



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

ECDE 7017

Exploring Contemporary Issues in Education 1: Policy Review and Critical Analysis Preparing for Assessment 1: Presentation

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Trawsnewid Addysg, Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education, Transforming Lives

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Module Aims:



To develop the **higher-level critical and analytical skills** required to **contribute meaningfully to the education debate**, across a **variety of different platforms**.



To critically evaluate contrasting approaches to one or more contemporary issues relating to education in Wales, the UK **and** international contexts, taking into account differing educational orthodoxies.



To critically evaluate the presentation of contemporary educational issues and proposals in legislation, statutory and non-statutory guidance, through consultation documents and the representation of those issues and proposals in the press, social media and other channels.



To demonstrate a critical understanding of the development of education policy, its impact and its potential pitfalls; including its perception among policymakers, schools, teachers, parents, communities, and children and young people.

Module 1: Learning Outcomes

Upon the successful completion of this module, students should be able to demonstrate the ability to:

- Assess the impact of differing approaches to the presentation of policy, proposals and educational outcomes for differing audiences.
- Understand the evidence of impact that differing discourses have in promoting or mitigating the impact of educational change.
- Explore critically the relationship between education policy, implementation strategy and impact locally, nationally and internationally.
- Articulate an understanding of the challenges and opportunities in leading educational change successfully.

At this stage of the module we are working together to begin to develop these capabilities

Module 1: Promise

**By working together-
and you listening to and
supporting one another**

- From discussion to critical analysis
- Presenting and discussing your interests
- Academic poster presentation
- Academic writing
- Developing your policy interest/ focus throughout



Module 1: Details of Assessment

Assessment Component 1 – 20% (Monday 12th October 2026)

Prepare a presentation for your fellow EdD students that critically evaluates a contemporary issue in education of your choice, its representation in official statements, media treatments and your understanding of its treatment in an international context.
(10 minute presentation).

Assessment Component 2 – 30% (Monday 2nd November 2026)

You are asked create an academic poster outlining the planning and preparation for component 3. This should present how your thinking has evolved around the educational issue that you have chosen and provide a rationale for the direction of the focus of your study (equivalent to 2250 words).

Assessment Component 3 – 50% (Monday 23rd November 2026)

Written report on policy surrounding a contemporary issue in education (3,750 words).

Presentation



**Academic
Poster**

From today – and first thoughts- to narrowing your focus

- Less is more – fewer ideas done well
- Depth over breadth – forensic, not superficial analysis
- Eye on the prize – start with key points and work out

**Build a watertight argument... plug all
holes**

**Policy
Report**



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Assessment 1

Assessment Component 1 – 20% (Monday 12th October 2026)

Task

Prepare a presentation for your fellow EdD students that critically evaluates a contemporary issue in education of your choice, its representation in official statements, media treatments and your understanding of its treatment in an international context.

Formative tasks:

- ✓ **What** is the contemporary issue?
- ✓ **How** chosen documents help you- and others- to understand policy and practice that relates to your chosen issue
- ✓ **How** to analyse the issue you have chosen?

Structure:

1. Title slide: The policy issue chosen. Your name. Module code.
2. (“ Say what you are going to say”) Introduction: *What* is your contemporary issue and aim of your presentation? (“ Say it” Slides 3- 8)
3. Why you have chosen the issue – and how your chosen policy impacts on one or two of the following : children- young people- students- parents- schools- universities- a province- national government
4. Government policy: You could emphasise ‘what is the policy’ , ‘how you have begun to evaluate the policy’ and ‘why this matters’
5. One example of official statement/ policy document of Government. (see previous guidance on moodle page on how you could evaluate the document using the work of Ozga). Argue how this helps you to begin to critically evaluate the issue
6. An example of how the media treats the issue- and why this is relevant
- 7&8. Questions you have begun to ask about your chosen policy – and research that relates to this (remember : select examples of research on how your chosen policy impacts on one or two of the following : children- young people- students- parents- schools-universities- a province- national government
- 10 References (see UWTSD Harvard referencing guide)
- 9 (“ Say what you have said”) Your conclusion : Emphasise what your aim has been and questions you have asked

10 minutes



Things to consider
about design and
delivery



Design and delivery

- Avoid large amounts of text on slides
- Emphasise key points (and prompt cards are one method you could use)
- Emphasise how the key points are the basis of their argument
- Practice and avoid reading word for word (Next Tue, I will encourage you to practice your presentations after the session and before the following Tue)
- This is your first assessment. We are assessing your emerging thinking and first critical responses. You will develop your thinking further through your blogs and journal articles.

Supporting material

- An example of your notes, in preparation for your presentation, that relate to one of the following : One example of Government policy, media treatment or questions you have begun to ask about your chosen policy



or



- Copies of your slides, as a handout, that could be given to others in the group after each of your presentations

Policy interpretation

Source of text:

- What is the policy text, who has produced it and who are the audiences it is intended for?

Scope of text:

- What is/are purpose(s) of the text? What does it assume the policy, as presented in the text, can do?

Patterns of text in two ways:

- Examples of any patterns of words and phrases and how they are used in those specific texts and contexts- given the audience(s) and purpose(s).

Policy interpretation

- **See also Ball's distinction (2017) between Big P and small p policy :**
- big –P policy that is 'formal' and usually legislated policy.... But we need to remain aware that policies are made and remade in many sites, and there are many little-p policies that are formed and enacted within localities and institutions (Ball,2017:10)

Critical thinking...

- Critical thinking ‘examines assumptions, discerns hidden values, evaluates evidence, and assesses conclusions.’

(Petress, 2004)

- ‘Critical thinking is the art of making clear, reasoned judgements based on interpreting, understanding, applying and synthesising evidence gathered from observation, reading and experimentation.’ (Burns & Sinfield, 2016)
- ‘Critical thinking means questioning not only assumptions of others, but also questioning your own assumptions.’
(Barnet & Bedau, 2011)

Six questions to trigger critical thinking:

Where did you find the information?

*Was it presented to you? Did you search for it?
How hard did you have to look? Is your source
reputable?*

How has the author/speaker come to their
conclusions?

*Is their line of reasoning logical? What did they
do to come to their conclusions? Are they
reliable/based on evidence?*

When was it written/said?

Is it recent and relevant?

What are the key messages
or results/findings?

*What are its claims to new knowledge? What
is their point? How does it compare to your
own?*

Who has written/said it?

*Is the author speaking as an individual or on
behalf of an organisation/employer? Are they
an expert/do they have credibility? Can you
identify bias?*

Why has it been written/said?

Who is it aimed at? What are its aims?

Critical thinking means...

- Being forensic in your analysis of a claim/policy/intervention
- Considering a range of views – never rely on a single source; are there alternative viewpoints?
- Careful construction of an argument, based on evidence
- Justifying your position – and providing sound rationale for the decisions you take (feel free to disagree, but must explain why)
- Spelling it out – never assume that your audience knows what you know
- You don't take anything for granted... ask questions and think about the 'bigger picture'



Ask yourself:

- Are there any hidden assumptions or agendas?
- Is there a political motivation?
- Does the evidence provided support the conclusions made?
- Is the analysis fair? (subjective vs objective)
- Why was something done – and what was its significance?
- Is the timing significant?
- How does one interpretation compare to another?
- Why might authors agree/disagree?
- Do opinions change over time?
- What is the weight of evidence and how convincing is it?
- Are the sources reputable?
- What are their strengths/weaknesses?

Questions?



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