic learning as he's able to absorb aspects of the course. As he is moving away from home, providing him with the best care and support the university can offer will reassure him throughout his studies so he can feel inclusive.

Ongoing communication between Dafydd and I is important as I'm able to listen to what he would like, or if he feels uncomfortable about any support that he's been given, (*professional standards, BK3.2*). Making sure Dafydd is satisfied and pleased in his academic studies is essential. Signposting will be useful stagey for Dafydd as he's able to grasp what's coming up throughout the sessions. Lastly and in regards to his vision, it may be worth guiding him to fill out an application form to request a personal assistance, or additional help with his eyesight, but also applying for DSA can help with Dafydd's studies. Giving Dafydd a great level of equity provides reassurance for him throughout his learning.

Alys

Alys has discovered that she has become pregnant at the start of her 2nd year of academia. She has insisted that she wishes to continue with her studies at UWTSD, but requests some help. As she is pregnant, Alys would need to fill out a pregnancy risk assessment form by the university, which I would review. This risk assessment would have to be reviewed occasionally for the stages of her pregnancy, but also because of the environment of her studies. A student pregnancy, maternity and adoption leave policy will also need to be considered.

In the Photography department at UWTSD, there is a few pieces of equipment and mobility issues that could be a risk factor for Alys; the darkroom where chemicals are present and heavy machinery, the stairs connected to the darkroom as there is no lift for her, studio lighting, cables and installation tools such as; hammer, drill and nails, (*professional standards, AK6.1*) Throughout her second year, Alys would need to be monitored for the progress of the pregnancy with doctors appointments, meetings, reassurance scans/checks and ongoing review of risk assessments/policies.

Inclusivity is important to give to Alys as although she is pregnant, treating her with the same respect as other students is important. However, the need to

take into account for manual handling and heavy lifting is crucial. Regular one-to-one tutorial or meeting with Alys will reassure her and myself as a tutor of the ongoing pregnancy, but will also be useful if she requires any further support. Although Alys is pregnant and does not have a disability, she has a physical impairment that will be a struggle for her to carry out tasks - either with early or late pregnancy. Alys does situate within the Rights Based Model as although she needs additional support or services, she deserves the same respect and rights as everyone else. Pregnancy is a natural cycle of life, and so it should not be discriminated against her, *Equality Act, 2010*.

On the discussion of models, the Dynevor campus at UWTSD carries a social model as it does not have a lift to the darkroom which is 3 levels below. Alys may need to use this space to create pieces for a project and will find it difficult towards the end of pregnancy due to the stairs. But keeping up-to-date with Alys on her pregnancy and if there are any high risk factors given by medical professionals will give staff a clear indication on what to help her with. The discussions of maternity leave and options of feeding (either breastfeeding or formula), will need to be provided to know if we need to give her a space to pump breastmilk postpartum. Under the Equality Act (2010), Alys is protected from the beginning of pregnancy until they decide to return after birth. Discrimination against Alys will not be tolerated throughout her pregnancy and postpartum, either direct, indirect or victimisation, *(professional standards, BK5.2)*

Professional Standards

AK2.2 - Ways in which learning promotes the emotional, intellectual, social and economic well-being of individuals and the population as a whole.

AK5.1 - Ways to communicate and collaborate with colleagues and/or others to enhance learners' experience.

AK6.1 - Relevant statutory requirements and codes of practice.

BK1.3 - Ways of creating a motivating learning environment.

BK2.2 - Ways to engage, motivate and encourage active participation of learners and learner independence.

BK2.4 - Flexible delivery of learning, including open and distance learning and on-line learning.

BK3.2 - A range of listening and questioning techniques to support learning.

BK3.3 - Ways to structure and present information and ideas clearly and effectively to learners.

BK5.1 - The impact of resources on effective learning.

BK5.2 - Ways to ensure that resources used are inclusive, promote equality and support diversity.

EK1.2 - Ways to devise, select, use and appraise assessment tools, including, where appropriate, those which exploit new and emerging technologies.

EK1.3 - Ways to develop, establish and promote peer and self- assessment.

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